

MATERIALS of DANCE

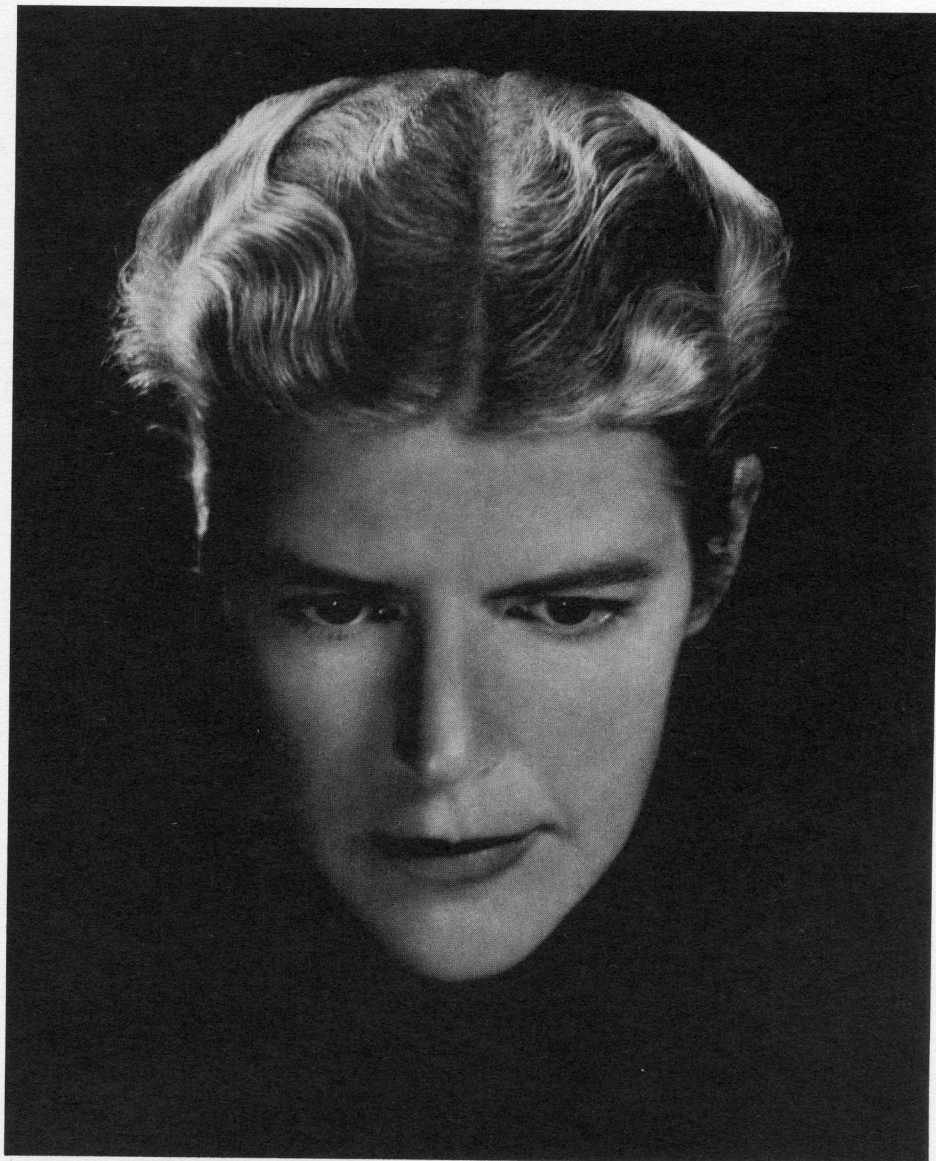
as a creative art activity

Barbara Mettler

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

METTLER STUDIOS
3131 N. CHERRY AVE.
TUCSON, ARIZ. 85719

PRICE _____



Published by Martin Studio

© 1960, 1970 Barbara Mettler Hansen

Barbara Mettler

BARBARA METTLER

MATERIALS OF DANCE

as a creative art activity

Designer

Will Carbo

Editor

June Warner

Music Consultant

Gene Forrell

Published by Mettler Studios

© 1960, 1979 Barbara Mettler Hammer

First Printing 1960

Second Printing 1967

Third Printing 1971

Fourth Printing 1974

Fifth Printing 1979

CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	The Purpose of this Book and How to Use it	11
---------------------	--	----

PART I BASIC DANCE EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER 1	FREE MOVEMENT EXPRESSION	17
CHAPTER 2	THE BODY AS INSTRUMENT	29
CHAPTER 3	EVERYDAY LANGUAGE OF MOVEMENT	51
CHAPTER 4	MOVEMENT AS MATERIAL	75
CHAPTER 5	MOVEMENT QUALITIES DERIVED FROM FAMILIAR THINGS	93

PART II RHYTHMIC ELEMENTS OF DANCE

CHAPTER 6	FORCE: Impulse, Organic Dance Form	107
CHAPTER 7	FORCE: Poles of Movement Expression	121
CHAPTER 8	FORCE: Dynamic Qualities	143
CHAPTER 9	TIME: Duration, Pulse, Pace	153
CHAPTER 10	TIME: Metric Patterns	167
CHAPTER 11	SPACE: Position, Direction, Size, Shape	213

PART III DANCE IN RELATION TO OTHER ARTS

CHAPTER 12	SOUND AND MOVEMENT: Sounds of Voice, Hands, and Feet	265
CHAPTER 13	SOUND AND MOVEMENT: Instrumental Sounds	303
CHAPTER 14	MOVEMENT AND VISUAL DESIGN	321
CHAPTER 15	DESIGN IN MOVEMENT ENVIRONMENT	353
CHAPTER 16	MOVEMENT AS DRAMATIC EXPRESSION	369

<u>SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</u>	395
----------------------------	-----

ILLUSTRATIONS

BARBARA METTLER (Gerda Peterich)	3
GROUP DANCE (Allan A. Hammer)	15
DUET (Allan A. Hammer)	105
CREATIVE DANCE AND MUSIC (Allan A. Hammer)	263
FLAME BEAT (Sound Accompaniment for Movement)	317
STUDENT-MADE INSTRUMENTS	319
MOVEMENT SCULPTURE	351
DANCE — THE CENTRAL ART (a chart)	393

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION

Since this book was first published in 1960, my work has been a continued exploration of basic elements of dance and I have grown steadily in my understanding and practice of pure dance, the art of body movement.

In this edition I have added notes to the following chapters: 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 14.

The last chapter, MOVEMENT AS DRAMATIC EXPRESSION, except for the introductory page (370), has been rewritten. Because this chapter is now shorter, there are fewer pages in the book and the page numbers jump from 376 to 393.

Anyone interested in further developments of the work presented in MATERIALS OF DANCE should refer to my book GROUP DANCE IMPROVISATIONS, published in 1975.

I would like to thank Paul H. Rubin and Denise Cavaliere for their help in preparing this edition.

Barbara Mettler

April, 1979
Tucson, Arizona

INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK AND HOW TO USE IT

This is a handbook for students and teachers of dance, and for everyone interested in body movement as art, education, recreation or therapy. Its purpose is to make creative dance activity easy and enjoyable for anyone who wants it, and to give everyone equal opportunity to develop to the fullest, through dance, his own unique powers of creative expression.

The material of this book has been developed over a period of many years of teaching all kinds of people in a wide variety of situations, in an effort to discover sure ways of liberating and developing the natural creative movement faculties which are latent in every human being.

The material is presented in the form of creative problems, in graded progressions, for solution by individual or group. The problems are basic in relation to human nature and can be adapted to persons of both sexes, all ages, and every type of body structure and temperament, including persons with severe handicaps. Building on basic dance experiences which can be enjoyed by the most inexperienced person, they proceed systematically toward the goal of mature artistic expression.

Most of the material is presented in the form of actual lessons, and the reader should imagine himself to be a member of a group listening to the voice of the teacher.

Each chapter covers a certain area of dance and contains enough material for any number of lessons, depending on the needs of the student and the scope of the teacher's imagination.

Within each chapter, or chapter section, the problems follow a graded progression, beginning with very easy ones and proceeding to those which are more difficult.

The sequence of chapters follows a different plan. Because a study of dance as a creative art activity represents total personality growth rather than an accumulation of knowledge or technique, the student's path of progress is more a spiral than a straight line. He must continually circle around the same basic elements, while deepening his feeling for them and developing his craftsmanship in making use of them. For example, a student does not complete his study of the problems presented in Chapter 1 before going on to those in Chapter 2. Rather, he should draw material from any chapter at any time according to his needs at the moment. Since needs and desire are often the same during the learning process, he may feel free to follow his inclinations. Similarly the teacher, in preparing lesson plans, may select material from any chapter in accordance with his needs and the needs of the group.

Each chapter is preceded by an outline of the material which it contains. Following this outline, creative problems are described. On the right-hand pages the reader will find practical instructions telling him exactly what to do. On the left-hand pages he will find theoretical notes and advice to the teacher.

Instruction and theoretical notes are cumulative from the beginning of the book to the end, gradually building up basic concepts and a way of work. Explanations are fuller at the beginning, and later studies can best be understood in the light of earlier ones. For this reason, although the teacher is expected to skip around freely in using the material for lesson planning, the book should be read through as a whole before being put to practical use.

To the best of our knowledge, this book offers a new approach to the study of body movement and dance. It is sincerely hoped that it may be useful as an aid in the development of a field which is beginning to be recognized as important to the physical and mental health of the individual and of the group.

Barbara Mettler

CHAPTER 1

FREE MOVEMENT EXPRESSION



PART I

BASIC DANCE EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER 1

FREE MOVEMENT EXPRESSION

PREPARATION

Arrangement of Group

Complete Relaxation

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Lying

Sitting

Standing

Off the Ground

Around the Room

GROUP STUDIES

Duet

Trio

Larger Groups

In this first problem (arrangement of group) the seed of all future creative work is sown by requiring the individual to adapt his own needs for free expression to the needs of the group as a whole.

Just as sound has meaning only in relation to silence, or light in relation to darkness, movement has meaning only in relation to no movement. The student of dance must learn to experience deeply within himself the motionlessness of complete relaxation.

Relaxation of the small muscles of the face and throat is as important as relaxation of the large muscles, and even more closely related to inner experience.

Closing the eyes can be a great help to the beginner. By eliminating visual distractions it brings the sensory experience of movement into sharper focus.

The teacher suggests specific ways of moving to stimulate movement imagination, not to dictate forms of expression.

CHAPTER 1 FREE MOVEMENT EXPRESSION

PREPARATION

arrangement of group

Your first creative problem is both an individual and a group problem: go out into the room and find a place for yourself where you can be all alone with plenty of space around you... not close to anyone else... not close to a wall or piece of furniture... with enough room to move freely in every direction... everyone should have an equal amount of space so that someone looking down from above would see the space equally divided among you in a regular pattern...

complete relaxation

Sit down on the floor... lie down on your back... we are going to begin our study of movement with the experience of no movement... relax completely... sprawl out on the floor... everything wide and free... arms wide, palms up, elbows easily bent, fingers loosely curled... legs rolled a little apart... eyes closed... breathing relaxed; let the breath come and go as it will, don't hold your breath, don't try to control it in any way... keep your eyes closed: lightly, not tightly... relax your face... keep your chin up so that the neck is long and free... let the lips be open... the tongue hanging heavily... the cheeks soft... the forehead smooth... everything relaxed... soft... heavy... quiet... still... no movement... no tension anywhere at all...

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

lying

Now, keeping your eyes closed, begin to move... any way at all... just for the sake of moving, for the sake of waking up the body, bringing it to life, activating the muscles... for the sake of creating new movement experiences for yourself... move in all sorts of ways... you need not remain on your back: you can stretch, bend, twist, turn, roll over, expand, contract, do anything you want to... use your whole body, every part of it: arms, legs, trunk, head, hands, feet, fingers, toes... try out different ways of moving: fast, slow, smooth, jerky, tight, loose, any way at all... keep on moving, don't stop... let one movement lead into another... experiment... explore... see in how many different ways you can move, ways in which you have never moved before... be bold, don't be afraid... find new ways of moving... it doesn't matter what it looks like, no-one is watching you, your eyes should be closed... this is for you alone, for you to see how much movement it is possible for you to make... at first, quantity of movement is more important than quality... let there be plenty of movement... more... much more...

Rest...

U
U
U
U
U
U
U
U
U
U
U

We are using these concepts interchangeably:

- sensing movement
- feeling movement
- being aware of movement

Our studies in dance as a creative art activity follow these progressions:

from moving — to sensing — to knowing

from freedom — to awareness — to control

The beginner finds security within the restrictions of the lying position. Gradually the restrictions are removed and he is given opportunity for an increasing range of movement.

Now try it again... this time, be aware of what you are doing, sensing in the muscles the feeling of the movement... put your whole attention on that feeling, letting it absorb you and lead you from one movement to the next... follow your feeling... do what your muscles want to do... do what feels good... no two persons will want to do exactly the same thing because no two are built in just the same way and no two have the same temperament... move in your own individual way, not like anyone else... be yourself, don't imitate something you have seen, don't try to be graceful, don't do what you think is expected of you... do what you really want to do... do what you feel like doing... and do it with your whole self... you may want to repeat one kind of movement over and over, or you may want to make contrasting movements... gradually begin to be aware of the quality of your movement... if you are stretching, sense the feeling of stretch in your muscles... if you are moving slowly, enjoy the feeling of slowness... however you are moving, be aware of it, feel it, enjoy it, develop it, let it grow...

Rest...

sitting

Now we can extend the range of our movement by moving in the sitting position as well as in the lying position... you may go freely from one position to the other in any way you wish, continuing to create for yourself all kinds of movement experiences... your eyes may be closed or open, as long as you don't watch anyone else: if they are open, keep the eyelids lowered, turn your gaze inward, put your entire attention on your own movements...

Rest...

standing

Now include the standing position as well as sitting and lying: this gives you a wider range and the possibility of much more movement...

Rest..

For the beginner, quantity of movement is more important than quality because it wakes up his muscle sense and furthers freedom of expression.

Beginning with the smallest group unit (two) we gradually increase the size of the group. The larger the group, the more difficult the problem.

off the ground

Now, in addition to lying, sitting and standing, you will sometimes leave the ground and go up in the air... up in the air, down to the ground, all sorts of movement in every possible position...

Rest...

around the room

So far, we have remained in one place in the room. Now we shall move around the room from place to place, extending the range of our movement still further. Continue to move in every way you can, going up in the air, down to the ground, around the room, running, jumping, creeping, crawling, rolling, everything you can possibly do... this is the largest quantity of movement you can make... today we are interested in quantity... don't bump into anyone else... this has become a group problem: move around the room as freely as possible without interfering with anyone else's movement...

Rest...

GROUP STUDIES

duet

Turn to the person nearest you and take a partner (if there is an uneven number of persons, one can wait until the couples are re-formed for the next duet)... stand facing your partner, quietly, without any movement... be relaxed... now, both of you begin to move, freely, in any way you wish, just as you have been doing, only now you must be aware of what your partner is doing and you must somehow adjust your movements to his... this is a duet, not two solo dances... you must move in relation to each other... there are many ways of establishing a relationship: you can both do the same thing or you can each do something different, it doesn't matter as long as you move with some feeling for each other's movements... you have two problems: one, to express yourself freely, making whatever movements you want to make; the other, to adjust your movements to the movements which your partner is making... don't hold back, don't wait for your partner to do something... give yourself freely in movement... be generous... contribute as much as you can to the movements of the duet, at the same time, be responsive, be sensitive to your partner's needs for expression... give him a chance... don't dominate him with your expression... sense what he is doing and relate your movements to his... in this way the two movements will become one... the more sensitively you are able to adjust to your partner's movements, while moving freely yourself, the better the duet will be...

Rest...

Because new situations stimulate creative growth, members of the group should be encouraged, in each partner change, to find a partner who is new to them: someone with whom they have never danced, whom they do not know, who is unlike themselves. Mixed groups including both sexes, various ages, and people of different backgrounds, occupations and races offer some of the richest experiences in creative group expression.

At the conclusion of any group improvisation, a period of discussion among those who have participated in the movement furthers creative growth.

The opportunity for every member of the group to create a duet with every other member provides a solid creative foundation for all future activity within the group.

Change partners... do it again... now you have a new partner, see how this new partner makes you want to move... we shall do this again and again, changing partners each time... with each new partner, make an entirely different duet... don't take your same movement patterns on from one partner to the next... start fresh each time... let your new partner stimulate you to do something new, something you have never done before... you two have never danced together before... let your duet be something new...

Rest...

Change partners again... don't stop to talk about it... just start moving... this is not verbal expression, this is movement expression... don't talk... say it in movement... let each duet be better than the preceding one...

Rest...

Now you can talk about it... talk it over... tell each other what you think was good and what was not so good about your dance... tell your partner frankly if he was dominating you with his movement... or if he was too passive and didn't contribute enough to the dance...

[Continue to repeat the exercise until everyone has had a chance to move with many different partners and there is a marked increase of freedom and security in dancing together. Unless the group is too large, every member should have an opportunity to make a duet with every other member.]

trio

Now get together in groups of three... we are going to do the same thing except that it will be a trio instead of a duet... it will be harder, and you will have to be still more sensitive to one another's movements... in finding a relationship you may all do the same thing, you may all do different things, or two may do one thing while the third does something else, but remember that all movements must be related in some way... you don't have to remain in one place, you may move around the room... start facing each other, but you need not remain in this position, you may vary it in any way you wish, going anywhere and doing anything...

Rest... talk it over...

The studies in Free Movement Expression presented in this chapter are both the starting point and the final goal of our practice of dance as a creative art activity. The beginner experiences them as introductory, and the mature dancer as a fulfillment. There is nothing more basic for the beginner and nothing more challenging for the experienced dancer than the opportunity to express himself freely in movement without any limitation of theme.

Form another trio with different people... try it again...

Rest...

Continue to re-form and improvise in groups of three until everyone has had a chance to work in many different trios.

larger groups

The same problem can be solved by groups of four, five, or more. It is hard for beginners to work on it in groups larger than three, but experienced dancers can do so in groups of any size.

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 1

Starting Point

I now rarely use these studies in free movement expression as a starting point in teaching beginners.

Experience has taught me that the best first step for students on almost any age level is free exploration of basic body movements (see Chapter 3), beginning with these:

stretching

flopping

twisting

shaking

bouncing

swinging

walking or skipping

For young children, very inhibited adults, or handicapped persons, another good start is movement of separate body parts (see Chapter 2) beginning with an extremity such as head, fingers, or toes.

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 1 (continued)

Sensing - Feeling - Being Aware of

Regarding the concepts of sensing, feeling and being aware of movement (see page 20), it was a mistake to consider them interchangeable, although the beginning student need not be expected to understand the difference.

As I use the words now, sensing is a sensation in the muscles, feeling is the emotional tone inherent in the movement, and being aware of is involvement of the whole person including not only the body and the emotions but also the mind.

Knowing, inaccurately included in our progression, suggests an independent function of the mind, in contrast to being aware of, as we now use the term.

Our creative progression in learning, which can result in a totally integrated movement experience and expression, is:

from moving

to sensing

to feeling

to being aware of

Terminology

In my efforts to use a movement terminology drawn from familiar everyday speech and totally free from conventional dance associations, I no longer use the words duet, trio, etc. Rather, I prefer dance for two (or couple dance), dance for three, etc.

CHAPTER 2

THE BODY AS INSTRUMENT

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Separate Body Parts

head
shoulders
elbows
wrists
fingers

hips
knees
ankles
toes
trunk

Combination of Parts

Whole Body

Face

Free Choice of Part

Performance

GROUP STUDIES

Head Duet

Arm Trio

Leg Quartette

BODILY CONTACT THEMES FOR GROUP

Holding Hands

Heads Touching

Feet Touching

Any Contact

By exploring the expressive movement possibilities of first one part of the body and then another, we become acquainted with our body as an instrument of expression. Emphasis should be on individuality of expression. No two people are exactly alike and no two have the same needs for expression. These studies give each person an opportunity to discover his own unique forms of expression according to his age, sex, body structure, temperament and level of experience.

These studies in the expressive use of separate body parts further objectivity toward the material (movement) and toward the instrument (the body) of dance. Self-consciousness tends to fade in the light of the objective problem of seeing what kind of movement a head or an arm or some other isolated part can make.

Creative problems in the use of the body as instrument break down the distinction between technique and expression.

CHAPTER 2 THE BODY AS INSTRUMENT

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Separate Body Parts

- head** Sit down on the floor in any comfortable position... close your eyes... begin to move your head... any way at all... just your head... experiment to see in how many ways you can move it... turn it, drop it, shake it, move it backward, forward, every way... the head has its own particular ways of moving... see if you can discover them... find those which you like best... when you discover an interesting movement, develop it, repeating it or varying it, or finding some other movement to contrast with it... now let the upper spine be drawn into the movement and, gradually, the whole body... this is still a head dance although the rest of the body is participating... be sure that you don't let any other part of the body become dominant...
- Rest...
- shoulders** We speak of the body as an instrument of expression, but it is more like a whole orchestra. Each separate part has its own quality of movement unlike any other part. Let's try moving our shoulders... keep your eyes closed and see in how many ways you can make your shoulders move... just the shoulders... move them separately or together, up, down, around... when you feel that you are really moving your shoulders, then you may let the rest of the body follow...
- Rest...
- elbows** Now try moving the elbows... elbows are interesting because they are so angular... don't try to conceal their angularity... emphasize it... this is an elbow dance... make your movement elbow-y...
- wrists** Now wrists... wrists can do things which no other part of the body can do... interesting things... move them together and apart, around each other, in parallel motion...
- fingers** Fingers... all ten fingers moving in every possible way...

Here are some other positions which offer opportunity for interesting movement of separate body parts :

Front Lying

head
arms and hands
legs and feet

Hands and Knees

spine
legs and feet

Back Lying

arms and hands

Standing

toes
ankles
knees
hips
legs and feet
spine

Side Lying

legs and feet

Fingers and wrists: the whole hand... a hand dance...

Add the elbows, using the whole lower arm...

Add the shoulders, using the whole arm...

Add the head...

Add the trunk... now you are moving the whole upper body:
trunk, head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers: everything...

Rest...

hips Lie down on your back... try to move your hips in different ways...
this is hard... try it anyway... see what you can do... you don't
have to remain on your back... you may twist or roll over or sit up...

knees Now, lying on your back, lift your legs in the air... see how
you can move your knees...

ankles Now the ankles...

toes The toes...

feet Toes and ankles: the whole foot...

Add the knees: the whole lower leg...

Add the hips: the whole leg, the whole lower body from the
waist down...

Rest...

Restrictions give security to the beginner and liberate his creative imagination, forcing him to discover new movement experiences. For this reason, we began this lesson with head movement (very restricted) and have proceeded gradually to movement of the whole body (unrestricted).

trunk

Now, still lying, experiment freely with movements of the trunk... continue, without limiting yourself to the lying position...

Rest...

Combination of Parts

Stand up... let's try some combinations. Move your hands and feet in relation to each other... a dance for hands and feet...

Elbows and knees...

Shoulders and hips...

Arms and legs...

Trunk and head...

Whole Body

Now move everything all at once... the whole body... every part of it... don't forget anything... trunk, head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, toes, ankles, knees, hips, everything... let the whole body be alive... move as you have never moved before... lots of movement... moving all around the room...

Face

There's one part we've forgotten... the face! Lie down on your back in a relaxed position (or sit on the floor) with closed eyes... experiment with face movement... make faces... all kinds of faces... stretch your face, twist it, pull it into many different

These studies in face movement are a basis for the creative problems of painting the face, page 357, and mask-making, page 365, in Chapter 15 (Design in Movement Environment).

There are two kinds of security for the beginner: the security of being given a specific theme to work on, and the security of choosing for himself a theme which is compatible with his nature. In this lesson we offer both kinds of security.

We are approaching performance as the sharing of a movement experience which has been created to fulfill a need within ourselves. Just as any experience is richer when shared, so is the dance experience. Performance experience is provided in class: as often as possible students should have a chance to observe one another's work. Spectators should be trained to observe creatively: to put themselves wholly into the dance and to try to receive the experience which is being offered them. (See Supplementary Notes on Performance, pages 409-412)

We do not feel it necessary to compose dances for performance. We believe that improvisation is the most creative form of dance so, instead of practicing composed dance sequences, we practice improvisation. Repeated improvisations on a given theme tend to become fixed and may turn into a composition. For anyone who knows how to improvise, it is easy to compose. Any of the themes for improvisation given in this book may be used for composition by those who wish to do so. (See Supplementary Notes on Improvisation, pages 401-402)

shapes... make it wide, narrow, long, short, round, flat, crooked... make tense movements, relaxed ones, movements which are slow, fast, jerky, smooth, large, small... try moving just a part of the face: the forehead... the nose... cheeks... mouth... chin... one half of the face... the whole face again... now relax the face, let all the muscles be completely relaxed...

Rest...

Free Choice of Part

Until now you have been told exactly which part of the body to move. Now you are going to choose freely, any part you wish. Probably you found that you enjoyed dancing with one part more than another. Concentrate on that part now, developing its movement qualities as fully as possible. First, choose a satisfying position in which to move, one which gives you interesting opportunities for moving the part you have chosen... then begin...

Rest...

Performance

Let us show each other what we are doing. One at a time, go into the center of the room, tell us which part of the body you will move, then improvise with it for a little while. Before you begin your improvisation, find a starting position, then pause for a moment in this position to give yourself and the spectators a chance to make a transition from the movements of daily life into the movements of your dance. Then begin to move and continue as long as you wish. When you have finished, pause in your final position for a moment to make the transition back to daily life. Let your dance be preceded and followed by a short period of no movement. This sets it in a frame which separates it from all the movements which you make before and after it, giving it a clear shape with a beginning and an end.

Those who are watching must be very attentive. Try to sense in your own muscles the movements which are being made. Don't sit back inertly and criticize. Be a part of the dance. Move along with it and receive the movement experience which is being shared.

Our progressions in this lesson are :

from parts of the body to the whole body

from individual dance to group dance

from small group to large group

GROUP STUDIES

Head Duet

Find a partner... choose the person nearest you... don't look around for your best friend... choose someone whom you don't know very well... the best duets are sometimes made by two people who have never seen each other before...

We are going back to the problem of head movement. You will each move only your head, as you did a little while ago, but now you will move the two heads in relation to each other. It will be a head duet.

Choose a position which you consider interesting for a head duet... you may want to stand or sit or lie down on your back or front or in some other way... you may be face to face, back to back, side to side, far apart, close together... perhaps you will want to have one standing and the other sitting or lying... use your imagination... find a position which you both like... now assume this position and be quiet for a moment... every movement study should begin and end with a moment of repose...

When you both feel quiet and concentrated, begin to move your heads at the same time and in any way you wish... move them in relation to each other... you may do the same thing or you may do different things, but you must feel the movement together... neither one should lead and neither one should follow... don't wait for your partner to show you what to do, and don't plunge ahead into your own movement without giving your partner a chance... work cooperatively... create the movement together... not by talking about it... don't talk... communicate through movement... keep on improvising until you both feel that the dance has reached its natural conclusion... you will both know when the last movement has come... let this last movement end, then pause for a moment in your final position before breaking your concentration and coming out of your dance...

If you finish your duet before the other couples have finished, just wait quietly until everyone is through...

Group movement improvisations offer opportunity for truly cooperative group activity. The movements are created by all members of the group together, according to the needs of the group as a whole. Each member must give freely of himself while adjusting his needs to the needs of the others. All participate in a movement experience which is richer than any one person could create alone. (See Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403-406)

When everyone has finished, you may talk it over among yourselves. Discuss it with your partner. Tell each other what seemed good or bad about your duet. If you don't think your partner approached the problem in just the right way, tell him so. It will help him. Don't be afraid to criticize each other in a spirit of helpfulness...

Let's see some of these duets...

[One after another should improvise while the others watch. If there is not time for all to show, a selection should be made which includes a variety of positions and movement qualities.]

Arm Trio

Form groups of three... this will be an arm trio... find a position in which you can move your arms together in interesting ways... begin and end your dance with a moment of quiet, just as you did the preceding one, framing your movement in stillness...

Leg Quartette

Get together in groups of four... this will be a leg dance... find an interesting starting position... achieve a moment of repose... then begin...

[Additional studies may be improvised by groups of various sizes using other parts of the body and, finally, the whole body.]

Bodily contact themes can exert an extraordinary power in liberating the individual from the confines of his separate personality and in strengthening the creative forces of group expression. By means of bodily contact, several bodies are made one, resulting inevitably in a shift of attention from individual to group movement. Also, the addition of tactile to kinesthetic awareness greatly strengthens the total awareness of the movement experience. (See Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403 - 406)

Holding hands is a natural and universal means of establishing contact and expressing feelings of unity with our fellow human beings. For this reason Holding Hands themes are highly recommended for all kinds of groups. They can break down the beginner's feelings of isolation while offering advanced students opportunity for mature group expression. (We have used these themes on occasion to integrate blind persons in a sighted group.)

BODILY CONTACT THEMES FOR GROUP

Holding Hands

One Hand

DUET

Problem 1 Same Hand

Hold right (or left) hands... continuing to hold hands like this, see what movements you can make together...

Problem 2 Different Hand

A's right hand holds B's left (or the reverse)... continuing to hold hands like this, see what movements you can make together...

Problem 3 Changing Hands

Holding one hand (either hand) and freely changing from one to the other, improvise together in movement...

TRIO

Hold hands, each using one hand only (either hand)... continuing to hold hands like this, see what movements you can make together...

As a tactile experiment, Bodily Contact studies may be improvised with closed eyes.

Both Hands

DUET

Problem 1 Arms Uncrossed

Starting in a face-to-face or back-to-back position, and holding both hands with uncrossed arms, improvise freely together in movement...

Problem 2 Arms Crossed

Same as above problem, starting with arms crossed...

Problem 3 Free Use of Hands

Holding one or both hands, and freely changing hands, improvise together in movement...

TRIO

Problem 1 Face to Face

Starting in face-to-face position and holding both hands, improvise freely together in movement...

Problem 2 Back to Back

Same as above problem, starting in back-to-back position...

Problem 3 Free Use of Hands

Holding one or both hands, and freely changing hands, improvise together in movement...

The Circle and the Line are studied more thoroughly as basic group positions in Chapter 11 (Space), pages 221 - 223.

Steps 1 and 2 (Problem 1) are based on progressions which are described more fully in Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403 - 406.

We must not be prudish about coming into bodily contact with one another in dance. As long as our attention is focused on the body as instrument, bodily contact can further a healthy mental attitude not only towards our own body but also toward that of our neighbor, whether of the same or opposite sex. It is the teacher's responsibility to see that this focus of attention is developed.

LARGER GROUPS

Problem 1 Circle

Holding hands in a circle (facing center) and moving in unison, see what movements can be made in this position...

step 1 one member leading

step 2 without a leader

Problem 2 Line

Hold hands in a line... the end member, or the one in the center, leads the group in unison movement...

Heads Touching

DUET or TRIO

With heads continuously touching, see what movements you can make together...

Feet Touching

DUET or TRIO

Improvise freely together in movement, maintaining continuous bodily contact by means of the feet...

Other forms of bodily contact suggested as themes for group improvisation are :

Duet one hand on partner's shoulder

both hands on partner's shoulders

Trio or Larger Group hands on shoulders

arms around waists

Individual Themes

The following individual body positions, which are based on some form of bodily contact, are appropriate themes for individual improvisation in a lesson featuring bodily contact themes for the group :

hands clasped

hands on knees

palms together

hands on ankles

finger-tips touching

elbows touching

wrists touching

knees touching

arms folded (front or back)

feet touching

hands on head

one hand on head

hands on shoulders

one arm behind back holding other arm

hands on hips

LARGER GROUPS

In an astride position with feet touching your neighbor's, stand side by side in a circle or line... moving in unison, experiment to see what movements can be made with feet in this position...

step 1 one member leading

step 2 without a leader

[If, in addition to the foot contact, members of the group put their arms around each others' shoulders or waists, the theme of bodily contact is greatly intensified.]

Any Contact

DUET, TRIO or LARGER GROUP

Improvise together in movement, maintaining some form of bodily contact with each other throughout the dance, changing freely from one kind to another and exploring various kinds of contact...

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 2

Instrument and Material

It has seemed more and more important to me to make a distinction between the instrument of dance which is the human body, and the material of dance which is movement.

The studies in this chapter are instrumental studies, because our attention is more on the function of the body than on the form of the movement. Other instrumental studies, exploring basic body movements, are found in Chapter 3.

Throughout the rest of the book we are more concerned with the form of the movement than with the function of the body although, in dance as in no other art, instrument and material are one.

Individual and Group Body

Since this book was written I have learned to put an increasing emphasis on the difference between individual and group body.

Group body movement differs from individual body movement in that members of the group body are people, whereas members of the individual body are head, hands, feet, etc. Both individual and group body movements are dependent on the interaction of separate members unified by feeling for the movement form.

In this chapter the studies on pages 43 - 49 require the student to shift emphasis from individual to group body movement.

CHAPTER 3

EVERYDAY LANGUAGE OF MOVEMENT

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Movements of the Human Body

in place
place to place

Other Living Movements

Non-living Movements

Movements Characteristic of Body Parts

face
hands
arms and hands
legs and feet

Movements with Specific Emotional Content

Words which Imply Movement

Free Choice of Movement Word

GROUP STUDY

LISTS OF MOVEMENT WORDS

A free approach to dance needs a natural terminology of movement drawn from everyday speech rather than from scientific text-books. The development of such a terminology can strengthen dance as an independent art.

The first word, wiggle, is chosen to stimulate lively movement of the whole body in the lying position. The lying position is favorable for beginners because:

- ... it is very restricted (restrictions can provide security by supplying a framework within which to experiment).
- ... it furthers relaxation.
- ... it eliminates all balance problems.
- ... it prevents observation of others.

Writhe provides a stronger movement experience than wiggle.

Roll, not strictly a movement in place, is included here to provide an additional lying movement.

CHAPTER 3 EVERYDAY LANGUAGE OF MOVEMENT

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Movements of the Human Body

in place

Lie down on the floor... relax... close your eyes... listen...

I am going to give you some words which represent certain kinds of movement. When I say a word, show me in movement exactly what this word means.

Here is the first word: wiggle... do it... show me in movement what wiggle means... that's it... keep on wiggling... don't stop... try to express the particular quality of wiggling which is not like any other movement...

Rest...

Here is another word: writhe... what does it mean, to writhe? ... don't think about it, just do it... it's a feeling in the muscles... let your muscle-sense guide you... writhe... and writhe some more...

Rest...

Roll... roll in various ways... make all kinds of rolling movements... you don't have to remain on the floor all the time... you can roll sitting up... even standing up... see in how many different ways you can roll...

Rest...

The purpose of standing up at this point is merely to widen the range of movement possibilities. Any of these movements may be done standing, sitting, lying, or in any position.

Stretching, bending and twisting are more useful terms for dance than their anatomical counterparts (extension, flexion and rotation) because, being broader, they give more room to the movement imagination.

Flopping, dropping and shaking loosen up the body and further relaxation, an essential ingredient in all creative work.

Springing develops elasticity.

Swinging movement, if sufficiently relaxed, can achieve a perfect balance between muscular force and the force of gravity, providing a deep experience of harmony between the laws of nature and the will of man.

Rock... rocking movements... back and forth... in any position at all...

Rest...

Let's stand up... here are some more movements:

Stretch... movements which feel stretchy... stretch the whole body, your arms, your legs, your back, your neck... stretch everything...

Bend... bending movements... anything which feels like a bend... bend at the waist, bend your knees, your elbows, your wrists and ankles, all your joints... bend forward, backward, sideward, in every direction...

Twist... twisting movements... twist every part of the body... twist this way and that way... twist yourself all around...

Flop and drop... flopping and dropping movements... head, arms, legs, everything... keep on flopping and dropping... loosening up... letting go...

Shake... let's see some shaking movements... vigorous shaking... shake your hands, your feet, your head, your shoulders... shake all over...

Spring... let's see how springy you can be... spring on both feet or on one foot... standing up or sitting down... keep on springing and bouncing all around the room...

Swing... make swinging movements... you know what it feels like to swing... swinging movements are pendular: back and forth... swing your arms, your legs, your head, your whole body... keep on swinging... let your swings carry you around the room and up into the air...

When does body movement become dance ?

Any body movement becomes dance for us when our experience of it is aesthetic rather than utilitarian. Aesthetic movement experience is enjoyment of the form of the movement for its expressive value. The form of a movement is determined by the interaction of its force, time and space elements. (See Part II, Rhythmic Elements of Dance). A movement's form is expressive when it expresses some feeling within us. (See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397 - 400)

Undulate... undulating means wave-like... see if you can move with a wave-like quality... the spine can undulate... so can the arms... try to make undulating movements with the whole body...

Here are two movements which are in contrast to one another: expanding and contracting... improvise freely, showing the contrast between them...

Another contrast: rising and sinking... the theme of your dance is: rising and sinking...

place to place

These movements will take you from place to place:

Crawl... get down on the floor and make crawling movements... crawl in your own way... your own individual style of crawling...

Walk... let's see some walking movements... any kind... forward, backward, sideward... new ways of walking... unusual ways... strange ways that have never been seen before... this is a walking dance...

Turn... turn around and around... back and forth... all around the room... this is a turning dance... the name of your dance is "Turning"...

Skip... a skipping dance... skip in all sorts of ways... skip high or low, slow or fast... find your own personal style...

Rest...

Each of the words given in this chapter is a movement theme. In pure dance we do not have to look for themes outside the field of movement. Every movement experience is a potential theme for dance. (See paragraph on pure and applied dance, page 399)

Other Living Movements

Now I am going to give you some movements which will stretch your movement imagination a little. Although you can't actually make these movements, you can imagine what they would feel like if you could. Express the feeling of these movements in any way you can:

Float...

Fly...

Swoop...

Slither...

Non-living Movements

Explode...

Melt...

Bubble...

Swirl...

Crumble...

The teacher is reminded at this point that the material of each chapter is presented in a condensed form and can provide activity for many classes.

Remember that we are dancing, not acting. This means that we are discovering movement qualities - not telling stories through movement. Before presenting the studies in this section (Movements Characteristic of Body Parts) the teacher should make sure that he understands thoroughly the difference between dance and drama, and the meaning of rhythm and abstract form. (See Part II, Rhythmic Elements of Dance; also Chapter 16, Movement as Dramatic Expression; and Supplementary Notes on Rhythm)

Movements Characteristic of Body Parts

Although some movements are characteristic of certain parts of the body, you can feel and express their quality throughout the body as a whole. For example, a smile is a movement of the face, but when a baby smiles, he smiles all over, moving his arms, legs and whole body in a smiling way.

Each of the following movements is characteristic of a particular body part. Try to express its unique quality in free movement of the whole body:

face

Smile...

Frown...

Sneer...

Pout...

Blink...

hands

Grab...

Stroke...

Scratch...

Squeeze...

Body movements which express a specific mood or emotion, or tell a story, have dramatic value. (See Chapter 16, Movement as Dramatic Expression)

arms and hands

Punch...

Grind...

Slice...

Sweep...

legs and feet

Kick...

Shuffle...

Stamp...

Movements with Specific Emotional Content

Some body movements express a specific emotion or suggest a story.
Show in movement the meaning of these words:

Cringe...

Threaten...

Struggle...

Hug...

Ideas which Imply Movement

Some words, although they do not describe actual movements, imply them. Express in movement these words:

Escape...

Search...

Welcome...

Wither...

Bloom...

Free Choice of Movement Word

Choose a word to be used as the theme of a movement improvisation. It may be a word we have already used, or it may be a new one. Express it freely in movement...

GROUP STUDY

Get together in a group (two, three or more persons). Choose a word to be used as the theme of a group movement improvisation. Express it in any way you wish. You may all make the same movement, or you may make different ones. You may repeat a single movement over and over, or you may vary the movement freely. Whatever you do, the quality of the movement must express the meaning of the word.

These lists of movement words have been growing ever since they were begun several years ago by one of our teacher-training groups. Every one who uses this book should add words which he or she finds creatively useful. There is plenty of space on the following pages for such additions.

LISTS OF MOVEMENT WORDS

Movements of the Human Body

in place

wiggle
wriggle
writhe
squirm
stretch
bend
twist
turn
flop
drop
collapse
fall
shake
swing
sway
rock
spring
bounce
bob
jump
undulate
whirl
spin
revolve
rotate
contract
expand
curl
uncurl
rise
sink
lunge
tumble
totter
lurch
lean
sag
hang
slouch
slump
droop
pounce
jostle

place to place

creep
crawl
roll
walk
skip
run
gallop
leap
hop
stride
prance
strut
stroll
saunter
meander
limp
hobble
stagger
march
scurry
trudge
stalk
race
plod
amble
sprint
slink
tramp
scramble
dodge
hustle

The purpose of our classifications is to help the teacher plan lively lessons by drawing on as wide a variety of movement material as possible.

Other Living Movements

glide
fly
float
soar
sail
swoop
slide
slither
plunge
dive
drift
climb
swim
lope
jog
trot
burrow
wallow
buck
butt
rear

Non-living Movements

explode
burst
melt
freeze
congeal
ooze
bubble
boil
seethe
simmer
swirl
crumble
crumple
crash
shatter
evaporate
effervesce
shrink
shrivel
disintegrate
infiltrate

Movements Characteristic of Body Parts

Face

smile
frown
sneer
pout
scowl
grin
yawn
chew
wince
grimace
squint
blink
wink
gape
stare
glare
leer

Arms and Hands

pound
strike
grind
sweep
cut
slice
chop
push
pull
thrust
clutch
dig
throw
fling
catch
beat
whip
stir
wave
punch
lift
reach
grope
weave

Hands

open
close
clench
grab
stroke
scratch
squeeze
wring
knead
snatch
slap
pat
pinch
point
poke
pluck
tap
grasp
beckon
clasp
pick
rub

Legs and Feet

kick
shuffle
stamp
trample
tip-toe
scuff
slip
mince
stumble
tap
drag

Additional words which suggest movement will be found in Chapter 5 (Movement Qualities Derived from Everyday Things) and in Chapter 16 (Movement as Dramatic Expression).

Movements with Specific Emotional Content

shudder
cringe
tremble
shiver
crouch
cower
fawn
grovel
sneak
flinch
lurk
advance
retreat
attack
defend
struggle
fight
chase
flee
caress
hug
fondle
embrace

Words which Imply Movement

search
hide
discover
escape
hurry
rush
hesitate
delay
linger
meeting
greeting
parting
welcome
threaten
pursue
attract
repulse
growth
decay
bloom
wither
wilt
appear
disappear

CHAPTER 4

MOVEMENT AS MATERIAL

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

FORCE Qualities

strong, weak
gradual, sudden

TIME Qualities

slow, fast
regular, irregular

SPACE Qualities

large, small
curved, straight

Free Choice of Quality

Performance and Criticism

Combined Qualities

GROUP STUDIES

The instrument of dance is the human body, the material of dance is movement. In Chapter 2 we explored the possibilities of the body as an expressive instrument, in this chapter we explore the possibilities of movement as an expressive material.

Movement has physical properties which may be described in terms of force, time and space, and which define the abstract form of the movement. They may be used by the dancer as objectively as the painter uses color or as the musician uses tone.

CHAPTER 4 MOVEMENT AS MATERIAL

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

In this lesson you will be given certain qualities of movement to explore. As each quality is given, try to experience and express it with your whole body. Do it in any way you wish. Try different ways of expressing it. Explore all the movement possibilities that this particular quality suggests. Use various positions: standing, sitting, lying. Move freely about the room.

Force Qualities

strong, weak

The first quality is: strong... make strong movements... very strong... all kinds of strong movement... feel the quality of strength in all your muscles, in every part of your body: your arms, your legs, your back, your hands and feet, right out to your fingers and toes...

Now, just the opposite: weak... make weak movements... very weak... so weak that you can hardly move at all... all the muscles of the body weak... weak arms, weak legs, weak trunk... weak all over...

Now, strong again... just the opposite of weak... every muscle vibrating with strength...

Weak... feel the difference...

Experiment with these two qualities in alternation, contrasting them freely in any way you wish, sometimes strong and sometimes weak...

Because less emphasis is usually put on the force qualities of movement than on the time and space qualities, our terminology in this area is less well developed. For beginners and children the terms "smooth" and "jerky" may be more understandable (though less precise) than "gradual" and "sudden".

Everyone has individual preferences for movement. Some people like to move slowly, others fast; some like to make small movements, others large; etc. In our study of dance, the discipline of being required to move in ways which are contrary to our natural preferences can extend the range of our expression.

gradual, sudden

Here is another contrast: gradual and sudden... make gradual movements... a gradual movement is one in which the flow of energy is gradually, not suddenly, released... a gradual movement is smooth, not jerky... it has an uninterrupted, continuous, sustained quality...

Now, the opposite... make sudden movements... a sudden movement is stopped, interrupted, jerky... move with a feeling of suddenness...

Now, gradual again...

Sudden...

Use these contrasting qualities, gradual and sudden, as the theme of a movement improvisation...

Time Qualities

The four qualities you have just experienced all have to do with force, rather than with time or space. They are determined by the amount of energy (force) and the way in which it is released. Now we are going to experiment with some time qualities.

slow, fast

The first one will be: slow... make slow movements... move very slowly... just as slowly as you can... exaggerate the quality you are trying to express... slow... don't let it become hurried... don't wish you could move faster... enjoy the quality of slowness... a philosopher has said "slowness is beauty"... this is a slow dance... it's theme is: slowness...

Now, fast... move as fast as you possibly can... faster... much faster... hurry, hurry...

Now, slow again... very, very slow...

Regularity and irregularity are two equally basic and natural kinds of time pattern. Let us not make the mistake of approaching irregularity as a deviation from the normal.

Now, let's contrast slow and fast movement. Improvise freely, showing clearly the difference between these two qualities...

regular, irregular Here are two more time qualities: regular and irregular. Regular means that every movement lasts exactly as long as every other movement. Irregular means that various movements are of unequal duration.

Express a feeling of regularity in movement: slow or fast, the pace doesn't matter... let your movement mark off regular intervals of time... let it have a regular time-beat...

Now, irregular... highly irregular... no two movements lasting the same length of time... make your movement as irregular as possible...

Regular again...

Contrast these two qualities, regular and irregular, showing how different they are in feeling...

Space Qualities

We have been working with force qualities and time qualities. Now we are going to experience some space qualities.

large, small

The first one is: large... make large movements, movements which occupy a large amount of space... use up the space in every direction: around, above, below... move all around the room with huge, space-consuming movements...

Now, make small movements, movements which occupy as little space as possible... tiny movements, so small you can hardly see them...

Large movements again...

Large and small movements, freely contrasted...

curved, straight

Our last contrast will be two more spatial qualities: curved and straight. Make curved movements, movements which are curved and rounded, without any straight lines anywhere...

Now, straight movement, all straight lines and angles...

Curved movement again...

Curved and straight movement contrasted...

When given free choice, students often ask if they may combine several qualities. It is always better for a beginner to limit himself to a single quality (or to one quality and its opposite).

See Supplementary Notes on Performance, pages 409-412

In this approach to dance, the function of criticism is to further creative growth by encouragement. Except for advanced students, criticism from within the group is preferable to criticism from the outside. If there has been an honest attempt to solve the given problem, there is little for the teacher to say except "Good!" Each improvisation represents the outer aspect of an inner experience which cannot be reshaped except through inner growth. Where the student shows lack of craftsmanship in handling the material, growth can be furthered by repetition of the same problem or by presentation of a new problem designed to correct the particular weakness.

Free Choice of Quality

Of all the qualities which we have studied in this lesson, perhaps you have enjoyed one more than any other. Take this quality by itself, or in contrast with its opposite, and improvise freely in movement, developing it in any way you wish...

Performance and Criticism

Let us show each other what we are doing. Sit down right where you are... now, one after another, tell us which quality you have chosen, then give us an improvisation on that theme...

Have you succeeded in solving the problem? Ask the other group members what they think. Let us criticize each other in a spirit of frank helpfulness, stating simply whether or not the problem has been solved satisfactorily. For example, if the theme of the dance was slowness, was the movement actually slow, and did it communicate satisfactorily a feeling of slowness?

These problems in Combined Qualities require a high level of craftsmanship and should not be attempted until the material of Part II (Rhythmic Elements of Dance) has been thoroughly studied.

Combined Qualities

The same movement may combine any number of qualities. On an advanced level of study, any of the following combinations may be used as themes for improvisation.

Force

strong (or weak) and gradual (or sudden)

Time

slow (or fast) and regular (or irregular)

Space

large (or small) and curved (or straight)

Force and Time

strong (or weak) and slow (or fast)
gradual (or sudden) and slow (or fast)
strong (or weak) and regular (or irregular)
gradual (or sudden) and regular (or irregular)
strong (or weak) and gradual (or sudden) and
slow (or fast) and regular (or irregular)

Time and Space

slow (or fast) and large (or small)
regular (or irregular) and large (or small)
slow (or fast) and curved (or straight)
regular (or irregular) and curved (or straight)
slow (or fast) and regular (or irregular) and
large (or small) and curved (or straight)

These group studies are difficult and should not be attempted until the group has had considerable experience in free group improvisation.

Force and Space

strong (or weak) and large (or small)
gradual (or sudden) and large (or small)
strong (or weak) and curved (or straight)
gradual (or sudden) and curved (or straight)
strong (or weak) and gradual (or sudden) and
large (or small) and curved (or straight)

Force, Time, and Space

strong (or weak) and gradual (or sudden) and
slow (or fast) and regular (or irregular) and
large (or small) and curved (or straight)

GROUP STUDIES

Duets, trios and larger groups may improvise freely on any one quality or on any combination of qualities. All may use the same quality (or qualities) or different qualities may be assigned to different members of the group.

Examples

DUET

Problem 1

Both partners use same quality

Problem 2

Both partners use freely two contrasting qualities

Problem 3

One partner uses one quality, while the other partner uses contrasting quality

Force, Time and Space qualities of movement are further developed in Part II (Rhythmic Elements of Dance).

TRIO

Problem 1

All three use same quality

Problem 2

All three use freely two contrasting qualities

Problem 3

Two members of trio use one quality, while third member uses contrasting quality

LARGER GROUPS

Problem 1

All use same quality

Problem 2

All use freely two contrasting qualities

Problem 3

One member improvises freely in one quality against background of unison group movement in contrasting quality

Problem 4

Different qualities are assigned to different members, or to different sections of the group

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 4

Terminology

Finding a completely satisfactory terminology for creative dance experiences has not been easy. To define dynamic polarities I now prefer to use:

forceful and forceless - instead of strong and weak
(because weak may have a negative connotation)

stopped and sustained - instead of sudden and gradual
(because sudden may imply unexpectedness)

Abstract Form

We consistently use the word abstract to characterize the formal qualities of movement studied in this chapter, in contrast to the derived qualities studied in Chapter 5.

Abstract qualities, as well as derived qualities, must express feeling and involve the whole person, emotionally as well as physically and mentally.

(See addition to chapter 1 following page 27.)

CHAPTER 5

MOVEMENT QUALITIES DERIVED FROM FAMILIAR THINGS

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

GROUP STUDY

LISTS OF FAMILIAR THINGS

Elements

Weather

Sky

Earth

Plants

Animals

Machines

Throughout this lesson we are concerned with movement qualities (dance) rather than with story-telling through movement (drama). We are not pretending to be fire. We are not pretending anything. We are trying to sense in our muscles the particular quality of fire movement and to move as fire moves. (For a thorough understanding of dance in relation to drama, see Part II, Rhythmic Elements of Dance; also Chapter 16, Movement as Dramatic Expression; and Supplementary Notes on Rhythm)

It is completely natural to use voice sounds in expressing movement qualities. When this occurs spontaneously, it should be encouraged. (For studies in the use of voice as movement accompaniment, see Chapter 12).

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Find a place for yourself where you have plenty of room in which to move... assume a relaxed body position... close your eyes... get ready to move...

I am going to name some familiar thing. I want you to think about it: think how it moves.

Fire... think about fire... think about the quality of its movement... feel this quality in your own muscles, then express it in movement... move as fire moves... move as you would move if you were fire... it moves in many different ways... discover them for yourself... keep your eyes closed... fire-y movement...

Rest...

I am going to name many things, one after another. As I name each one, think about it. Think about its movement. Try to sense the quality of its movement in your own body, then express this quality as vividly as you can. Get ready...

Water... how does water move? ... try it out... move as water moves... let your movement be watery...

Air... what is the quality of air? ... is it heavy? ... is it thick? ... let's see some airy movement...

Wind... move like the wind... yes, if it helps you to move, you can make sounds with your voice...

There is, of course, a difference between moving like snow and moving as if you were in snow, but for the beginner it is not necessary to make a sharp distinction. As long as an authentic movement experience is evoked by the idea of snow and the attention is on movement qualities rather than on story-telling, the problem will be satisfactorily solved. Advanced students will naturally choose one approach or another.

Anything can be expressed in body movement. The shape, weight, texture, etc. of even stationary things can suggest movement qualities. By identifying ourselves through movement with things around us we establish a creative relationship between ourselves and our environment.

Lightning...

Thunder... you can't see thunder, but you can hear it move...

Rain...

Snow... snow in the air... snow on the ground... how does snow make you want to move? ... you can move as snow moves... or you can move as you would if you were in snow... this is a snow dance... a dance called "Snow"... dance it any way you want to...

Sunshine... when we think of sunshine, we feel like moving in certain ways... how? ...

Grass... does grass move? ... certainly, it moves... all living things move... how would you move if you were grass? ... and how does grass make you want to move? ... you can move like the grass, or you can move as you would move if you were in grass... it's all the same... you and the grass are one... this is a dance of grass...

Tree...

Flower...

Vegetable...

Mountain... a mountain doesn't move, but you can move in the way it would move if it could... this is a mountain dancing...

Waterfall...

This same kind of theme is approached from a different angle in Chapter 16 (Movement as Dramatic Expression).

Children enjoy being asked to bring to class something which can be expressed in movement.

An interesting variation that can enliven this group problem is the requirement that several (or all) members of the group unite to form just one thing: one animal, one machine, etc. This demands closest cooperation and can lead to amusing results.

Frog...

Snake...

Cat...

Bird...

Bug...

Airplane...

Snow-plow...

Typewriter...

Clock...

Egg-beater...

Perhaps you can think of something else which has an interesting movement quality. Something in this room? Out on the street? At home? Tell us what it is, then show us how it moves, or how it would move if it could...

GROUP STUDY

Would you like to work on this problem in groups? All right, get together in groups of two, three or more... choose anything you wish and show it in movement... if you want to, you may use your voices to make the sound which goes with the movement...

For additional lists of things which can suggest movement, see Chapter 16
(Movement as Dramatic Expression).

LISTS OF FAMILIAR THINGS

Elements

fire
water
air
earth

Weather

wind
lightning
thunder
rain
snow
hail
storm
mist
fog
sunshine
moonlight

Sky

sun
moon
stars
meteor
milky way
cloud
sunrise
sunset

Earth

rock
mountain
river
lake
waterfall
forest
ocean
ice
mud

Plants

grass
tree
flower
vegetable
mushroom
moss
root
leaf

Animals

snake
frog
cat
bird
bug
caterpillar
butterfly
fish
horse
cow
dog

Machines

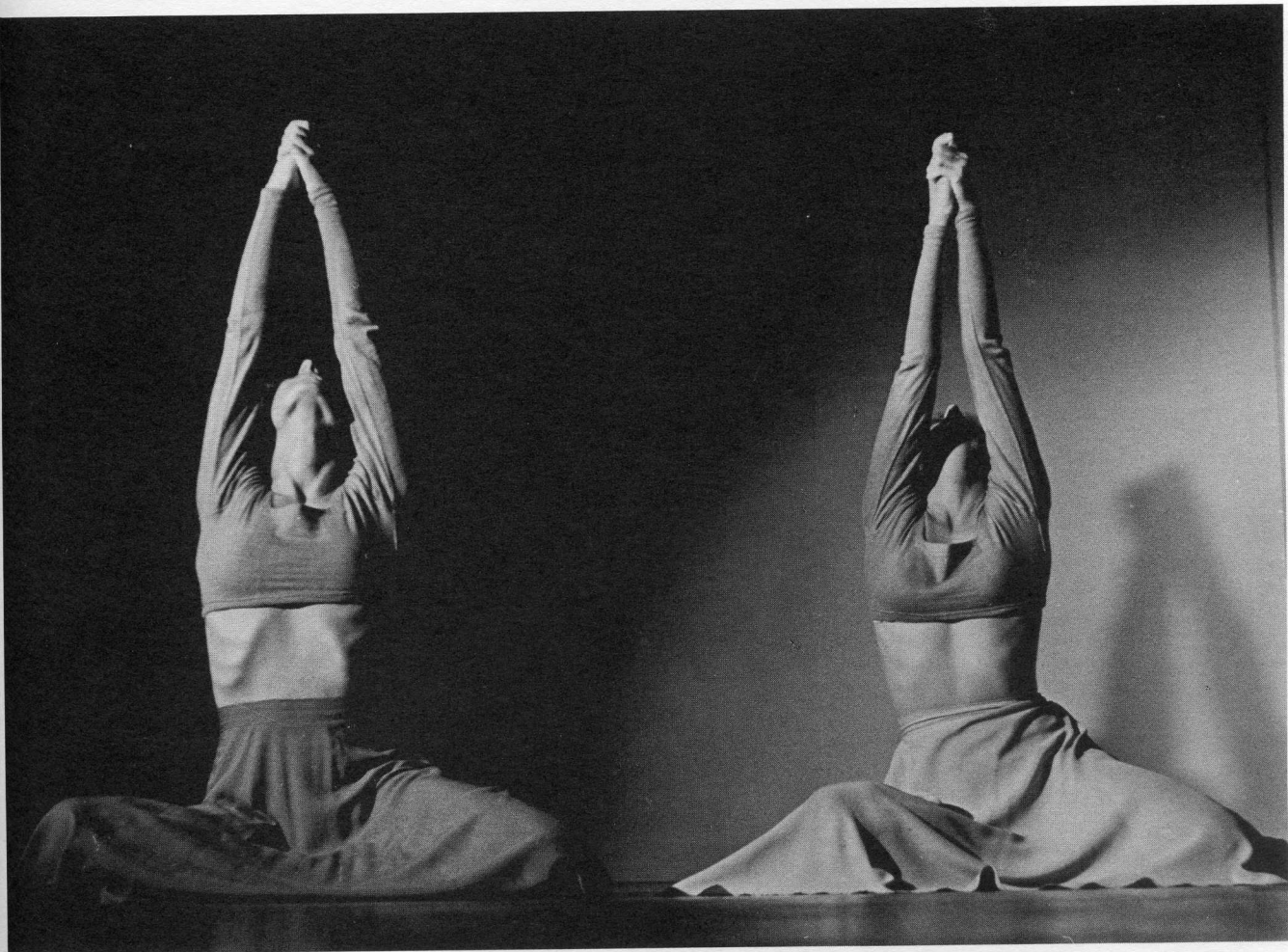
airplane
tractor
bulldozer
snowplow
train
subway
automobile
typewriter
clock
cash register
washing machine
vacuum cleaner
egg beater

PART II

RHYTHMIC ELEMENTS OF DANCE

CHAPTER 3

FORCE • IMPULSE • ORGANIC DANCE FORM



CHAPTER 6

FORCE: IMPULSE, ORGANIC DANCE FORM

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Impulse

Major and Minor Impulses

Activity and Rest

Continuity

GROUP STUDIES

Duet

Trio and Larger Groups

Form, Rhythm

Movement creates patterns of force in time and space. The interaction of the force, time and space patterns of the movement create the movement's form.

We begin our study of form with a study of force. By temporarily disregarding the time and space values of our body movements while concentrating our entire attention on their force values, we learn to control the patterns of force, establishing a creative basis for controlling patterns of time and space.

The basic unit of force (considered from the viewpoint of body movement as a medium of creative expression) is the impulse: a single wave of activity, beginning and ending in rest.

Rhythm is the wave-like nature of the impulse, the alternation of activity and rest, which causes one movement to grow out of another, creating continuity and flow.

Let us not think of rhythm as merely a time-beat. Time is an important factor in rhythm, but it is by no means the only one. Underlying the time pattern of a movement is the living flow of force which accounts for its creative vitality. Space, too, has rhythmic significance insofar as it qualifies the pattern of impulse.

Every phase of our study of dance as a creative art activity is concerned with the awakening and cultivation of rhythmic awareness. The chapters on force and time, dealing with impulse (Chapters 6-10), approach the problem most directly.

See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397-400.

The practice of exhaling on every movement coordinates the impulse. It intensifies awareness of both force and time elements of movement, and greatly furthers the development of rhythmic feeling. At first, no attention should be put on inhaling: there is great danger of exaggerating this phase of breathing, therefore no effort should be made to control it until the creative function of exhaling has been firmly established. Inhaling will naturally precede exhaling and, if allowed to be completely subordinate, it will adjust itself creatively to the pattern of the movement. The use of voice to increase audibility of the breath is not absolutely necessary, but it is recommended because it amplifies the force and time elements of the impulse.

CHAPTER 6 FORCE: IMPULSE, ORGANIC DANCE FORM

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Impulse

Until now we have been approaching movement as a continuous stream of energy, and we have proceeded from one movement to the next without awareness of each separate movement.

Now, I want you to make a movement... just one... one single movement...

What is a movement? ... A single movement may last a long time or a short time. It may be simple or complex. It may use only one part of the body or the whole. It may keep you in one place or move you around the room. It may be as limited as the twist of a wrist, or as extended as a run across the floor. How do you know that it is just one movement? ... It is one movement if it is the result of a single impulse, a single release of energy, a unified whole from beginning to end.

Make another movement, different from the first, trying to sense it as a single impulse: distinct, whole, complete, having a beginning and an end...

Make another one. Regardless of how small your movement may be, put your whole self into it, feel it throughout your whole body, let it come from within, from the center of your body - and exhale as you make the movement...

Make another movement, exhaling as you do so... and another... and another...

Each time you make a movement, exhale freely and thoroughly. Let the breath be audible. Add the voice, if you wish, to increase audibility. Exaggerate both the movement and the sound of exhaling. For the present, we are not all concerned with inhaling. Just forget this phase

If students have difficulty at this point in understanding the relationship between major and minor impulses, it is because the time element is somewhat involved. The problem may be postponed, without detriment to subsequent studies in this chapter, until a later lesson when the material of Chapter 10 (Time : Metric Patterns) is studied.

of breathing. Put all your attention on exhaling. Inhaling will naturally take care of itself.

Continue to make one movement after another, sensing each one as a separate impulse and exhaling audibly on every one...

Major and Minor Impulses

Your movement may be simple, in which case it will have just one clearly defined impulse. Or it may be complex, with minor impulses subordinate to the major one. Every body movement has some complexity, although the minor impulses may not be perceived. Let us try to sense minor impulses within the major impulse of our movement.

Make a single movement, exhaling audibly on the major impulse, as before... now make the same movement again, seeing if you can discover any minor impulses within the major one (exhale audibly on each of these also)...

If you are unable to discover any minor impulses in your movement, you can create some. Repeat the same movement, keeping continuity from beginning to end while adding one or more lesser (weaker) movement impulses at any point within the major one...

This will, of course, change the character of your movement. The force and time patterns will be altered, and even the space pattern (position, direction, size and shape of the movement) may remain only approximately the same.

Make a simple movement, having only one (major) impulse... now repeat it, adding minor impulses as follows (note the change in both form and feeling):

one minor impulse...

two minor impulses...

three minor impulses...

The Creative Pause

All natural movement is characterized by a continuous flow of impulses, one growing out of another, each distinct and yet continuous with the preceding and following one. At the end of each impulse, before the beginning of the next one, there is a pause during which the seed of the new impulse is sown. This pause may be so slight that it is imperceptible, as it is in most of our daily life movements. Or it may be long. An example of a prolonged pause is the breathing movement of a thoroughly relaxed person in deep sleep: after each expiration before the new inspiration, the pause is astonishingly long. Use of this natural pause as a creative element of movement enables us to create organic dance form.

Activity and Rest

Now let us put our attention on the beginning and end of our movement. Every movement (simple or complex) represents an impulse. An impulse is a wave of activity rising out of rest and falling back to rest again. Let us experience the rest which precedes and follows the activity of our movement impulse.

Take any body position you wish in preparation for making a movement... in this position remain perfectly quiet for a moment, experiencing repose... now make a single movement... when it is concluded, come to rest in the final position, experiencing again complete stillness and repose...

Do the same thing again, making the same movement or a different one: take a starting position... first, no movement... now, a movement... now, no movement again...

Continuity

Let us see how this rest at the end of a movement prepares the creative way for a new movement.

Take a starting position... come to rest in it... now make a movement, putting your whole self into it as if it were the only movement you were ever going to make... give it plenty of time to develop and come to a conclusion, then pause in your final position, experiencing again repose... now, out of this repose, let a second impulse grow, creating a second movement, either like or unlike the first... don't force it, let it come of itself...

A movement impulse which has been deeply felt, allowed to live its life fully and and to die away completely, will give birth to a new movement as inevitably as any living thing gives birth to another. The new movement may be like the preceding one, or it may be entirely different.

We shall continue to move in successive impulses, letting each movement grow organically out of the preceding one. Take plenty of time at the end of a movement to let the next one evolve. Don't anticipate. Don't hurry. Wait. Wait until something has to happen. Let your movement feeling guide you...

As soon as you feel capable of creating a continuous flow of separate movement impulses, you may begin to explore different kinds of movement: sudden, gradual, fast, slow, large, small, simple, complex, all kinds. See how much variety you can achieve while preserving continuity. The pause at the end of the movement may be long or short, depending on the nature of the movement. It may be almost imperceptible, but it is always there: the stillness in which the new movement is born. Do not imagine this to be a dead stillness. It is wholly alive, an alert waiting, containing within itself all that has gone before and all that is coming. Continue to exhale with each impulse...

As our awareness of impulse grows, we can begin to put our attention on inhaling as well as exhaling. Inhaling may occur as part of the preparation for the new movement, at the end of the pause which precedes the movement. It may be short and shallow and almost imperceptible, or it may be long and deep, depending on the nature of the movement. In a complex movement, although exhaling should occur on minor impulses as well as on the major one, inhaling is necessary only in preparation for the major impulse.

Let us continue to move in successive impulses, putting attention on the breath. Prepare for each movement by inhaling at the end of the pause which follows the preceding movement...

Sometimes the inhaled breath is so extended that it creates a separate preparatory movement impulse. Examples of daily life movements which include a preparatory impulse are: sneezing, hammering, ball-throwing, etc.

Create a movement which has a preparatory impulse... another... and another...

Organic dance form is free dance form: dance which is free of artificial restrictions, free to develop according to the living qualities of the movement. Living movement grows and evolves out of itself, creating forms which are ever new. Our study of dance consists not of learning rules for the construction of dance forms but in learning to allow dance forms to unfold naturally as an expression of our inner life. Free dance is not an interpretation of life, it is life. As such, it cannot be learned: it must be lived. Organic dance form is living dance.

Problem 2 (for duet and, as adapted, for trio and larger groups - see next page) is a very fruitful exercise in creative group expression. It requires perfect cooperation between the members of the group as they adjust their movements to one another (both in leading and in following) and as they pass the leadership back and forth while keeping the movement growing. The leader must create movements which fulfill the needs of the group. He must express the will of the group in deciding which movement should come next. The follower must try to sense the inner feeling of the leader's movement rather than merely imitate its external form. Both must rely less on sight than on pure kinesthetic (muscle-sense) awareness. Slow, gradual movements are easier to follow than fast, sudden ones and beginners should limit themselves to this type, although an experienced group can use all kinds of movement. The aim is to achieve such unity of feeling and form that the dance is actually created not by individual members but by the group as a whole. (See Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403-406)

Before we go on to explore this same area in groups, let us have one more individual improvisation: improvise freely on the theme of impulse and continuity, follow your feeling wherever it leads you in creating movements which represent separate impulses but which flow spontaneously one out of another...

This is what we call organic dance form, because the form of the dance is not arbitrarily constructed but grows organically out of itself like a living thing.

GROUP STUDIES

Duet

Problem 1 Moving in Alternation

Stand facing each other, or find some other starting position for a duet... while B waits, A creates a single movement with a clearly expressed feeling for impulse... at the conclusion of the movement, there is a pause during which B tries to sense what movement should come next... now, while A holds the final position of the first movement, B creates a second movement growing organically out of the first... at the conclusion of the second movement, B holds his final position while A creates a third movement... in this way the partners continue to move in alternation, creating continuity of impulse...

The pause between movements is a creative pause. It may be long or short, depending on the requirements of the movement. It is not a dead stillness but a thoroughly alive one. As before, use the breath audibly to coordinate the impulse.

Problem 2 Unison Movement, Leadership Changing

Stand facing each other... A begins by making a movement which is suitable for both partners to make at the same time... B joins in, making the same movement at the same time (mirror-fashion)... at the conclusion of A's movement there is a pause in which B tries to sense what movement can grow organically out of the first... B then creates a second movement while A joins in... similarly, A leads through a third movement, B through a fourth, etc. ... in this way the dance develops, with the partners alternating in carrying the responsibility for the evolution of the movement... both should recognize the final movement when it comes and conclude the dance together...

This theme, which uses the circle (the most basic of all group positions) in combination with principles of organic dance form, can lead to very satisfying group dances. It is easy enough for any beginner and yet challenging enough for an experienced dancer. It makes good demonstrational material.

At this point, these references may be helpful :

Chapter 11 (Space)

Page 220 Notes on Group Body and the Circle

Page 221 Circle Dance

Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403 - 406

The problem of Changing Leadership is approached from another angle in the next chapter (see pages 137 - 141).

Trio and Larger Groups

Problem 1 Unison Movement in Circle, Leadership Rotating

Duet Problem 2 can be adapted to trio and larger groups as follows: form a circle and stand, sit or find some other position in which to start... one member of the group begins the dance by making a movement which is suitable for everyone in the circle to make... all join in, making the same movement at the same time as the leader... at the conclusion of the movement there is a pause in which a second member of the group tries to sense what group movement should follow... he then makes a second movement while all do the same... similarly, a third member adds a third movement... in this way, each member of the group contributes to the continuity of the whole...

It should be decided in advance who is to begin and in what order the leaders follow one another (the best plan is in succession around the circle, continuing until the last person's movement concludes the dance). This is a circle dance and every movement should be appropriate not only to all members of the group but also to the nature of a circle. The breath should be sounded to make every impulse audible.

Problem 2 Unison Movement, Position and Leadership Freely Changing

Same as Problem 1 except that the movement is not limited to the circle position. Each leader is free to move the group around the room in any way at all. The order of leadership should not be fixed in advance. Whoever finds himself in a position to lead at the beginning of a movement should assume the role of leader, relinquishing it to someone else at the conclusion of the movement.

Start in the position of a loosely assembled mass... relax and try to sense the movement needs of the group as a whole... whoever feels that he is in a position to lead should take the initiative and lead the group through the first movement of the dance... at the end of the movement, wait, experiencing the creative pause in which it will become clear who the next leader should be... do not hesitate to lead, at the same time be sure that no-one else is in a better position to do so... everyone shares the responsibility for the progress of the dance: the choice of leader should express the unspoken will of the group...

Occasionally more than one may seem to be in the position of leader. In this case, one or the other should relinquish the role. It may happen that leadership falls again and again on the same person. This may be unavoidable but, of course, it is desirable to vary the leadership as much as possible, giving every member of the group an opportunity to lead.

[An experienced group, instead of changing leadership at the end of every single movement, may change at the end of a movement sequence, according to the movement feeling of leader and group.]

CHAPTER 7

FORCE: POLES OF MOVEMENT EXPRESSION

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Alternating Tension and Relaxation

Constant Tension, Constant Relaxation

Forceful and Forceless Movement

Activity and Passivity

GROUP STUDIES

Constant Leadership

Duet

testing for passivity
leading by the hand
free movement

Trio

Larger Groups

Changing Leadership

Duet

leading by the hand
free movement

Trio

Larger Groups

Activity and Rest

In the preceding chapter (Force: Impulse, Organic Dance Form) we learned to experience movement as a continuous flow of separate impulses, each representing a wave of activity growing out of, and returning to, rest. In the human body, activity and rest are represented by neuro-muscular states of tension and relaxation. Any creative feeling for impulse and rhythm must be rooted in a feeling for these two states. (See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397 - 400)

All natural body movement is characterized by an alternation and balance of tension and relaxation. Over-emphasis in one direction or the other can lead to a lopsided movement expression.

Learning to experience extremes of tension and relaxation opens the door to the entire range of dynamic movement feeling.

In our terminology, "dynamic" is the adjective corresponding to the noun "force". It may be defined as "pertaining to force".

CHAPTER 7 FORCE : POLES OF MOVEMENT EXPRESSION

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Alternating Tension and Relaxation

Find a place for yourself where you have plenty of room in which to move... lie down on the floor... relax completely...

We are going to explore two poles of body movement: tension and relaxation. At either pole there is no movement. Extreme tension causes rigidity. Extreme relaxation causes inertia. The whole range of body movement exists between these two poles.

We'll begin by experiencing the extremes of tension and relaxation in alternation. First of all: relaxation. Be completely relaxed... no tension anywhere in the body... no movement... inert...

gradual tension,
sudden relaxation

Now, when I tell you to begin, gradually bring your entire body to a state of complete tension, with every muscle so tight that you can't move any more. Hold this rigid position for a moment then, when I say relax, exhale suddenly and let all the tension go, returning to your state of complete relaxation.

Let's begin: gradually become tense... tenser... tenser... until you can't move any more... now, hold the position a moment...

And now, suddenly exhale and relax! ... let all the tension go... back to complete relaxation...

The teacher may accompany alternating tension and relaxation with a drum, as follows:

gradual tension

continuous rapid beat growing stronger and slower

gradual relaxation

continuous rapid beat growing weaker and slower

sudden tension

one single strong beat

or

one strong beat immediately preceded by a weak one

sudden relaxation

one single strong beat

or

one strong beat immediately followed by a weak one

The drum should accompany rather than lead the dancers; it should continue until all members of the group have stopped moving. The purpose of the sound is less to evoke than to intensify feelings of tension and relaxation. It is not necessary for the success of the work, but it can enhance the experience.

The teacher himself should beat the drum as he directs. For this purpose, a small drum which can be easily carried in the hand, and a beater with a soft felt head, are useful. To acquire facility in the use of a drum as class accompaniment, the teacher will need to practice diligently. Such practice is worthwhile and highly recommended for all teachers of creative dance.

If no drum is used, the quality of the teacher's voice should emphasize the contrast between tension and relaxation, and between gradual and sudden.

(Problems of sound accompaniment for movement are studied in Chapters 12 and 13 and further discussed in Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407-408.)

We're going to do the same thing again and again, and each time you should find a new position of tension and a new position of relaxation. Don't remain lying on your back. You may turn over, sit up, stand up, anything at all. Find as many different ways of becoming tense and relaxed as you can. Don't let your tension be cramped and painful. If well coordinated, even extreme tension is not uncomfortable. Of course the most obviously relaxed position is lying flat on your back, but don't limit yourself to this. Find other positions of relaxation: lying, sitting, kneeling, standing. Your problem is to learn to relax in all sorts of ways. Be bold in finding new movements of tension and new movements of relaxation.

Once more, the same thing: gradually tense... tenses... tenses...

Relax! ...

Again: tense... tenses... tenses...

Relax! ...

Rest a moment while I tell you how we are going to continue...

sudden tension,
gradual relaxation

We shall continue to create movements of tension and relaxation in alternation, but we are going to change the dynamic pattern. Instead of becoming gradually tense and suddenly relaxed, we are going to become suddenly tense and gradually relaxed. Gradualness and suddenness are two more poles of movement which we are exploring today.

Get ready... remember, you are going to become suddenly tense and gradually relaxed. Here we go...

Suddenly tense! ...

And gradually relaxed... gradually exhaling... letting everything go... releasing all the tension in your muscles... finally dissolving into nothing... soft... loose... weak... complete relaxation...

In a previous lesson (Chapter 4, Movement as Material), we learned that gradualness and suddenness are dynamic qualities of movement. By combining these qualities with tension and relaxation in various ways, we can experience the entire range of dynamic quality.

Now, from this position of relaxation, become suddenly tense again :

Tense! ...

And gradually relaxed... softer... looser... fading away as if the life were going right out of you... until there is no movement at all any more...

Again: suddenly tense! ...

And gradually... gradually... relaxed... take all the time you need to let go of all the tension...

sudden tension,
sudden relaxation

We'll change the dynamic pattern again. This time it will be: suddenly tense and suddenly relaxed. Each time, a new movement and a new position. Explore all possible movements and positions. Get ready...

Suddenly tense! ...

Suddenly relaxed! ...

Again: tense! ...

Relaxed! ...

Again: tense! ...

Relaxed! ...

Tense! ...

Relaxed! ...

gradual tension
gradual relaxation

And now, a gradual tension and a gradual relaxation, letting your movements take you around the room if you wish. You can move from place to place as you become tense, and also from place to place as you become relaxed. Ready? Here we go...

Gradually tense... tenses... tenses...

And gradually relaxed... and more relaxed... and more relaxed... finally returning to complete relaxation...

Again... gradually tense...

And gradually relaxed...

Constant Tension, Constant Relaxation

Now, instead of alternating tension and relaxation, we'll take just one of these two extremes and move continuously in that way. Let's start with extreme tension. Improvise on the theme of tenseness. Be as tense as you can and still keep moving. Of course if you were completely tense you couldn't move at all because you would be rigid. Stay close to the threshold of rigidity but keep moving. Try it...

Now, the opposite: extreme relaxation. Be as relaxed as you can be and still keep moving, close to the threshold of inertia... go ahead... flop and drop and droop and drag and sag and slump and hang... feel as if there were very little life in your body... just barely enough to keep moving...

Once more: extremely tense movement...

Once more: extreme relaxation...

Forceful and Forceless Movement

Now, we'll vary our theme a little. Instead of tension and relaxation we'll work with forceful and forceless movement. Feelings of forcefulness and forcelessness are related to feelings of tension and relaxation but they are not exactly the same.

Our progression from feelings of tension and relaxation to feelings of forcefulness and forcelessness and, finally, to feelings of activity and passivity is an interesting one.

Tension and relaxation are physiological states of muscles and nerves.

Forcefulness and forcelessness (strength and weakness) are qualities of movement which can apply to movement of non-living as well as to living bodies.

Activity and passivity, as we use them here, refer to the relationship of one moving body to another: activity means "acting upon"; passivity means "being acted upon".

Tension - Relaxation

physiological emphasis
awareness of instrument (human body)

Forcefulness - Forcelessness

physical emphasis
awareness of material (movement)

Activity - Passivity

psychological emphasis
awareness of relationship to outer forces

First, forceful : make forceful movements... movements which are strong and express forcefulness...

Now, the opposite : forceless movement... express forcelessness... move as though you were very weak, without any strength at all...

Once more : forceful movement...

And again : forcelessness...

Activity and Passivity

Continue to move forcelessly... as if you were being moved by some force outside yourself... be completely passive, without inner force of your own... moving as the result of some outer force acting upon you... imagine that you are being moved by something strong that can push you around or pull you or lift you up or press you down, roll you over... you can float, drift, sail... so light and responsive that the slightest pressure moves you... the more relaxed you are, the more you can feel as if you were actually being moved by some force outside yourself...

Now, just the opposite : be a moving force... strong... active... capable of moving anything in your way...

Once more : express passivity... able to be moved...

And again : activity... be a moving force...

Force of Gravity

Although relaxation and passivity are by no means the same thing, the experience of relaxation is basic to the experience of passivity. This is because relaxation means giving in to the force of gravity. The force of gravity is an outer force which is working on us at all times. Tension enables us to resist it. Relaxation means submission to it. Learning to submit to the force of gravity is the foundation for our study of passivity.

GROUP MOVEMENT

Constant Leadership

Duet

testing for
passivity

Get together in couples... one of you is going to be active, the other passive. The active partner is going to test the passive one to see how passive he can be. Passivity means capable of being moved by an outer force. Decide which one is going to have the passive and which one the active role...

The passive partner is going to be relaxed and allow himself to be moved in any way at all by his partner. The active one will try out different things to test the passivity of his partner. He may lift and drop his partner's arms, move his head, bend him forward, raise him up again, turn him around, lead him forward or backward or down to the floor. The more passive the partner and the more skillful the manipulation, the more satisfying the experience will be. Remember, passivity is not exactly the same as relaxation. The passive partner cannot be completely relaxed. If he were, he would be a dead weight and difficult to move. He must be sufficiently relaxed to sense the force exerted on him, but he must also be light and flexible so that he can be easily moved about. Are you ready to try this? All right. Go ahead...

How did it go? Talk it over with your partner. Tell him how he can improve his passive or active role...

Now, reverse roles and do the same thing again...

leading
by the hand

Change partners...

We'll develop this theme a little further. We'll still have one active and one passive member of each couple, but this time the active member will take the passive one by the hand and lead him freely around the room. Be careful in leading. You must inspire confidence in the one you lead. Don't let him bump into anything. Lead him gently and with consideration so that he will enjoy being led...

It is clear to see that some temperaments are more at home in the active, and some more at home in the passive role. For an active temperament to learn to be passive, and for a passive temperament to learn to be active, can result in great personality gains as well as in a more balanced movement expression.

Activity and passivity themes are equally good for adults, for children, and for mixed groups. A duet in which a little child plays the active role in relation to a passive adult can be a novel and enriching experience for both.

When teaching children, the words "tense" and "relaxed" may be interpreted as "tight" and "loose", and the theme "activity and passivity" as "leading and following" or, better, "moving and being moved".

Reverse roles and try the same thing again...

free expression

Now, a further development. Change partners again...

This time you are going to express activity and passivity in free body movement. The active one will move his partner about, not leading him by the hand but rather expressing freely with his whole body a feeling of forcefulness. He will be a moving force, before which everything has to yield. The passive one will have a willingness to be moved and will respond sensitively to the forceful action of his partner. The active partner may push or pull, press down, lift up, sweep his partner along, moving him in any way he can. He should not rely on bodily contact alone, but bodily contact may be used if it furthers the success of a particular movement. The passive partner must respond with complete submissiveness. Do not meet force with counterforce. Have the will to be moved. It is enjoyable to move another person around according to your will. It is equally enjoyable to be moved around according to the will of another. Try to experience the enjoyment of each of these roles...

Exchange roles and try it again...

Trio

Let's work on this theme in groups of three... One member of the trio will be active while the other two are passive. Active one, see how you can move the other two around. Be forceful. Draw them together, push them apart, lead them, drive them, anything at all to make them move according to your will. Don't use your arms only. Use your whole body. Be a moving force. Passive ones, don't imitate the movements of your leader. His movements should express power, yours should express powerlessness...

Now, let another member of the trio have a chance to be active while the other two are passive...

Let the third member be the active one...

Dance and Drama

When we are emphasizing the force patterns of movement, as we are doing here, we are very close to the art of drama. Force is the action element of movement, and drama is the art of action. Action means that force is exerted: something happens: an event occurs. Drama is concerned with the specific nature of the event: what is done and who (or what) is doing it. Dance is also concerned with action, but only insofar as it is rhythmic. Dance is less concerned with the specific nature of an event than with the pattern of impulses which it creates in time and space. (See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397-400) Later in our study (Part III, Dance in Relation to Other Arts) we shall find that emphasis on time patterns of movement brings us toward the arts of sound, and that emphasis on space patterns brings us toward the visual arts. Now, while we are primarily concerned with the force patterns of our movement, we find ourselves approaching drama.

Dance in relation to drama is studied in Chapter 16 (Movement as Dramatic Expression).

Larger Group

This same theme may be developed in larger groups, with one active and any number passive. The active one may be outside the group or within it. He may manipulate the group as a unit or divide it into parts. If his expression of activity is strong and if the group is truly passive, many interesting relationships are possible. Each member of the group should have a turn being active.

At this point we find ourselves approaching the art of drama and, if we wish to take our work one step further in a dramatic direction, we can plan an action sequence involving interaction of forces and, possibly, conflict. (For example: beginning with a completely passive group, a single active individual may emerge who becomes the leader and moves the group according to his will. Out of the group there may emerge a second active force which may come into conflict with the first, or the group as a whole may become active and come into conflict with its leader, etc.)

Such studies, improvised on the basis of an action sequence outlined in advance, can form a bridge to dramatic movement expression. From here it is only a step to the representation of specific persons, places and situations.

Changing Leadership

Duet

Let's go back to the smallest unit of the group (two) and approach this theme on a more advanced level.

leading
by the hand

Take each other by the hand... As before, one of you is going to be active and the other passive, while the active one leads the passive one around the room. But, instead of one remaining active and the other passive the entire time, you are going to exchange roles at the end of each movement. First one, then the other, will have the active role.

The problem of changing leadership depends on awareness of movement impulse and organic dance form. This awareness can be developed through the studies described here as well as through those described in the preceding chapter. Important is the concept of the creative pause (see page 112). The reader may also wish to refer to Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397-400, and on Group Movement Expression, pages 403-406.

How do you know when to exchange roles? ... You will exchange roles at the end of each movement. That is a matter of feeling. A single movement is the result of a single impulse. Let each movement begin and end in repose. A movement may be long or short, but it must have a definite duration. It must be clear enough in form for both partners to feel it together.

Decide which one will be active first... Take hands and stand quietly for a moment in preparation for the first movement... When ready, the active one will lead through the first movement. When this movement is clearly finished, he becomes passive and his partner takes the lead. Now the partner who was passive becomes active and leads through a second movement. At the conclusion of this movement, he becomes passive again while his partner becomes active. In this way there is a continuous exchange of roles.

Try it... make it very clear whether you are active or passive and when each movement has come to an end...

free body
movement

Change partners... We'll do the same thing without holding hands, expressing activity and passivity in free body movement. Let the force flow freely back and forth between you. Vary your movements as much as you can...

Trio

We'll do the same thing in groups of three... Now the problem becomes much more difficult because we do not know in advance who the active one is going to be. It will depend on the movement. The end of each movement will indicate which one of the three is in a position to be active. If a movement has had an organic development and conclusion, every member of the group will realize who is in the best position to lead through the next one. Don't be afraid to assume the active role if your position at the moment indicates that you should. And don't hesitate to let someone else be the leader if the movement seems to require it. Let's begin...

This problem is basic to a balanced movement expression, both in the individual and in the group. Some of us are by nature more active and some are more passive than others. Learning to be active or passive in movement, to assume leadership or to be a follower, regardless of preference and according to the needs of the situation, can be an important educational experience for all of us.

Larger Groups

We can do the same thing in larger groups, groups of any size. It may sometimes happen that leadership falls again and again on the same person. That is all right if it is an inevitable result of the movement, but it is better, of course, if every member of the group finds an opportunity to lead. Look for the opportunity and seize it when it comes. In case more than one person feels himself to be in a position to lead at one time, let there be no conflict but give the leadership to the one whose role is most clearly defined...

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 7

Three Interwoven Polarities

In the study material described in this chapter three distinctly different areas of movement experience are interwoven. Although briefly outlined on page 130, they need further clarification.

tension and relaxation

conditions of the muscles and nerves in the human body

forcefulness and forcelessness

qualities of movement, whether of the human body or any other kind of body

activity and passivity

relationship of one moving body to another, human or otherwise

It may be hard at first for the dance student to distinguish between these three areas because he is experiencing them through the medium of his own body. The beginner may be able to express feeling for them without completely understanding the differences, but, for the advanced student and for the teacher, understanding is a necessity.

Passive Walk and Run

Our ability to express a certain feeling in movement is dependent on the skill with which we handle our instrument (body).

In activity - passivity studies, students sometimes fail to express passivity adequately when they are walking or running. This is because a passive walk or run tends to be smooth, and the students' ability to walk smoothly has not yet been developed.

Exercises in walking and running, smoothly and otherwise, will be found in my book BASIC MOVEMENT EXERCISES, published in 1973.

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 7 (continued)

Use of Drum

Since writing this book I have discontinued the use of the drum as described on page 124. No sound is needed other than the teacher's voice which, while giving directions, can clearly express the feeling of the movement quality.

CHAPTER 8

FORCE : DYNAMIC QUALITIES

AMOUNT OF FORCE

strong
weak

DYNAMIC MODE

gradual
sudden

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

GROUP STUDIES

Duet
Trio
Larger Groups

The material of this chapter has already been presented in an introductory way in Chapter 4 (Movement as Material). The presentation here, being more analytical, is intended for the more advanced student.

We are, of course, concerned with relative, rather than absolute, strength. Strong or weak, means stronger or weaker in relation to some other movement. Degrees of strength or weakness in movement expression cannot be objectively measured but they can be accurately sensed.

As we use them here, gradual and sudden, like strong and weak, are relative terms.

CHAPTER 8 FORCE : DYNAMIC QUALITIES

Every movement is characterized by its relative strength or weakness, and by its dynamic mode.

AMOUNT OF FORCE

strong, weak

The strength of a movement is determined by the quantity of force exerted. According to the amount of force, a movement may be relatively strong or weak (forceful or forceless).

DYNAMIC MODE

gradual, sudden

The manner in which the force is expended determines the dynamic mode of the movement. Two basic modes are : gradual (continuous, uninterrupted, smooth, sustained) and sudden (interrupted, jerky, stopped).

A gradual movement is one in which the force is spent gradually. In a sudden movement, the force is spent suddenly, all at once.

Although gradualness and suddenness suggest some feeling for time, the time element is so subordinate that they may be approached as pure force qualities.

In the preceding chapter we studied force from the standpoint of both the instrument (human body: tense or relaxed) and the material (movement: weak or strong, gradual or sudden). Here our concern is with the material, and our aim is to take the student a step further in the development of craftsmanship in the objective handling of movement as the material of dance.

The interesting relationship between tense-relaxed, strong-weak, forceful-forceless and active-passive was shown on page 130.

An outline of combined quality themes was given in Chapter 4 (Movement as Material) pages 87-89.

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

We have already experienced strong and weak, and sudden and gradual movement in previous lessons. We may continue our exploration of these qualities by improvising on any of the following themes :

strong...

weak...

Do not think of a weak movement as ineffectual. It can be just as positive and interesting as a strong one. Weak simply means: having less force. It describes a physical characteristic of the movement and is not an evaluation.

gradual...

sudden...

strong, gradual...

strong, sudden...

weak, gradual...

weak, sudden...

GROUP STUDIES

Duet

Improvise freely together on any of the following themes :

both strong...

both weak...

These group studies represent a severe creative discipline and are, therefore, profitable only for students who have had a considerable amount of experience in free group movement improvisation. As we have already learned, the larger the group the more difficult the problem.

one strong, one weak...

both freely contrasting strong and weak...

both gradual...

both sudden...

one gradual, one sudden...

both freely contrasting gradual and sudden...

Trio

Improvise freely together on any of the following themes:

all three strong...

all three weak...

one strong, two weak...

one weak, two strong...

all three freely contrasting strong and weak...

all three gradual...

all three sudden...

one gradual, two sudden...

one sudden, two gradual...

all three freely contrasting gradual and sudden...

Group themes based on the contrast between strong and weak movement may, but need not, become activity-passivity themes. (See Chapter 7, Force: Poles of Movement Expression)

Larger Groups

Improvise freely together on any of the following themes:

all strong...

all weak...

one (or more) strong, others weak...

one (or more) weak, others strong...

all freely contrasting strong and weak...

all gradual...

all sudden...

one (or more) sudden, others gradual...

one (or more) gradual, others sudden...

all freely contrast gradual and sudden...

[Combinations of strong or weak with gradual or sudden provide additional themes for group improvisation.]

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 8

Breath

The role of the breath in forceful movement is very important.

Forcefulness is naturally expressed through the contraction of abdominal muscles which raises the diaphragm and expels air from the lungs.

Students should be taught to exhale freely on every movement, furthering total rhythmic coordination and expressiveness.
(See page 108.)

CHAPTER 9

TIME : DURATION, PULSE, PACE

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Duration

single movement
long, short

two or more movements
equal, unequal

Pulse

regular, irregular

Pace

slow, fast
constant, changing
gradual changes, sudden changes

GROUP STUDIES

Duet, Trio

Larger Groups

A study of time is one of the severest disciplines in the entire study of body movement. It is perhaps for this reason that it is sometimes over-emphasized at the expense of other important elements. In our study of dance as a creative art activity we put equal emphasis on the force, time and space values of movement. Nevertheless, because time patterns are so fleeting, we may need especially rigorous discipline to learn to sense them accurately.

Feeling for a movement's duration is dependent on many things: our age, individual body structure, temperament, health, mental outlook, time of day, atmospheric pressure, etc. For this reason the same movement may seem long to one person and short to another, or it may seem to the same person long one day and short the next. This does not prevent us, however, from finding common denominators of feeling and establishing a working basis for our study of time.

The use of voice as self-accompaniment can be a great help in our study of duration. By saying "lo-o-ong" or "short" while we are executing the movement, lengthening or shortening the word to correspond exactly to the movement's duration, we express duration in both sound and movement simultaneously, making us doubly aware of it.

It is very easy to confuse duration (of time) with dynamic mode (force). For example, we may tend to make all long movements gradual and all short movements sudden. But long movements, as well as short ones, may be either gradual or sudden. Duration is the time interval between the beginning of a movement and the end of it. Because movement is not intermittent but continuous, the end of a movement is marked by the beginning of the next one.

It is also easy to confuse time with space, because long and short are words which can suggest either duration or distance. But a movement may be short in space and long in time, covering a short distance while having a long duration. Or it may be long in space and short in time, covering a long distance while having a short duration.

CHAPTER 9 TIME : DURATION, PULSE, PACE

Movement creates patterns in time. Time patterns are characterized by duration, pulse and pace.

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Duration

Every movement has duration, and our feeling for duration is the basis of all our awareness of time pattern.

Our concern is with relative duration. We are not at all interested in the fact that a movement may last a certain number of seconds by the clock, but we must learn to sense how long or short it lasts in relation to other movements.

Single Movement

long, short

Make a single movement which lasts a long time...

Make a single movement which lasts a short time...

Make a series of movements, each of which lasts a long time...

Make a series of movements, each of which lasts a short time...

See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397-400.

The practice of exhaling on every movement impulse, begun in a previous lesson (Chapter 6: Impulse, Organic Dance Form), should be continued throughout all our studies in pulse.

Graphic representation of time patterns has great value because it adds a visual dimension to our experience of time. The experience of time is basically motor (kinesthetic). We have already made it auditory by using our voice to accompany ourselves as we move. Now, in addition, we make it visual. So, by involving three senses (movement, sound and sight), we experience a time pattern in three different ways. Obviously, this triple impact can greatly increase awareness.

Two or more Movements

equal, unequal

The duration of two or more movements may be equal or unequal.

Create a series of movements having equal duration...

Create a series of movements having unequal duration...

Pulse

A succession of movements (movement impulses), perceived in their rhythmic continuity, may be called a pulse.

regular, irregular

A pulse is regular when all of its separate movement impulses are of equal duration. It is irregular when they are of unequal duration.

Create a series of movements having a regular pulse...

Create a series of movements having an irregular pulse...

There are various degrees of regularity, and a pulse may be more or less regular. Two or more movements of unequal duration create in themselves an irregular pulse but, if repeated in the same order, they become a regular one.

Example:

— — | — — | — — | — — |
long short | long short | long short | long short |

Make two movements of unequal duration... repeat them again and again in the same order...

Pulse and pace have already been introduced as time elements of movement in Chapter 4 (Movement as Material).

Pace

slow, fast

The relationship between duration of time and distance covered determines the pace (rate of speed) of the movement. A movement which takes a long time to cover a certain distance is slow in relation to one which covers the same distance in a shorter time (fast). Although the experience of pace includes some feeling for distance (space), it may be approached as a pure time value.

Make a single movement which lasts a long time...

Make the same movement last a shorter time...

In relation to each other, the first movement was slow, the second fast.

Improvise freely in body movement,

at a slow pace...

at a fast pace...

freely contrasting slow and fast pace...

When using a locomotor movement like walking to develop feeling for pulse and pace, students may accompany themselves as they walk (either individually, or as a group in a circle) by speaking one word on each step such as: "walk - walk - walk - walk -" or "step - step - step - step -". This makes sure that they exhale audibly on every movement impulse and provides a meaningful sound accompaniment.

Accompanying oneself with hand-clapping (one clap for each step) is also a good way to increase awareness of pulse and pace. However, this is by no means easy, because it requires not only precise movement coordination of hands, feet and whole body, but also coordination of the senses of hearing and touch with the sense of movement. Beginners should not be expected to do it without practice.

constant,
changing

Pace may be either constant or changing.

Walk or run freely around the room at a constant pace :

any pace...

slow pace...

fast pace...

moderate pace...

gradual changes

Walk or run with gradual changes of pace :

slow to fast...

fast to slow...

slow to fast to slow...

fast to slow to fast...

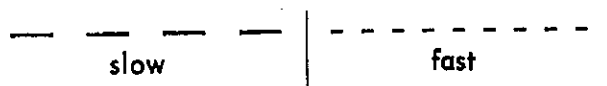
experiment freely with gradual changes of pace...

sudden changes

Walk or run with sudden changes of pace :

maintaining feeling for regular pulse...

Example :



without any feeling of regularity...

Walk or run with freely changing pace, making gradual and sudden changes in any way you wish...

After the above problems in pace have been solved on the basis of the walking or running step, they should be solved again in free movement of the whole body.

GROUP STUDIES

Duet, Trio

Problem 1

One Behind the Other

Walk or run, one behind the other, with leader freely varying his pace while the followers adjust their pace to the leader's, stepping at exactly the same time...

Problem 2

Side by Side

Walk or run side by side, adjusting your pace to one another (no-one leading) so that your steps occur at exactly the same time... vary the pace...

Further studies in pulse and pace will be found in Chapter 10 (Time : Metric Patterns).

Studies in sound accompaniment for movement will be found in Chapters 12 and 13 (Sound and Movement).

Larger Groups

Problem 1 Circle, with Leader

Walk or run in a circle with everyone adjusting his steps to the steps of one member who, acting as leader, freely varies his pace...

Problem 2 Circle, without Leader

Walking or running in a circle with no-one leading, adjust your pace to one another so that your steps occur at exactly the same time... gradually change the pace...

Problem 3 Clap Accompaniment

The group sits on the floor in a circle while one member walks or runs within the circle, freely varying his pace. The group claps once on every step. There should be perfect unity of feeling and pulse between individual and group.

ADDITION TO CHAPTERS 9 AND 10

"Now" Patterns

Throughout Chapters 9 and 10 the student should strengthen his feeling for time patterns by saying "now" whenever he makes a movement.

First he should improvise freely, saying "now" on every felt beat and varying his movement as much as possible. Then he should continue to say "now" on every beat as he works through all the problems of pulse, pace and measure presented in Chapters 9 and 10.

I use the terms time pattern and beat pattern and "now" pattern interchangeably because they all answer the question "when does the movement occur?"

Saying "now" on every movement is important because it requires exhaling which, as mentioned several times in this book, furthers rhythmic coordination. It is important also because it expresses in sound the exact moment at which the movement occurs. Sound, being intermittent, can express a moment of time more exactly than can a body movement.

The great value of saying "now" on every felt beat became clear to me only after this book was published, otherwise it would have been given a central role in the time studies described here.

Drum Beat

I no longer use the drum as suggested on pages 170, 178, 180, and 190.

The teacher's drum beat may make it easier for the student to solve some of the problems presented in Chapters 9 and 10, but the easiest way is not always the best way in creative work.

Sound is an outgrowth of movement and any sound needed can be provided by the student's own breath, voice, hands or feet.

ADDITION TO CHAPTERS 9 AND 10 (continued)

Syncopation

In my teaching now, I describe syncopation as a conflict of impulses: a normally weak beat trying to usurp the role of an established strong one.

Relaxation

Students who have difficulty in developing feeling for time patterns are probably too tense. They should make every effort to relax and be passive, allowing the beat to move them from within rather than trying too hard to master it.

CHAPTER 10

TIME : METRIC PATTERNS

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Grouped Beats

- walking
- free body movement

Divided Beats

- walking and clapping
- free body movement

Binary and Ternary Divisions

- binary beats
- ternary beats
- mixed beats

Omitted Beats

Extended Beats

Time Patterns

- arbitrarily constructed
- freely created

Syncopation

GROUP STUDIES : DUET, TRIO, LARGER GROUPS

Successive Movement

- same time pattern
- different time pattern

Simultaneous Movement

- pulse and pace
- measure
- divided beats
- syncopation
- free time patterns

Final Problem

TIME PATTERNS IN SOUND AND MOVEMENT

Individual Study

Group Study

Analysis of Metric Patterns

Beat is a force-time concept. It represents both an amount of force and a moment of time. For metric purposes, the beat may be counted as the beginning of the movement. Some movements begin with a preparatory impulse (referred to in music as an "up-beat").

We must understand the difference between the terms rhythm, time pattern and metric pattern, as we use them.

Rhythm is more than time pattern. It is a pulsing flow of force in time and space.

Time pattern is the pattern established by the relative duration of movement impulses. It can be accurately sensed without being mathematically measured (counted).

A metric pattern is a mathematically measured (counted) time pattern.

Rhythm is a wholly creative experience, whereas time patterns may be experienced either creatively or analytically. Awareness of metric pattern is dominantly analytical. (See Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397-400)

By grouping a number of beats into a measure, we create a complex movement pattern, having minor impulses within the major one (see Chapter 6, page 111). The measure, as marked by the first beat, represents the major impulse, while the succeeding beats represent the minor impulses. As they are used here, the terms beat and measure both refer to movement impulses and can, as we shall see later (page 175), become interchangeable.

CHAPTER 10 TIME : METRIC PATTERNS

Every movement impulse represents an alternation of stress and unstress. The moment of greatest stress in each movement may be felt as a beat. The time interval between the beat of one movement and the beat of the next one, measures the duration of the movement.

It is possible to measure relative duration of movements mathematically. For example, one movement may last two, three or more times as long as another. The relationship between the duration of one movement and that of another establishes a time pattern. Insofar as it can be measured, the time pattern may be called a metric pattern.

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Grouped Beats

Walking

regular beat,
regular measure

Walk continuously at a moderate pace, establishing a regular pulse... feel the transfer of weight on each step as a beat... on the first of every four steps, emphasize the beat with some movement of the arms or whole body... you have now created a measure of four beats. Count aloud as you move: "one, two, three, four"...

| — — — — | — — — — |

In the same way, create a measure of three beats...

| — — — | — — — |

Two beats...

| — — | — — |

Time and Sound

Sound is audible movement and every time pattern heard can be traced back to its movement origin, just as every time pattern of movement can be made audible in sound. This is why our studies of time and our studies of sound often interweave and overlap.

There are several ways in which sound may be profitably used in this lesson to develop feeling for metric pattern:

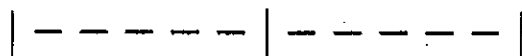
The teacher may beat a drum to accompany the pulse and / or the measure (provided he himself is secure in the area of time). This is helpful for beginners, although it should not be overdone because it can weaken the student's creative vitality by making him dependent on sound.

The student may accompany himself with sounds of breath and voice (see page 108, and Chapter 12). This is a practice which greatly strengthens creative feeling for time and should be an integral part of our study in this area.

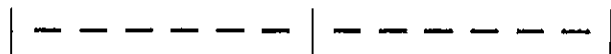
The student may accompany himself with hand-clapping. Whenever sounds of hand-clapping or drum-beating are used to intensify feeling for time pattern, it must be remembered that the dynamic quality of the sound should not dictate the dynamic quality of the movement. The short, sharp sound of the hand-clap or drum-beat is used only to indicate a moment of time, not a quality of movement.

As we have already learned in the preceding chapter (see page 157), an irregular time pattern, repeated continuously, creates a feeling of regularity.

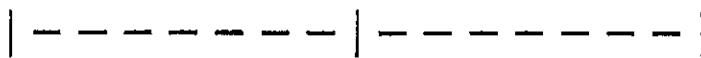
Five beats...



Six beats...



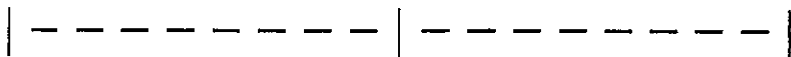
Seven beats...



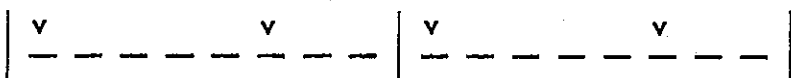
As the number of beats in a measure is increased, you may use a faster walk or even a running step. Give every beat in the measure, except the first, equal emphasis. Do not divide the measure into parts by emphasizing any but the first beat.

regular beat,
irregular measure

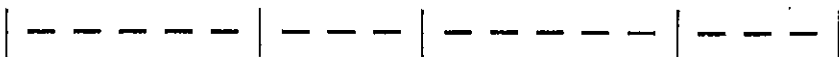
So far, you have been creating regular measures. Now we shall create irregular ones. Walk at a regular pace... create a measure of eight by emphasizing the first of every eight steps (beats)... count aloud as you move...



Now emphasize the sixth beat as well as the first...



You have created an irregular measure: a measure of five alternating with a measure of three. Change your count to "one, two, three, four, five - one, two, three"...



Now that we are no longer using a regular walking or running step as the basis of our movement, it is essential that we use the breath, exhaling on every beat (see note on page 108). Awareness of time pattern is basically kinesthetic and our feeling for regularity must rest on some movement experience. The movement of breathing occupies a central, coordinating position in the body and can provide the best possible source of creative feeling for time pattern. In all movement studies based on time pattern, every beat should be indicated by the exhaled breath. The movement of exhaling may be either audible or inaudible, and it may be either a dominant or a subordinat part of the whole body movement.

Continue to move freely within this pattern without confining yourself to the walking step. Express both the beat and the measure in free body movement...

Free Body Movement

In the preceding problems, the beat has been established by the walking step. Now we must learn to create time patterns in free body movement without relying on the beat of the walk.

Improvising freely in body movement:

Establish a regular pulse (every beat having equal duration and equal emphasis)...

Create a regular measure by emphasizing the first of every

two beats...

three beats...

four beats...

five beats...

six beats...

seven beats...

Create an irregular measure by alternating

a measure of two with a measure of three...

a measure of three with a measure of four...

a measure of four with a measure of one...

Clapping is both a movement and a sound. It can provide kinesthetic and auditory as well as tactile experience of metric pattern. Walking and clapping at the same time is not an easy exercise (see note on page 160).

"Beat" and "measure" are relative terms, referring to minor and major movement impulses. Here we see how a beat (minor impulse), when divided, can become a measure (major impulse).

It must be remembered that our diagrams of time patterns are not concerned with dynamic quality (force). The horizontal lines indicate merely duration of time from the beginning of one movement to the beginning of the next. The length of the line shows whether the movement is relatively long or short (time) and does not show whether it is gradual or sudden (force).

Experiment freely in creating measures, regular or irregular...

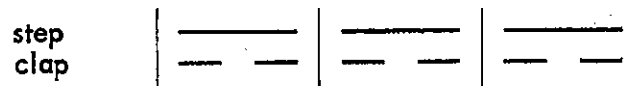
Divided Beats

So far, we have created measures by grouping beats. Now we shall create measures by dividing beats.

Walking and Clapping

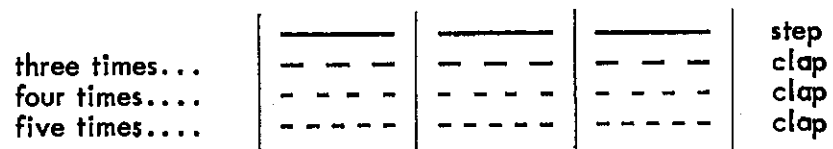
regular beat,
regular measure

Walk continuously at a slow pace, establishing a regular pulse... clap once on every step... now, continuing to walk at the same pace, clap twice on every step... the clapping should divide the beat of the step into two equal time intervals.



In this way you have created a measure of two. Count aloud as you move: "one, two - one, two"... The pace of the clapped beat is twice as fast as the pace of the walking step.

Continuing to walk, create other measures by clapping on every step as follows:



Be sure that the walking step is slow enough to allow time for the claps. The time intervals marked off by the claps must be of equal duration so that they create a regular beat within the regular measure.

We find it unnecessary and inadvisable to use music notation in our study of dance. Our method of diagramming time patterns is simpler and entirely adequate for our purposes. We also prefer to use an everyday movement vocabulary rather than to borrow musical terms. Dance and music have common elements and a study of music can be very valuable for the student of dance, but the materials of the two arts (dance: movement / music: sound) are not the same and should not be confused in the mind of the student.

It is a good exercise to reverse the metric roles of the clap and the step, so that you take two (or more) equal steps for every clap.

Example

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

 step
clap

The roles can then be exchanged at regular intervals, as follows:

step

—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

 clap

irregular beat,
regular measure

Once more, walk slowly at a regular pace, clapping once on every step... by clapping, divide the first of every two steps into two equal parts and the second into three equal parts...

step

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

—	—
—	—

 clap

In this way you have created an irregular beat within a regular measure. [This is not easy to do and may require much practice before it can be done accurately.]

Free Body Movement

Now, instead of limiting ourselves to walking and clapping, let us create divided beats in free body movement.

Improvising freely in movement:

establish a regular pulse...

divide each beat into two equal parts...

If the drum is used by the teacher to maintain the underlying pulse or to sound the entire time pattern, this should be done only as preparation for the main work of creating time patterns in movement independently of sound. Beginners should have the occasional help of the teacher's drum. Advanced students do not need it.

return to the undivided pulse...

divide each beat into three equal parts...

return to the undivided pulse...

divide each beat into four equal parts...

return to the undivided pulse...

divide each beat into five equal parts...

return to the undivided pulse...

divide the first of every two beats into two equal parts and the second into three equal parts...

experiment freely with divisions of the beat...

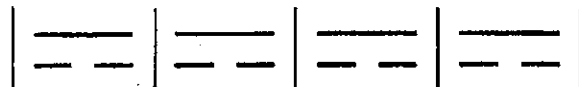
Binary and Ternary Divisions

A beat may be called binary if it is divisible into two equal parts and ternary if it is divisible into three equal parts.

Binary Beats

Improvising freely in body movement:

establish a regular pulse (slow)... divide each beat into two equal parts, creating a new pulse twice as fast as the original one...

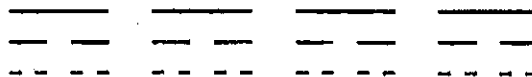


Feeling for binary and ternary divisions of the beat may be strengthened by drills in sound and movement, such as these :

The teacher maintains the basic pulse on the drum, while the class divides it by means of walking steps or free body movement.

Some members of the group clap the basic pulse, while others divide it by clapping, walking or improvising freely in movement.

Further divide each of the sub-beats into two equal parts, creating a new pulse four times as fast as the original one...

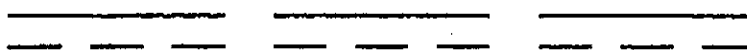


Ternary Beats

Improvising freely in body movement,
establish a regular pulse (very slow)...



divide each beat into three equal parts, creating a new pulse
three times as fast as the original one...



further divide each of the sub-beats into three equal parts,
creating a new pulse nine times as fast as the original one...



Mixed Beats

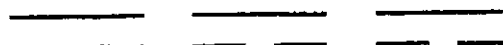
A single beat may be divisible into either two or three equal parts, in which case we may call it a mixed beat.

Improvise freely in body movement:

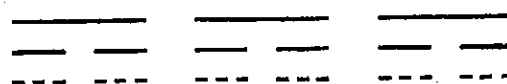
establish a regular pulse (slow)...



divide each beat into two equal parts, creating a new pulse twice as fast as the original one...



divide each beat of the new pulse into three equal parts, creating a new pulse six times as fast as the original one...



beat
binary division
ternary division

As a conclusion to our study of divided beats, let us improvise freely on each of the following themes:

regular pulse, binary divisions...

regular pulse, ternary divisions...

regular pulse, binary and ternary divisions freely contrasted...

Omitted Beats

In a regular pulse, a movement may be omitted, while still being felt as a beat.

Improvising freely in body movement, establish a regular pulse... by emphasizing the first of every three beats, create a measure of three (count aloud)... now, cease moving on the second beat of every measure without losing the feeling of the measure (continue to count)... we may say that you have omitted a beat and the time pattern of your movement is like this:

pulse	— — —		— — —
measure	—————		—————
pattern	— — —		— — —

Improvise freely in movement on the basis of any regular measure, omitting beats occasionally, according to your feeling...

Extended Beats

In a regular pulse a beat may be extended and combined with the following one.

Improvising freely in body movement, establish a regular four-beat measure...

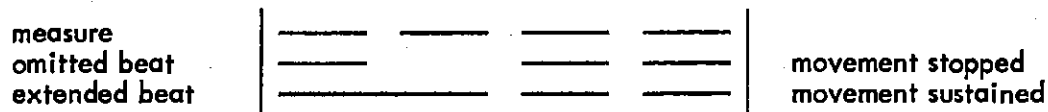
	— — — —		— — — —	
--	---------	--	---------	--

Extend the first beat of every measure to include the second beat, so that the combined first and second beats make one long beat instead of two short ones...

	== — —		== — —	
--	--------	--	--------	--

or

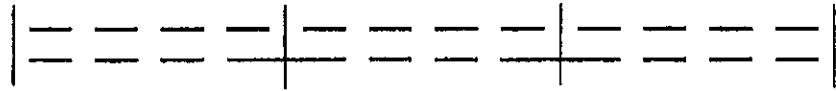
The difference between an omitted beat and an extended beat will depend on the quality of the movement. To create an omitted beat, the movement must be stopped. To create an extended beat, it must be sustained.



The creation of body movements according to preconceived metric patterns is good discipline for the student of dance at certain stages of his development. However, being dominantly mental, such exercises can be inhibiting to natural creativeness unless they are subordinate to free movement expression.

Except in metric studies, or for purposes of analysis, the beats of a movement should never be counted (measured mathematically). This is the only chapter in the book which presents movement material to be counted.

Extend the fourth beat of every measure to include the first beat of the succeeding measure...



Improvise freely in body movement, establishing a regular pulse and a regular measure... extend a beat occasionally according to your feeling... be careful not to lose the measure...

Time Patterns

Arbitrarily Constructed

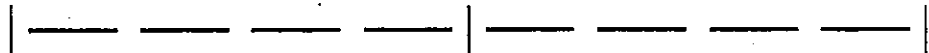
For purposes of discipline, time patterns may be arbitrarily constructed in diagram form, then improvised in free body movement.

For example:

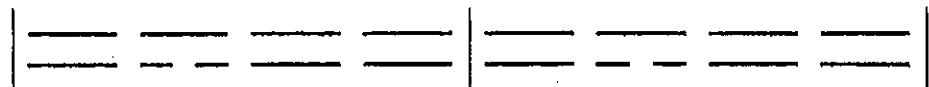
diagram a regular pulse...



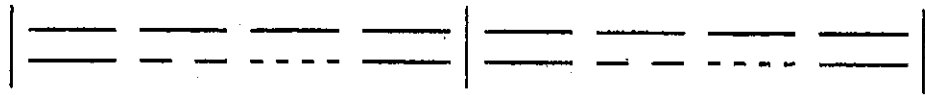
indicate a four-beat measure...



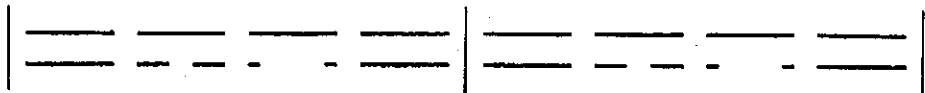
show that the second beat of each measure is divided into two equal parts...



show that the third beat of each measure is divided into four equal parts...



show that the second and third sub-beats of the third beat are omitted...



Now clap the pattern you have created...

Improvise freely in body movement while the rest of the group claps the pattern...

Freely Created

Establishing a regular pulse and a regular measure, improvise freely in body movement, using binary and ternary divisions of the beat, omitted beats and extended beats, to vary the time pattern as much as possible. Do not lose the measure...

Create a time pattern which you repeat continuously while improvising freely in movement, then diagram it:

one-measure pattern...

two-measure pattern...

three-measure pattern...

Because syncopation is a dominant characteristic of our social dance music today, we may tend to think of it as a musical phenomenon. Actually, it is a kind of time pattern which, originating in movement, may be expressed in sound. Syncopation means a shift of emphasis within the measure. Ordinarily the first beat of a measure (major impulse) receives the strongest emphasis. When this emphasis is shifted to some other beat in the measure (minor impulse), the resulting pattern is "syncopated". Feeling for syncopation can best be developed within the framework of a regular pulse and measure.

Some students have much difficulty in developing a feeling for syncopation. This may be due to exaggerated neuro-muscular tension, in which case every effort should be made to relax the student, or it may be due merely to an undeveloped feeling for time. We are all naturally stronger in some areas and weaker in others. In those areas where we are weak, it may take a little longer to reach a satisfactory accomplishment.

The teacher may sometimes use a drum beat to maintain the regular pulse and measure, while the student moves only on the syncopated beats (or on every beat, emphasizing the syncopated ones).

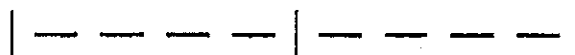
The first beat of a measure is ordinarily the strongest because it represents the major impulse. Syncopation threatens, but does not destroy, the basic structure of the measure.

For Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, see pages 397-400.

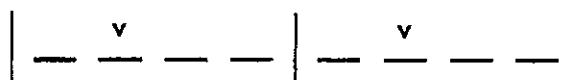
Syncopation

Syncopation occurs when the emphasis ordinarily belonging to the first beat of the measure is shifted to some other beat within the measure.

Walk continuously at a moderate pace, establishing a regular pulse... create a four-beat measure by emphasizing the first of every four beats (count aloud)...



continue to maintain the same measure but shift the emphasis to the second beat...

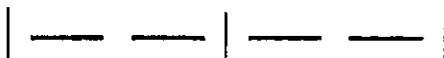


The second beat has now taken over the emphasis which ordinarily belongs to the first beat of the measure: the second beat (and the pattern as a whole) is syncopated.

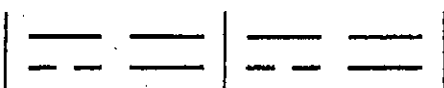
Any beat, except the first beat of the measure, can be syncopated. The weaker the beat, the more syncopated it becomes when it is emphasized. The second half of a divided beat can provide a particularly strong feeling of syncopation.

For example :

establish a regular two-beat measure...



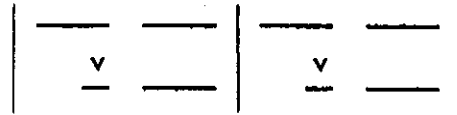
divide the first beat of each measure into two equal parts...



These group studies which use voice to clarify time patterns should be preceded by some work in Free Vocal Sound (see Chapter 12, pages 267-279). The time patterns should be freely created without any attempt to measure or count them.

Although B is not obligated to re-create any aspect of A's movement except its time pattern, a natural tendency is to imitate the whole form of the movement. Advanced students may enjoy trying to vary the form in every way except in time pattern.

omit the first half of the first beat and stress the second half...



the second half of the first beat, ordinarily felt as weak, is now stressed, creating a strong feeling of syncopation.

Maintaining a regular two-beat measure, with the second half of the first beat syncopated, vary the time pattern freely in any way you can...

Create other syncopated patterns in movement... diagram them...

Establish a regular pulse and a regular measure, then experiment freely in movement with syncopated beats...

GROUP STUDIES

Successive Movement

Same Time Pattern

DUET

Stand facing each other... while B waits, A creates a movement with an interesting time pattern, using his voice to make every beat of the pattern audible... at the conclusion of the movement, A holds his final position while B creates a movement having exactly the same time pattern (it need not be the same movement)... now B holds his final position while A makes another movement having a different time pattern... B recreates this time pattern... continue to move in alternation with A creating new time patterns and B recreating them... A should vary the time patterns as much as possible...

This duet is the same as Duet Problem 1 on page 117, Chapter 6 (Force: Impulse, Organic Dance Form) with a different creative emphasis.

TRIO

Same as duet (above), with members of the trio moving in rotation: A creates a movement with a time pattern which is recreated first by B, then by C. A then creates another time pattern, and so on.

LARGER GROUPS

Same as duet (above) with the group moving in alternation with an individual. The individual (who may be in front of the group or in the center of a circle) creates the time pattern, the group recreates it.

Different Time Patterns

DUET

Moving in alternation (as in the preceding problems), each partner creates a new time pattern whenever it is his turn to move. There should be continuity and interesting contrasts of time pattern.

TRIO OR LARGER GROUP

Moving in rotation, each, when it is his turn, creates a new pattern which has continuity with, but is in contrast to, the preceding one. The circle is a good position (but not the only one) for this study.

In all studies in pulse and pace, we must make a special effort to subordinate the space patterns of our movement to the time patterns. Begin with the movement of exhaling: establish a strong feeling for pulse by exhaling on every beat. Your movement may be spatially unformed at first, consisting only of a rudimentary throbbing throughout the entire body. Let the spatial patterns develop organically out of this throbbing.

Simultaneous Movement

Pulse and Pace

DUET, TRIO and LARGER GROUPS

Improvising freely together, establish a regular pulse:

at a moderate pace...

at a slow pace...

at a fast pace...

at a gradually changing pace:

slow to fast to slow...

freely changing...

Be sure to give equal emphasis to every beat: do not group or divide beats. Use the sound of the breath to emphasize the pulse. The group starting position may be a loose mass, allowing the group movement to develop in any way at all. Individual movements may be alike or different. Spatial patterns should be subordinate to, and evolve out of, a strong feeling for pulse.

Measure

DUET, TRIO and LARGER GROUPS

Improvising freely together, establish a regular measure:

two-beat measure...

three-beat measure...

four-beat measure...

five-beat measure...

two-beat measure alternating with three-beat measure...

Be exact in moving on every beat and in making sure that the first beat of every measure is clearly defined. Keep the pace constant: do not speed up.

DUET

One partner maintains a regular pulse, while the other creates a regular measure by moving on the first of every

two beats...

three beats...

four beats...

five beats...

TRIO and LARGER GROUPS

The group maintains a regular pulse, while one member creates regular or irregular measures in any desired sequence.

Divided Beats

DUET

One partner maintains a regular pulse at a slow pace, while the other divides each beat into

two equal parts...

three equal parts...

four equal parts...

five equal parts...

TRIO

A creates a regular pulse (slow). B divides each beat, and C further divides it, using binary or ternary divisions or a combination of both.

LARGER GROUPS

The group maintains a regular pulse, while one member divides the beat freely in any desired way.

Syncopation

DUET

Problem 1

A maintains a regular pulse. B syncopates every beat by dividing it into two equal parts and emphasizing the second half:

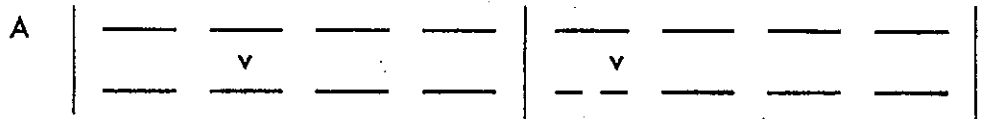
In studies where the group forms a simple background for a more complex solo movement, it is desirable, if possible, to give every member of the group an opportunity to experiment in the solo role. However, if time is limited, or if the members of the group are on widely different levels of experience, the solo role may be given to one of the more experienced members. In this way, a single member can raise the level of the entire group experience while providing everyone with stimulus for growth.



Problem 2

A maintains a regular pulse and a regular measure. B creates an occasional syncopated beat.

Example :



TRIO

Problem 1

A establishes a regular pulse, B establishes the measure, and C creates an occasional syncopated beat.

Problem 2

A establishes a regular pulse and regular measure. B and C both experiment freely with syncopated beats.

LARGER GROUPS

One member improvises freely with syncopated beats against a background of simple group movement which has a regular pulse and measure. The group may be in a circle with the individual in the center, or it may be in a line with the individual in front. The group, as well as the individual, may improvise as a group, or it may be led by one of its members in unison movement. It is also possible to decide on some simple group movement in advance, such as a side-to-side sway or a walking step.

Free Time Patterns

DUET

Problem 1

A maintains a regular pulse and measure, while B varies the time pattern freely.

Problem 2

Maintaining a regular pulse and regular measure, both partners vary the time pattern freely. The pulse, pace and measure may be fixed in advance, or they may be created together in improvisation.

TRIO

Problem 1

A establishes a regular pulse, B creates the measure, C improvises free time patterns within the measure.

Problem 2

A establishes a regular pulse and measure, B and C each create freely varying time patterns within the measure.

Problem 3

Maintaining a regular pulse and measure, all three create freely varying time patterns within the measure. The pulse, pace and measure may be fixed in advance or they may be created together in improvisation.

For Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, see pages 397-400.

Step 6 Diagram the pattern, indicating pulse, measure and pattern as follows:

Example

pulse	— — —		— — —	
pattern	— — —		— — —	

Step 7 Clap the pattern...

[Advanced problem: clap the pattern while walking the pulse...]

Step 8 Half the group claps the pattern while the others improvise individually in free body movement. It is not necessary to move on every beat of the pattern; rather, the feeling of the pattern should be expressed freely.

CHAPTER 11

SPACE : POSITION, DIRECTION, SIZE, SHAPE

POSITION

Relative to Body Structure

Individual Studies

general

whole body

body parts

Group Studies

based on individual body structure

based on group body structure

Relative to Surrounding Space (Individual and Group Studies)

Relative to Other Bodies

Inanimate Objects (Individual Studies)

Moving Bodies (Group Studies)

Relative to the Earth (Individual and Group Studies)

Level

Plane

DIRECTION

Relative to Body Structure (Individual and Group Studies)

Relative to Surrounding Space (Individual and Group Studies)

Relative to Other Bodies

Inanimate Objects (Individual Studies)

Moving Bodies (Group Studies)

Relative to the Earth (Individual and Group Studies)

SIZE

Individual and Group Studies

SHAPE

Individual and Group Studies

FREE SPACE PATTERNS

Individual and Group Studies

A movement is characterized at every moment by its position in space. In some schools of dance, too much importance is placed on the beginning and end positions of body movement, with the result that movement becomes merely a transition from one position to another. In contrast, we approach movement as a continuous flow of force creating continuously evolving patterns in space which may at any moment be defined in terms of position.

The position of a body movement is relative. It has meaning only in relation to something. Our study of position covers various types of relationship, beginning with the relationship of our movement's position to the structure of our own body.

Space patterns of movement are visible, and the material of this chapter is closely related to the material of Chapter 14 (Movement and Visual Design). The teacher may sometimes combine material from both chapters in a single lesson.

CHAPTER 11 SPACE : POSITION, DIRECTION, SIZE, SHAPE

Every movement creates a pattern in space. Spatial patterns of movement are characterized by position, direction, size and shape.

POSITION

Relative to Body Structure

Individual Studies

GENERAL

Problem 1

Improvise freely in body movement... now stop suddenly and remain motionless in whatever position you find yourself... put your attention on your position and be aware of every aspect of it... be aware of the exact position of your head, arms, hands, feet, trunk, every part of the body...

Now dissolve the position...

Assume the same position again...

Dissolve it...

Assume it again...

Problem 2

Create some body position which you like, then use it as the theme of an improvisation. You may begin with it, end with it, or use it in any way you wish during the improvisation...

Another position (relative to body structure) which might be added to our list is "upside-down". Some strange and enjoyable movement experiences can be created on the theme of "upside-down movement".

Some interesting body positions are suggested as themes for individual improvisation in Chapter 2 (The Body as Instrument) page 48.

WHOLE BODY

Problem 1

Improvise freely in each of these positions:

lying

front...

back...

side...

freely changing...

sitting...

kneeling (on one or both knees)...

standing

on both feet...

on one foot...

BODY PARTS

Problem 1

Choose some position of the head and improvise freely with the whole body, keeping your head fixed in this position...

Problem 2

Same as Problem 1, using a fixed position of some other body part (or parts) as the theme of an improvisation...

Although these are group studies, the positions (lying, sitting, etc.) are derived from the requirements of individual body structure. Positions emphasizing group body structure (circle, line, etc.) will be studied in the next section of this chapter.

Group Studies

Position based on Individual Body Structure

DUET

Improvise freely in one of these positions:

both lying

front...

back...

side...

freely changing...

both sitting (kneeling or standing)...

one sitting, one standing...

other combinations...

TRIO or LARGER GROUP

Improvise freely in one of these positions:

all lying (sitting, kneeling or standing)...

one lying, others standing...

other combinations...

A group, like an individual, has a body structure made up of various members. Just as the relative position of the various members of the individual body (head, arms, legs, etc.) determines the nature of the individual movement, so the relative position of the various members of a group body determines the nature of the group movement. In our study of creative dance, we learn to sense not only the requirements of our own individual body but also the requirements of the group body of which we are a part. Throughout the course the teacher must help the student learn to distinguish between individual and group movement expression. The group studies in this section (Position based on Group Body Structure) are especially useful for this purpose.

The circle is the most basic of all group body positions because in it every member of the group has the same spatial relationship to every other member, as well as to the group as a whole. It is used repeatedly for group improvisations throughout our entire study of dance. When members of a group hold hands in this position, the circle has extraordinary unifying power. (See Holding Hands themes, Chapter 2, pages 43-47).

Our group studies in unison movement always follow this progression:

- step 1 Improvisation with Leader
- step 2 Improvisation without Leader

See Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403-406.

Position based on Group Body Structure

CIRCLE

Circle Dance (group of five or more)

Form a circle, all facing the center... Improvising in unison movement, explore thoroughly the movement possibilities of this basic group position...

The entire effort should be directed toward discovering what movements the circle as a whole can make (rather than toward how an individual in a circle can move). A circle can contract, expand, revolve, sink, rise, etc. It can move slowly, fast, etc. Individual movements should be subordinate to the group movement and should express the nature of a circle.

This circle dance should be improvised first with, then without, a leader.

Concentric Circles (group of fifteen or more)

Form two concentric circles, facing the center... Each circle improvises in unison movement, with its own leader (a leader for each circle). The outer circle makes movements which are in spatial contrast to those of the inner circle.

Group studies in Line are approached from another point of view in Chapter 14 (Movement and Visual Design) pages 329 - 331.

Holding hands in a line, like holding hands in a circle, can strengthen the unity of group expression.

LINE

Single File (group of three or more)

Form a line, one behind the other... Improvise in unison movement, with the head member leading...

Lines in Relationship (group of ten or more)

Form two (or more) lines as in the preceding study... Each line improvises in unison movement, following its leader. The leaders move the lines in relationship to one another...

Side by Side (group of three or more)

Form a line, side by side, all facing the same direction... Improvise in this position first with, then without, a leader. The leader should be in the center, rather than at the end, of the line. The line may remain in one place, or it may move from place to place. It may be straight or curved...

This dance may also be improvised with some members of the group facing in one direction while others face in the opposite direction.

Two Lines Facing (group of five or more)

Form two lines facing each other... Improvise in this position, first with two leaders (one for each line), then without any leader. The lines may remain in one place or move from place to place. They should start facing each other, but this relationship may be varied...

OTHER BASIC GROUP POSITIONS

Improvise in one of the following positions, first with, then without, a leader:

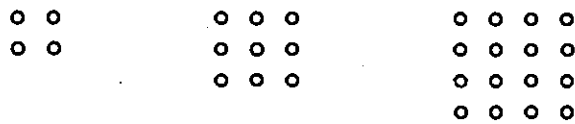
Square (group of four, eight or twelve)

○ ○
○ ○

○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○

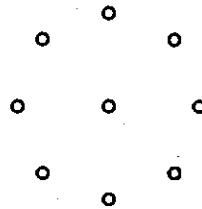
○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○

Block (group of four, nine or sixteen)

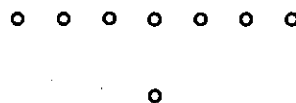


Improvise in one of the following positions, with individual movement in contrast to unison group movement. In order to achieve unison movement, it will be necessary for the group to have a leader...

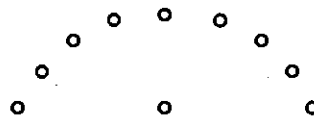
Circle with Individual in Center



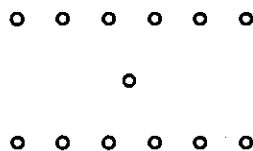
Line with Individual in Front



Semi-circle with Individual in Front



Two Lines with Individual Between



These studies (Position Relative to Surrounding Space) have value in relation to daily life experience as well as to dance and to the theater. Any one of us may at any time find himself in a central (or peripheral, etc.) position in relation to his daily life environment, requiring creative movement adjustment. In the same way the dancer who is in the center of the stage (or on the periphery, etc.) must move accordingly.

It is suggested in Chapter 15 (Design in Movement Environment), page 360, that students construct architectural settings for movement. Such settings would be useful here in our study of Space.

Position Relative to Surrounding Space

Individual Studies

Center Take a position in the center of the surrounding space...
express freely in movement the feeling of being in the center...

Periphery Move around the edge of the surrounding space, expressing
the feeling of being on the periphery...

Foreground Decide which is the front and which is the back of
the space in which you are going to move... take a position at the
front and express in movement the feeling of being in the foreground...

Background Take a position at the back and express in movement
the feeling of being in the background...

Side Take a position at the side of the space and express in
movement the feeling of being on one side...

Top Imagine that you are at the top of a space and move
accordingly. (In order to intensify the feeling of being on top, the
student may stand on some upper level such as stairs, chair, table, etc.)
...

Bottom Imagine that you are at the bottom of a space and move
accordingly...

Group Studies

DUET

Improvise freely together in one of the following positions:

A beginner's group, if larger than three, may need a leader. An advanced group can learn to improvise without one. (See Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403 - 406)

both center (periphery, foreground, background, side, top or bottom)...

one center, one periphery...

one foreground, one background...

one on one side, one on the other side...

one top, one bottom (top partner may or may not stand on some upper level)...

other combinations...

TRIO or LARGER GROUP

Improvise freely together in one of the following positions:

all center (periphery, foreground, background, side, top or bottom)...

one center, two (or more) periphery...

two (or more) center, one periphery...

one foreground, two (or more) background...

two (or more) foreground, one background...

one top, two (or more) bottom...

two (or more) top, one bottom...

other combinations...

INDIVIDUAL and GROUP

Improvise freely together in one of the following positions:

individual center, group periphery...

group center, individual periphery...

individual foreground, group background...

group foreground, individual background...

individual on one side, group on the other side...

individual top, group bottom...

group top, individual bottom...

other combinations...

TWO GROUPS

Improvise freely together in one of the following positions:

one center, one periphery...

one foreground, one background...

one on one side, one on the other side...

one top, one bottom...

Position Relative to Other Bodies

Inanimate Objects (Individual Studies)

Using a chair, table or any ordinary object, take one of the following positions and improvise freely in movement, exploring the creative possibilities of the position :

beside the object...

behind it...

in front of it...

on top of it...

beneath it...

Using some enclosure, like a box or fenced-in area, improvise freely in one of these positions :

outside it...

inside it...

Using two (or more) objects, arrange them so that you can improvise in one of these positions :

between them (one on each side of you)...

in front of one, in back of another...

beside one, in front of another...

some other arrangement...

Moving Bodies (Group Studies)

DUET

Improvise freely together in one of the following positions:

face to face...

back to back...

side by side

facing same direction...

facing opposite direction...

one above, one below...

one in front, one behind...

far apart...

close together...

TRIO or LARGER GROUP

In groups of three or more, improvise freely together in one of these positions:

face to face (circle)...

back to back (circle)...

side by side (line)...

Further studies in Plane will be found in Chapter 14 (Movement and Visual Design),
pages 331-333.

Position Relative to the Earth

Level

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Improvise freely in movement, maintaining one of these levels:

low...

high...

middle...

Contrast different levels...

GROUP STUDIES

Improvise freely in groups of two, three or more, limiting all movement to one level, or assigning different levels to different members of the group...

Plane

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Improvise freely, limiting your movement to one of these planes:

vertical...

horizontal...

inclined (between vertical and horizontal)...

The direction of a movement is pure when all parts of the body express the same directional feeling. For example: in a pure sideward movement, the side of the head, shoulders, hip and ankle are all leading (a twist of the trunk or turn of the head would destroy the pure sidewardness). Likewise, in a pure forward movement, the head should not be turned sideward. In these studies we aim for as pure a directional expression as possible. However, we should not be so rigidly analytical that we destroy creative spontaneity.

It is interesting to discover that our feeling for forward and backward direction is lost when we are lying on our backs. The teacher giving directions to students in the back-lying position must substitute such directions as "toward the feet" or "toward the head". All feeling for direction can be dissolved by a turning movement in which we rotate continuously around our own axis with neither the front nor the back of the body leading.

The oblique direction is a subtle cross between the forward, or backward, and the sideward direction. Study of it is suitable not for beginners but for advanced students whose feeling for the three basic directions (forward, backward and sideward) has been well developed.

GROUP STUDIES

In groups of two, three or more, improvise freely, limiting all movement to one plane or assigning different planes to different members of the group...

DIRECTION

Direction Relative to Body Structure

In relation to the structure of the human body, the direction of a movement is forward when the front of the body is leading, backward when the back of the body is leading, and sideward when the side of the body is leading. When a part of the body between front and side, or between back and side, is leading, the direction of the movement may be called oblique and further designated as oblique forward (right or left) or oblique backward (right or left). These directions would have no meaning for a body with undifferentiated shape like a round ball, but for the human body they are of major importance.

Individual Studies

Improvise freely, limiting your movement to one of these basic directions:

forward...

backward...

sideward...

oblique...

Contrast these directions:

forward and backward...

forward (or backward) and sideward...

forward, backward and sideward...

oblique and forward (or backward or sideward)...

Group Studies

DUET

Improvise freely within these directional limitations:

both partners moving forward...

both moving backward...

one moving forward, one backward...

both moving forward and backward...

both moving sideward...

one moving forward and / or backward, one moving
sideward...

both moving obliquely...

other combinations...

TRIO

Explore the movement possibilities of these directional themes:

all three moving forward...

The terms "forward", "backward" and "sideward" (directions relative to body structure) are sometimes loosely used to mean "from background to foreground", "from foreground to background" and "from one side to the other" (directions relative to surrounding space). In our study of movement expression we need to be more accurate in our movement terminology, distinguishing clearly between these two types of directional relationship.

all three moving backward...

one moving forward, two backward...

all three moving forward and backward...

all three moving sideward...

two moving forward and backward, one sideward...

one moving forward, one backward, one sideward...

all three moving obliquely...

other combinations...

LARGER GROUPS

Improvise freely in movement, assigning different directional roles to different members of the group...

Direction Relative to Surrounding Space

In relation to the surrounding space, a movement may have one of these directions:

centripetal (toward the center)...

centrifugal (away from the center)...

from background to foreground...

from foreground to background...

from one side to the other...

diagonally across...

from top to bottom...

from bottom to top...

Each of these directions provides opportunity for distinct movement experiences and may be used as a theme for individual or group improvisation.

Direction Relative to Other Bodies

Inanimate Objects (Individual Studies)

Relating your movement to some piece of furniture or other object, experiment freely with these directions, using them separately or in combination:

toward the object...

away from it...

around it...

over it...

under it...

through it...

Moving Bodies (Group Studies: duets, trios and larger groups)

Improvise freely together, experimenting with these directions

toward and away from each other...

around each other...

over and under each other...

Direction Relative to the Earth

In relation to the earth, the direction of a movement is either upward or downward.

Individual Studies

Problem 1

Explore the expressive possibilities of upward and downward movement.

Problem 2

Improvise on any of these combined directional themes:

forward-upward and backward-downward...

forward-downward and backward-upward...

sideward-upward-right and sideward-downward-left...

other combinations...

Size and Shape have already been introduced as spatial elements of movement in Chapter 4 (Movement as Material), page 83.

Large and small movements may be created while remaining in one place or while moving from place to place. The teacher should make sure that the student has both types of experience. Movements from place to place can greatly increase the size of a movement.

Our experience of a movement's size (dimension) may be one-dimensional, two-dimensional or three-dimensional in feeling.

one-dimensional
feeling of line: long or short

two-dimensional
feeling of plane: wide or narrow

three-dimensional
feeling of volume or mass: deep or shallow, thick or thin

The general concepts large and small are sufficient for beginners, but advanced students should learn to create movements which are not only large or small but also long or short, wide or narrow, deep or shallow, thick or thin. (Line, plane, volume and mass are studied as Elements of Visual Design in Chapter 14).

Group Studies: duet, trio and larger groups

Problem 1

Improvise freely together, limiting yourself to upward and downward movement...

Problem 2

Assign the upward direction to certain members of the group and the downward direction to others... Improvise freely together, each emphasizing the direction assigned to him...

SIZE

The size of a movement may be large or small, depending on whether it occupies a large or small space.

Individual Studies

Improvise freely on each of these themes:

large movement...

small movement...

large and small movement contrasted...

Group Studies: duet, trio and larger groups

Problem 1

Improvise freely together on one of these themes:

Unlike time patterns, space patterns of body movement do not lend themselves creatively to mathematical measurement. One exception is turning. As the body rotates around its own axis, the extent (size) of the turn may be measured in relation to a complete rotation as follows: full turn, half turn, quarter turn or eighth turn.

Shape of Instrument

At this point we can discover an interesting interaction between our instrument (body) and our material (movement). The shape of our instrument is not necessarily the same as the shape which we give to our material. To demonstrate this, let us make a curved movement with a straight arm, or let us walk in a straight line while maintaining a curved body position. If we wish, we can bring our instrument into perfect harmony with our material by curving our body in the creation of a curved movement or by straightening it in the creation of a straight one. The instrument of dance is uniquely creative in its ability to assume any number of different shapes according to the requirements of the material and, for purposes of creative movement expression, the shape of our body as determined by its spatial position is far more important than its shape as determined by anatomical characteristics such as height, width, thickness, etc.

large movement...

small movement...

large and small movement contrasted...

Problem 2

Assign large movement to certain members of the group and small movement to others... Improvise freely together, each emphasizing the quality assigned to him...

SHAPE

The shape of a movement may be curved or straight, depending on the nature of the line it creates.

Individual Studies

Improvise freely on these themes:

curved movement...

straight movement...

curved and straight movement contrasted...

Group Studies: duet, trio and larger groups

Problem 1

Improvise freely together, limiting yourselves to one of these themes:

In learning to create clear space patterns of movement, we must become aware of the exact position of every body part. But we must not let this awareness draw our attention away from the movement of the body and turn it toward the body itself. The body is the instrument of dance. The material of dance is movement. Dance is not concerned with shaping the body, but in using the body to shape movement (to create movement patterns). Any use of the body which focuses the attention primarily on the body itself, rather than on the movement of the body, is not dance.

curved movement...

straight movement...

curved and straight movement contrasted...

Problem 2

Assign curved movement to certain members of the group and straight movement to others... Improvise freely together, each limiting himself to the quality assigned to him...

FREE SPACE PATTERNS

Individual Study

Improvise freely in movement, creating clear and interesting space patterns. Emphasize the position, direction, size and shape of your movement...

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1

Alternating Movement, Same Pattern

The partners move in alternation, one remaining motionless while the other is moving.

Stand facing each other... A begins by creating a movement with a clear and interesting space pattern while B remains motionless in the starting position... A now holds his final position while B makes exactly the same movement (mirror-fashion or otherwise, whichever seems more natural)... now B holds his final position while A makes a second movement with a different space pattern... B repeats this movement... A continues to create new space patterns with B repeating them... A should vary the space patterns as much as possible...

Some of these same group problems are approached from another angle in Chapter 6 (Force: Impulse, Organic Dance Form), pages 117-119, and from still another in Chapter 10 (Time: Metric Patterns) pages 193-195. It may be helpful now to refer to these earlier lessons, and also to Supplementary Notes on Group Movement Expression, pages 403-406.

Problem 2 Alternating Movement, Contrasting Pattern

Moving in alternation as in Problem 1, each partner creates a new space pattern whenever it is his turn to move. There should be continuity of movement and interesting contrasts of space pattern.

Problem 3 Unison Movement, with Leader

Facing each other and with one leading, both partners make exactly the same movement at the same time (mirror-fashion). Emphasis should be on clear and interesting space patterns.

Problem 4 Unison Movement, Leadership Alternating

Same as Problem 3, with leadership passing from one to the other at the end of every movement (or movement sequence).

Problem 5 Unison Movement, without Leader

Starting face to face, the partners move simultaneously, making the same movements at the same time with neither one leading: both create the movements together. Beginners should maintain the face to face position throughout the dance, advanced students may vary it.

Problem 6 Free Movement

Starting in any position, the partners improvise freely together in movement, creating clear and interesting space patterns. Emphasis should be on the position, direction, size and shape of the movement.

TRIO

Problem 1 Successive Movement, Same Pattern

Same as Duet Problem 1. Members of the trio move in succession.

Problem 2 Successive Movement, Contrasting Pattern

Same as Duet Problem 2. Members of the trio move in succession.

Problem 3 Unison Movement, with Leader

Same as Duet Problem 3. One member of the trio leads, the other two follow.

Problem 4 Unison Movement, Leadership Rotating

Same as Duet Problem 4. Members of the trio lead in succession.

Problem 5 Unison Movement, without Leader

Same as Duet Problem 5.

Problem 6 Free Movement

Same as Duet Problem 6.

LARGER GROUPS

Problem 1 Alternating Movement, Same Pattern

One member takes a position in front of the group or in the center of a circle. He creates a movement with a clear and interesting space pattern which is then repeated by the group moving in unison. Individual and group continue to move in alternation, with the individual creating the space pattern and the group repeating it.

Problem 2 Alternating Movement, Contrasting Pattern

Same as preceding problem, with individual and group creating contrasting space patterns. In order to achieve unison movement, it will be necessary for the group to have a leader.

Problem 3 Unison Movement, with Leader

Circle position. The entire group makes the same movement at the same time, with one member leading.

Problems 4 and 5 are the same as the two group studies described on page 119 (Chapter 6), with a different emphasis.

Problem 4 Unison Movement, Leadership Rotating

Same as preceding problem with leadership passing from one member to another in succession around the circle.

Problem 5 Unison Movement, Position and Leadership Freely
Changing

Same as preceding problem except that the movement is not limited to the circle position and the order of leadership is not fixed in advance. Start in any position... Whoever feels himself to be in a position to lead, leads through the first movement, relinquishing the role to someone else at the conclusion of the movement. Throughout the dance, position and leadership change freely according to the development of the movement.

Problem 6 Unison Movement, without Leader

The entire group improvises in unison without a leader, emphasizing spatial patterns of movement.

Problem 7 Free Movement

The entire group improvises freely together creating clear and interesting space patterns.

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 11

Plane

Studies in plane (pages 237 - 239) do not belong in this chapter.
They belong in Chapter 14, Visual Design (see pages 331 - 333).

PART III

DANCE IN RELATION TO OTHER ARTS



CHAPTER 12

SOUND AND MOVEMENT: SOUNDS OF VOICE, HANDS AND FEET

FREE VOCAL SOUND (Individual Studies)

Qualities of Sound and Movement
Familiar Sounds

VOICE, HANDS AND FEET AS INSTRUMENTS

Individual Studies
Group Studies
 repeated pattern
 free improvisation

SPEECH

Speech Sounds (Individual Studies)

vowels
consonants
syllables
words

Own Language

Individual Studies
 free use of words
 story
 poem

Group Studies

Known Language

Individual Studies
 word
 phrase, sentence
 free use of words
 story
 poem

Group Studies

SONG

Individual Studies

Pitch, Tone
Melody

Group Studies

SONG WITH WORDS

Individual Study

Group Studies

Music and Dance

An understanding of the physical relationship between sound and movement provides us with a solid basis for our study of music in relation to dance. Sound is an outgrowth of movement, and the quality of a sound expresses to some extent the quality of the movement which produces the sound. For example, a sudden movement of the diaphragm and rib-cage in the act of exhaling produces a sudden breath sound, whereas a gradual movement of these same muscles produces a gradual sound. If the movement is strong, the sound will be relatively strong (loud); if the movement is weak, the sound will be weak (soft), etc. Dance is the art of movement, music is the art of sound. At their point of origin, within us, these two arts are one. Opportunity to express ourselves freely in both sound and movement strengthens our creative feeling for music and dance.

Our basic study of exhaling as part of the movement impulse has been presented in Chapter 6 (Force: Impulse, Organic Dance Form), pages 108 - 115.

CHAPTER 12 SOUND AND MOVEMENT: SOUNDS OF VOICE, HANDS AND FEET

Body movement creates sound: the sound of the breath and the sound of the feet on the ground. Whether or not it can be heard, there is a sound inherent in every movement we make. As our study of dance proceeds, we learn to listen to the sound of our body movement and to shape it creatively into expressive forms.

FREE VOCAL SOUND (Individual Studies)

Qualities of Sound and Movement

Improvise freely in body movement, exhaling audibly each time you make a movement... add the voice to make the movement still more audible... let the sound of the voice express the quality of the movement...

Using the voice, express freely in both sound and movement each of the following qualities. The sound and the movement should occur simultaneously as the result of a single impulse.

tight...

loose...

strong...

weak...

sudden...

gradual..

slow...

fast...

regular...

irregular...

large...

small...

curved...

straight...

high...

low...

heavy...

light...

flat...

round...

open...

closed...

contracting...

expanding...

rising...

sinking...

In these studies in Qualities of Sound and Movement, our teaching progression is

from pure movement qualities

to tactile qualities

to visual and auditory qualities.

rough...

smooth...

hard...

soft...

coarse...

fine...

oily...

scratchy...

fluffy...

sticky...

bumpy...

prickly...

bubbly...

slippery...

rubbery...

silky...

muddy...

watery...

airy...

Additional studies in tactile and visual qualities expressed through movement will be found in Chapter 14 (Movement and Visual Design), pages 337-343.

fire-y...

animal-like...

insect-like...

bird-like...

flower-like...

loud...

soft...

bright...

dark...

This section (Familiar Sounds) and the preceding one (Qualities of Sound and Movement) are equally good as introduction to free expression in sound and movement.

Although some of these sounds may be characteristic of human or animal behavior, we need not slip over the border of dance into drama. Let us focus our attention on the kind of sound we are making rather than on the creature or thing which may produce the sound. For an understanding of dance in relation to drama, see page 370.

There are times in the course of our study when the teacher may need to use a very strong hand supported by his complete confidence in the educational and artistic value of the material. This is one of those times. Our studies in Free Vocal Sound are among the hardest to teach. The average student is wholly unprepared for this type of experience, which may come to him as quite a shock. He may resist violently, in which case it is inadvisable to pay any attention to his fears. Do not follow him in his retreat. Rather, challenge him boldly to courageous action. He has come to you for growth through new experiences. This is his opportunity. Any hesitation here on the part of the teacher will mean losing valuable ground which will be doubly hard to gain later on. The teacher himself must understand thoroughly, believe in and love the material. He must also believe in and love his students, being convinced that each one has profound individual creative potentialities which may require a brave leap to gain the freedom necessary for their unfolding. The choice of sounds and the order in which they are presented are important factors in drawing the student out of his shell.

Familiar Sounds

Lie down on the floor and relax... stretch and yawn... yawn loudly... make all sorts of stretching movements and yawning sounds... exaggerate the sounds of yawning... make lots of movement and lots of sound...

Rest...

Sit in some relaxed position... make collapsing movements and sighing sounds... collapse and sigh... again and again... flop and drop, letting all the air out of your lungs with each sigh... collapse this way and that way... exaggerate the sounds of sighing...

Rest...

I am going to name many kinds of sound and, as I name each one, you are going to use your voice and your whole body to express in both sound and movement as vividly as you can the particular quality of that sound.

Here is the first one: groaning. Make groaning sounds, and movements which express the quality of the sound... do not act out a person in pain... we are not telling stories, rather we are expressing qualities of sound and movement... every sound has a quality all its own: it may be tight or loose, strong or weak, jerky or smooth, or it may have some other quality... try to sense the quality of a groaning sound and express it clearly with every means at your disposal...

Rest...

Here is another sound. Let's stand up for this one: grunting. That should be easy! Grunting sounds come naturally out of forceful body movements. Try it... make grunting sounds, and express in movement the quality of the sound... put your whole body into it... a grunt comes from the center of the body... don't be afraid of it... it may not be pretty, but it has power...

Rest...

The sound of laughter can have many qualities: rocking, shaking, exploding, etc. It can be boisterous, repressed, sinister, etc. It is emphasis on qualities of laughter rather than on the person laughing which characterizes dance in contrast to drama.

Sometimes students become so absorbed in making these sounds that they forget the movement aspect of the problem. To counteract this tendency, they should be asked occasionally to express the quality of the sound silently through movement alone.

An expanded sound like shouting offers an opportunity for the student to stretch his voice in the same way that he often stretches the rest of his body to release tension and free it for creative activity. The teacher should see that students open up their voices and take full advantage of this opportunity. The sound of a room full of dance students shouting at the top of their lungs may be startling to hear, but it is nonetheless worthwhile as a creative experience.

Here are some more sounds. I'll name one right after another.
Remember, don't pretend to be the person or thing which makes
the sound. Be yourself and express the quality directly:

growling...

hissing...

humming...

whining...

sobbing...

laughing...

sneezing...

sputtering...

mumbling...

squeaking...

croaking...

clicking...

whistling...

shouting...

whispering...

LIST OF FAMILIAR SOUNDS

yawning
sighing
groaning
moaning
grunting
growling
howling
roaring
bellowing
screeching
screaming
crying
sobbing
gasping
shrieking
whining
whimpering
wailing
shouting
laughing
sneezing
snickering
chuckling
tittering
giggling
sniffing
snoring
panting
coughing
hiccoughing
wheezing
murmuring
mumbling
muttering
sputtering

whistling
whispering
speaking
singing
hissing
humming
buzzing
croaking
cooing
cackling
purring
barking
calling
twittering
trilling
hooting
chirping
crowing
lowing
squealing
braying
neighing
whinnying
rattling
clanging
ringing
honking
popping
clicking
ticking
rustling
creaking
squeaking
sizzling

Quantity of sound is more important than quality at first, to free the student of inhibitions and awaken him to the world of sound.

As an extension of Problem 2, we may dance on some other surface which offers another set of foot sounds: a hollow box, stair-steps or (if outdoors) dry leaves, a gravel walk, etc.

Short, sharp sounds like stamping and clapping bring into focus the time patterns of movement. It is often a good idea to combine studies in sound with studies in the area of time (see Chapter 10 Time: Metric Patterns). When studies in different areas are combined in one lesson, the teacher must know exactly where he is at every moment. To expect a student to be aware of time patterns when the problem presented is essentially one of sound quality, or to criticize a student's work on the basis of sound quality when his entire attention has been directed toward time pattern, can be confusing for the beginner. Beginners cannot be expected to handle more than one area at a time, although advanced students should learn to control all areas simultaneously.

VOICE, HANDS AND FEET AS INSTRUMENTS

Individual Studies

Problem 1 Hands and Feet

Using your hands and feet as instruments, improvise freely in sound and movement, stamping and clapping, slapping the floor or your own body or anything at all to make an accompaniment for yourself while you dance... make as much sound as you can... let this be a very noisy dance...

Problem 2 Foot Sounds

Walk and listen to the sound of your feet on the floor... intensify the sound by stamping slightly... vary it, by changing the time pattern of your stamping... experiment with various time patterns... discover new qualities of sound by using a different method of moving your feet against the floor: brushing, scraping, etc. ... finally, improvise freely in sound and movement, accompanying your movement with sounds made by your feet...

Problem 3 Hand Sounds and Others

Create an interesting sound pattern by clapping your hands together... create another by slapping your hands against your thighs... snapping your fingers together, create still another... discover other kinds of hand sounds... move about the room striking various objects with your hands to create interesting sound patterns... use not only your hands but your elbows, knees and other parts of your body... finally, using various parts of your body in contact with each other, with the floor, with the walls and objects throughout the room, improvise freely in movement while accompanying yourself with sound...

Problem 4 Voice, Hands and Feet

Use all your native instruments - voice, hands and feet - in any way you wish, to accompany yourself in sound while improvising freely in movement...

Repeated patterns sharpen awareness of both sound quality and time pattern. Studies in repeated pattern supplement studies in free improvisation, assuring a balanced creative experience.

Group Studies

Repeated Pattern (Large Group)

Problem 1 Unison

The group forms a circle (or line). One member after another takes a turn in the center of the circle (or in front of the line) creating a pattern of sound and movement which he repeats over and over again. The group joins in, doing the same thing at the same time, with emphasis on feeling, quality and pulse rather than on the exact form of the movement. Each leader should try to create a pattern as different as possible from the preceding one. He may use voice and / or hands and feet as instruments.

Problem 2 Alternating

Same as Problem 1, except that the individual and the group move in alternation. The individual executes the pattern only once, then waits while the group repeats it. The group then waits while the individual executes the same pattern again. The group repeats it again, and so on. After a few such repetitions, a new leader creates a new pattern.

Problem 3 Locomotor

Same as Problem 1, except that the movement is locomotor. The individual, followed by the entire group, proceeds from one end of the room to the other, all repeating the leader's sound-and-movement pattern simultaneously.

Free Improvisation (Duet, Trio or Larger Group)

Problem 1

Improvise freely together in sound and movement, using voice, hands and feet as movement accompaniment...

Problem 2

Improvise freely together in sound and movement, assigning the use of voice to part of the group and the use of hands and / or feet to another part...

The difference between these speech sounds is largely one of timbre (tone-color). The pitch and dynamic mode may be freely varied without changing the timbre. (For explanation of pitch and timbre, see page 294. For explanation of mode, see page 145.)

We have selected certain vowel and consonant sounds in preference to others merely for the sake of variety.

SPEECH

Speech Sounds (Individual Studies)

vowels

Explore thoroughly the movement feeling of each of these vowel sounds by improvising freely in movement while speaking the sound. You may experiment freely with the sound as well as with the movement, speaking it in various ways:

ah...

oh...

ee...

oo...

ow...

ai...

uh...

consonants

In the same way, explore the movement feeling of these consonant sounds:

b...

f...

g...

h...

j...

k...

These studies in speech sounds, like all the studies in this book, will be difficult for some students and easy for others. It becomes obvious to a teacher of this work that students tend to fall into different types according to their natural sensibilities and inclinations. Some students, for example, will find much less enjoyment in the area of sound than in the area of visual design (Chapters 14 and 15). In the area of speech, some will be quite inhibited at first, whereas others will find an immediate, welcome release. This is the reason for covering so many different areas in our study of dance. It is a joy for the teacher to see a student, who has hitherto seemed only half awake, suddenly come to life when a new area which suits his particular needs is presented. The art of dance is as broad as life itself and can draw on all the creative resources of human personality. A study of dance must therefore take into account differences in personality, supplying each in due time with the creative nourishment which it needs.

Accompanying our body movements with words of our own creation strengthens our creative feeling for speech, building a bridge to the art of language. If a student is already strong in verbal expression, these studies will give him much pleasure. If he is weak, they will strengthen him.

l...

m...

p...

r...

s...

t...

v...

z...

syllables

Combine various speech sounds, forming syllables. Improvise freely in movement, accompanying yourself with spoken syllables, discovering as many interesting combinations as possible...

words

Combine spoken syllables into words of your own creation. Improvise freely in movement, accompanying yourself with words which you make up as you go along...

Own Language

Individual Studies

free use of words

Problem 1

Improvise freely in movement, speaking as you move. The language will be your own, not like any other. Express your feelings in movement and words which you yourself create...

A poem is a song-like use of words, more metrical than prose. (This definition, though necessarily incomplete, is sufficient at this point for the dance student.)

In contrast to known language (see next section of this chapter, pages 291 - 293), our own language is a language more of feeling than of intellect. It is therefore more intimately related to movement expression.

See Problems of Accompaniment, page 296, and Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407 - 408.

story

Problem 2

Tell a story in movement and words, using your own language...

poem

Problem 3

Create a poem in movement and words, using your own language...

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1

"Conversation "

Improvise freely together in sound and movement, each speaking in his own language...

Problem 2

Words accompanying Movement

One partner improvises freely in movement, while the other partner accompanies him with words, improvising freely in his own language and adjusting the words to the movement.

Problem 3

Movement accompanying Words

One partner improvises with words, speaking freely in his own language, while the other partner improvises in movement, adjusting the movement to the words.

TRIO

Same as Duet Problem 1.

Problems 1 and 2 ("Party" and "Oration") can provide hilarious group experiences. If there is humor, however, it must come as the by-product of a completely serious attempt to solve the problem of communication.

For an understanding of drama in relation to dance, see page 370.

LARGER GROUPS

Problem 1 "Party "

All improvise freely in sound and movement, each using his own language to accompany his movement. Move around the room as if at a social gathering. Speak to the people you meet, pausing for a moment to converse with one, then another. Occasionally groups of three or more may form. Keep moving, keep talking. If it is the universal language of movement and sound, it will be understood...

Problem 2 "Oration "

One member, taking a position in front of the group, delivers a speech in his own language. Members of the group respond in movement and words (own language) according to the feeling which the speaker communicates.

Problem 3 Drama

Plan the action of a drama, then improvise it together, each speaking in his own language...

Known Language

Individual Studies

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| word | Make a single movement, accompanying it with a single word, in English or some other known language. Let the word be an outgrowth of the movement: create the movement and the word simultaneously without previous planning... |
| phrase, sentence | Make a single movement, accompanying it with a series of words, repeating the same word, or speaking a phrase or sentence... |
| free use of words | Improvise freely in movement, accompanying yourself with spoken words... |

If these verbal accompaniments are written down, we have made a bridge to literature. This is the teaching progression which we have followed:

from body movement

to free vocal sound

to speech sounds

to language

to literature.

See Problems of Accompaniment, page 296, and Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407-408.

In addition to giving the students opportunity to create their own verbal accompaniment for dance, some teachers like to suggest known literary works to be used as dance accompaniment. This may have particular value in educational institutions where it can help further integration of the curriculum.

For further study of dance in relation to drama, see Chapter 16 (Movement as Dramatic Expression).

story Tell a story in movement and words...

poem Create a poem in movement and words...

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1 Self-accompaniment

Improvise freely together in movement, speaking as you move...

Problem 2 Words accompanying Movement

One partner improvises in movement while the other improvises a verbal accompaniment, adjusting the words to the movement.

Problem 3 Movement accompanying Words

One partner improvises in words while the other improvises in movement, adjusting the movement to the words.

TRIO

Same as Duet Problem 1.

LARGER GROUPS

Dance-dramas and dance-poems may be planned, then improvised, by groups of any size, with the dancers using speech to accompany themselves or each other.

Pitch

When used in reference to pitch, the terms "high" and "low" are not spatial terms. However, they have an indirect relationship to the spatial concepts of "high" and "low". A loose sounding body (string, drum skin, etc.) produces a lower pitch than a tight one. Because loose movements of the human body generally tend downward as a result of the pull of gravity, a low pitch may be associated with a low movement. However, we must be careful not to over-simplify this relationship. In creative dance, a low sound may be expressed by either a low or a high movement, depending on the whole quality and feeling of the sound. Similarly, a high sound may be expressed by either a high or a low movement.

Timbre

In addition to pitch, sound has an attribute called timbre (tone-color) which is the particular quality resulting from the material and shape of the sounding body. For example, although the tones of a flute and those of a violin may have the same pitch, their timbre is quite different. Every human voice has its characteristic timbre which can be varied according to the use of throat, mouth and lips. Differences in sounds of oh, ah, etc. are differences of timbre. In our studies of pitch in relation to movement, the student's movement quality may be influenced by the timbre of the tone as well as by its pitch. This is quite natural and it is unimportant in the work of beginners. Advanced students should learn to distinguish between pitch and timbre.

No student should consider himself handicapped in this work by lack of conventional "singing ability". Although some will, of course, have had previous singing experience and some will find it easier to coordinate voice and ear, everyone can take part in these studies on an equal basis. We are concerned primarily with individuality of expression, and we find that it is the uniqueness of each voice which gives color and life to the entire group. A trained singer's voice which has lost some of its naturalness and individuality may be less interesting than the voice of an inexperienced beginner.

SONG

Individual Studies

pitch, tone

Pitch is a fundamental attribute of sound. Depending on the rate of vibration of the sounding body (string, vocal cords, etc.), the pitch of a sound is called "high" or "low". The higher the rate of vibration, the "higher" the pitch; the lower the rate of vibration, the "lower" the pitch.

A tone is a sound with a constant level of pitch. Let us experiment in movement with feelings of tone and pitch.

Using your voice, create a single tone by maintaining a constant level of pitch (singing oh, ah, la, da, or any other syllable)... as you sing, express in movement the feeling of that particular tone...

Do the same, creating a tone on another pitch:

lower pitch...

higher pitch...

very low pitch...

very high pitch...

melody

A succession of tones, if it is a unified expression of a single impulse, is a melody. Improvise freely in movement, accompanying yourself with a melody which you yourself create. You may repeat the same tone sequence over and over again, or you may freely vary it:

two-tone melody...

three-tone melody...

free melody, using any number of tones...

Problems of Accompaniment

In our basic sound-and-movement studies, the dancer provides his own accompaniment.

On another level, when the roles of dancer and accompanist have been separated so that one student creates the movement while another creates the sound, the sound must still be the voice of the dancer. This means that the sound must be adjusted to the movement, quality for quality and beat for beat. Only in this way (because sound is an outgrowth of movement) can a truly organic unity be achieved.

As a discipline, and as further exploration of the creative possibilities of sound in relation to movement, this process may be reversed so that the movement is adjusted to the sound. In this case, the sound must be motivated by clearly defined movement impulses, making it possible for the dancer to follow easily.

See Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407-408.

When two or more improvise a sound accompaniment for movement, they must adjust to each other as well as to the dancer.

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1 Self-accompaniment

Improvise freely together in movement and song, singing as you dance...

Problem 2 Song accompanying Movement

One partner improvises in movement, while the other improvises in song, adjusting the song to the movement.

Problem 3 Movement accompanying Song

One partner improvises in song, while the other improvises in movement, adjusting the movement to the song.

TRIO

Problem 1 Self-accompaniment

Same as Duet Problem 1.

Problem 2 Song accompanying Movement

Same as Duet Problem 2, with one dancing and two singing; or two dancing and one singing.

Problem 3 Movement accompanying Song

Same as Duet Problem 3, with one dancing and two singing; or two dancing and one singing.

Our insistence on the equal value of every group member's natural expression does not belittle the special contribution which certain individuals can make to the whole. As in each area we cover, some students will have a particular aptitude for this area and find it easy to express themselves freely in song. These students should be encouraged to contribute as much as they can to the group improvisations, not hesitating to assume a dominant role when it furthers the development of the theme.

An extraordinarily beautiful thing about free vocal improvisation by a group of dancers unspoiled by conventional singing techniques, is the rich variety of tonal color, blending in an organic unity as mysteriously alive as the sound of wind or water. It would be a great mistake to try to channel this living group expression into a conventional framework. Rather, let it find its own form. It is not necessary that the group sing in unison. Each member should sing as he feels. The common movement feeling will bind the whole together.

LARGER GROUPS

Problem 1 Self-accompaniment

Same as Duet Problem 1.

Problem 2 Song accompanying Movement

Same as Duet Problem 2, with group singing while individual dances.

Problem 3 Theme and Variations

Stand or sit or find some other position in a circle... establish a regular pulse by repeating continuously some simple movement (example: swaying from side to side)... begin to sing in accompaniment to the movement... you may begin by singing a single tone... gradually add other tones until you have a melody which is repeated over and over again... maintaining the basic movement, improvise freely in song... now let one member after another go into the center of the circle and improvise freely for a while in movement and / or song, while the group maintains the basic movement and melody... once the melody is established, it may be freely varied...

Students who have learned to create their own songs as movement accompaniment, and to dance to songs created by their fellow-students, find it easy to dance to traditional songs whenever the occasion arises. Christmas and other festivals present a good opportunity for this type of experience. A whole program can be built on traditional songs, with the students singing their own accompaniment, or dancing while the audience sings.

This last problem is for advanced groups only.

SONG WITH WORDS

Individual Study

Improvise freely in movement and song, singing a melody with words...

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1 Song accompanying Movement

One partner improvises in movement, while the other accompanies in song, improvising a melody with words and adjusting the song to the movement.

Problem 2 Movement accompanying Song

One partner improvises a song with words, while the other improvises in movement, adjusting the movement to the song.

LARGER GROUPS Self-accompaniment

With the members of the group scattered about the room, each begins to improvise freely in movement, song and words, according to his own feeling... gradually all try to become aware of one another's expression and to adjust to one another, until a single unified pattern has been created (it may be a single sung word accompanying a single movement, which all repeat over and over together, or it may be something more complex)... after the pattern has been firmly established, the group should try to develop it...

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 12

Speech

An excellent introduction to speech is to give the student this word to say: NO. It should be said in various ways and, while it is being said, the feeling of it should be expressed freely in movement of the whole body.

After NO has been fully explored, the word YES should be danced.

Then there can be couple dances in which the partners move alternately, one saying NO and the other YES. There can also be a group circle dance with one after another saying either NO or YES, according to plan or free choice.

NO and YES are such easy words to express in movement that spectators sometimes like to join the dancers in saying them.

CHAPTER 13

SOUND AND MOVEMENT: INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS

ORDINARY THINGS USED AS INSTRUMENTS

INSTRUMENT - MAKING

CONVENTIONAL INSTRUMENTS

ACCOMPANIMENT

Self-accompaniment

Individual Studies

Group Studies

Accompanying Each Other (Group Studies)

Sound Accompanying Movement

Movement Accompanying Sound

INSTRUMENTS AND VOICE

Individual Study

Group Studies

Outdoor Dance

In this chapter and in the two following ones, we offer many suggestions for outdoor dance. Whenever possible, students should have an opportunity to dance outdoors. A natural environment furthers spontaneity and ease of creative expression, counteracting the inhibiting artificiality of our indoor lives today. Use of natural objects as part of the dance brings us into intimate relationship and harmony with nature as a creative force.

New movements suggest new sounds, and a free approach to dance requires a free approach to music. Any body movement is material for dance, any sound is material for music. Our creative use of all kinds of body movement is paralleled by our creative use of sound wherever we find it.

It is desirable, although not always possible, to have a workshop available to dance students for the construction of original instruments. For some students, instrument-making will be an important step in strengthening their creative relationship to music. Students who are very much interested in this area should be encouraged to give as much time to it as possible. With or without special ability and using only the simplest tools, every student should be able to create an instrument which is entirely new and satisfying both in function and form.

ORDINARY THINGS USED AS INSTRUMENTS

Let us look around us, wherever we happen to be, to see if we can find something which makes an interesting sound. Anything will do. If we are outdoors in the country, we shall find things like stones to strike together, or a leafy branch to shake, etc. If we are indoors, we can rattle a door-knob, rustle a piece of paper, tap a typewriter, etc. ...

After you have found something, play it freely in such a way as to bring out its unique sound quality. As you play it, be aware of the movement you must make in order to produce the sound. Exaggerate this movement, making it with your whole body. Your instrument may be something which you can carry in your hand like a chain of keys, or it may be rooted in the ground like dry grass. Whatever it is, unite yourself to it through movement. Let it become a part of you, so that every movement you make expresses the sound of the instrument, and the sound of the instrument expresses your movement...

INSTRUMENT - MAKING

The next step in our study of sound and movement may be to construct an instrument according to our own original design, using easily available materials (oatmeal boxes and other containers for drums, spoons on glasses containing water at different levels, resonant blocks of wood for xylophones, seeds for rattles, bottle whistles, etc.). Be bold in making up a new kind of instrument or in making a variation on a familiar kind. Your instrument should make an interesting sound and it should be enjoyable to play. It should also be pleasant to handle and to see...

After you have made your instrument, play it...

Use your instrument to accompany yourself or someone else in movement...

A collection of instruments for class use should include as many different kinds as possible. Those listed here are especially practical for beginners because they are easy to handle, inexpensive, and available almost anywhere. Expensive or rare instruments should be reserved for advanced students. If a member of the student group can play the accordion, violin, clarinet or any other orchestral instrument, he should bring it to class and learn to improvise with it as freely and creatively as with these simpler ones. The addition of such an instrument can greatly enrich the group's musical experience.

CONVENTIONAL INSTRUMENTS

Any instrument may be used for creative expression in our study of sound and movement. Beginners should use instruments which can be carried in the hands (rattles, etc.) or worn on the body (wrist bells, etc.) allowing maximum freedom of movement, and which present no technical barriers. However, even such a stationary and technically demanding instrument as a piano can be used if it is approached freely as a percussion instrument without dependence on conventional scales or techniques.

The following instruments have been found especially useful because they are inexpensive and easily available at stores which sell musical instruments:

drums

rattles

cymbals

tambourines

cuban sticks

wrist bells

slide whistle

triangles

finger cymbals

sandpaper blocks

metal xylophones (toy)

ukeleles (toy)

flutes (toy)

When students are first introduced to an instrument collection, each one should be given an instrument without regard for preference, since there is as yet no creative basis for making a selection.

Just as movement has meaning only in relation to no movement, sound has meaning only in relation to silence. Students should become as sensitive to silence as to sound.

ACCOMPANIMENT

Self-accompaniment

Individual Studies

Problem 1 Movement without Sound

Select an instrument with which you would like to dance... Carry your instrument in your hand or, if it can be worn, wear it on your body. Move freely with it in silence. Do not let it make any sound at all. Instead, sense its size, shape, weight and texture, as you improvise in movement. An instrument is something to handle and to see as well as to hear...

Problem 2 Sound without Movement

Stand or sit quietly and play your instrument. Explore its unique sound qualities...

Problem 3 Sound and Movement

Use your instrument to accompany yourself in movement. Move freely, feel as if the instrument were an extension of your body, let the sound come out of your movement. Discover new movements while playing your instrument in different ways. Use your whole body: don't let the instrument inhibit your movement...

Group Studies

DUET, TRIO, LARGER GROUP

Improvise freely together in sound and movement, each accompanying himself with an instrument of his choice...

The teacher should select for the head of the procession a student who can maintain a regular pulse.

For additional notes on accompaniment, see page 296, and pages 407-408.

The musician's use of an instrument selected by the dancer furthers the unity of movement and sound. As preparation, the musician has been given opportunity to dance with the instrument himself.

LARGE GROUP "Processional "

With each member accompanying himself on a different instrument, the group forms a procession as follows: one member heads the procession, creating a pattern of sound and movement which he repeats continuously. The pattern should have a regular pulse and it should be simple and clear. One after another, members of the group join in, each adding a sound-and-movement pattern of his own while maintaining the common pulse and direction. Thus the procession moves along: if indoors, around the room; if outdoors, up and down hill, through the fields, around the trees. A good instrument for the head of the procession is a drum, but any instrument can be used, if the regularity of the pulse is maintained.

Accompanying Each Other (Group Studies)

Sound Accompanying Movement

DUET

Find a partner... each select an instrument which you like, then improvise individually with it in sound and movement...

Exchange instruments with your partner... improvise freely in sound and movement with your partner's instrument, while he improvises with yours...

Partner 1 keeps his partner's instrument while partner 2 puts the other instrument away and prepares to dance. Partner 2 now improvises freely in movement, while partner 1 accompanies him in sound. This is a duet in sound and movement. Partner 2 is responsible for the movement while partner 1 is responsible for the sound. The sound must be an outgrowth of the movement. It must follow, not lead, the movement. Follow it beat for beat. The dancer should improvise with a feeling for the quality of the sound which is accompanying him. The musician should express the quality of the movement in sound. Be sure that the sound is a result of the movement and does not precede it. The musician should watch the dancer carefully, breathe with him (the dancer should never watch the musician). Let the music be the voice of the dancer...

Now make another duet, with the roles of musician and dancer reversed. The musician uses the instrument which was selected by the dancer...

When a group is improvising a sound accompaniment for movement, it is not necessary for everyone to play all the time. Some instruments can express the quality of certain movements better than others. Members of the orchestra should play, or not play, according to their feeling for the quality of the movement in relation to the sound of their instrument. However, in the case of beginners' groups, it is better to play too much than too little. A beginners' orchestra must concentrate on following the pulse of the movement. An orchestra of advanced students can put more attention on expressing the quality.

One member of the group improvises in movement while the others accompany in sound, using any combination of instruments.

Movement Accompanying Sound

Problem 1 Qualities of Sound

Each member of the group selects an instrument. One after another demonstrates the sound of his instrument by playing on it in such a way as to bring out its unique quality. While he improvises in sound, one or more members of the group improvise in movement, expressing the quality of the sound.

Problem 2 Dancer following Orchestra

Members of the group sit (or stand or take any other position) in a circle, each with his own instrument. One member begins to play, improvising freely in sound on the basis of a regular pulse. One after another, the other members of the group join in, maintaining the basic pulse while improvising in sound. Now, one member puts his instrument down and goes into the center of the circle. While the group continues to play, the individual member improvises in movement, maintaining the pulse while freely expressing the quality of the sound. After a while he returns to his place and picks up his instrument, joining the orchestra again. Now another member of the group puts down his instrument and goes into the center of the circle. In this way every member of the group takes a turn improvising in movement while the rest of the group continues to play. In an experienced group there can be a creative interaction between individual and group, between movement and sound.

Speech and Song as movement accompaniment were studied in the preceding chapter, pages 285-301.

See notes on accompaniment, page 296, and pages 407-408.

INSTRUMENTS AND VOICE

Individual Study

Self-accompaniment

Accompanying yourself with an instrument of your choice in combination with your voice (speech and / or song), improvise freely in sound and movement...

Group Studies

DUET

Problem 1 Sound accompanying Movement

While one partner improvises freely in movement, the other improvises in sound, using one or more instruments and voice (speech and / or song). The sound adjusts to the movement.

Problem 2 Movement accompanying Sound

While one partner improvises freely in sound, using one or more instruments and voice (speech and / or song), the other improvises in movement. The movement adjusts to the sound.

TRIO OR LARGER GROUP

While one member of the group improvises freely in movement, the others improvise in sound, using instruments and voice (speech and / or song). The sound adjusts to the movement.

Flame Beat

Sound Accompaniment for Movement
created by dance student

notated by musician

DRUM

WORDS

OUT OF THE SI-LENCE AND BE-YOND SOUND BURNS THE FLAME

DRUM

WORDS

IN THE HEART OF THE FIRE BEATS THE DRUM

DRUM

WORDS

WHERE THE FLAME BEATS BURNS THE DRUM BEAT

DRUM

WORDS

IN THE PULSE OF THE DRUM BEATS THE FLAME

DRUM

WORDS

BURN-ING WITH A STILL FIRE

DRUM

WORDS

BE-YOND SOUND IN-TO A SI-LENCE

Flat Drum

rubber heads laced with leather thongs,
metal frame

Snapper Pipes

pieces of bamboo,
split so that they can be plucked

Singing Plate

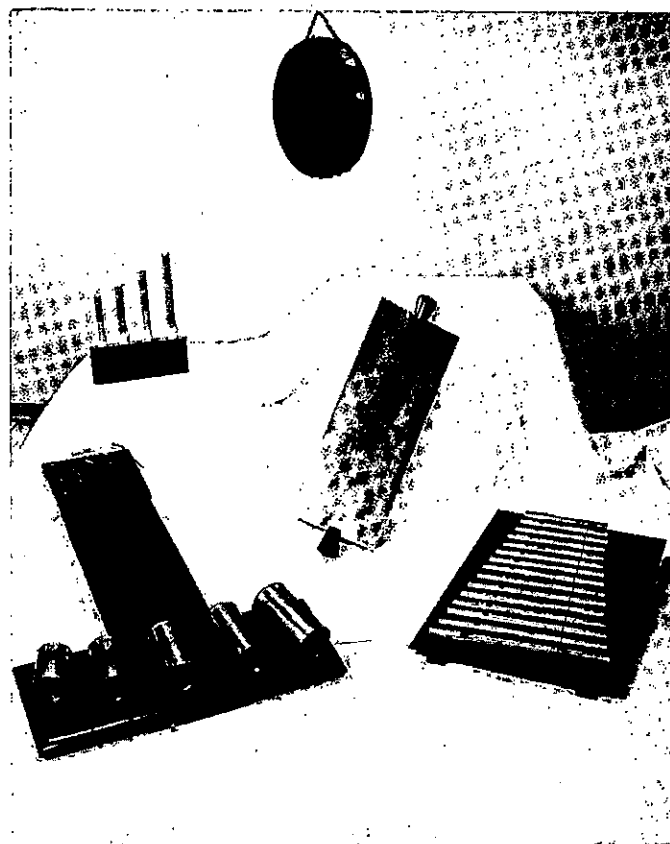
sheet of aluminum played by bending

Can Harp

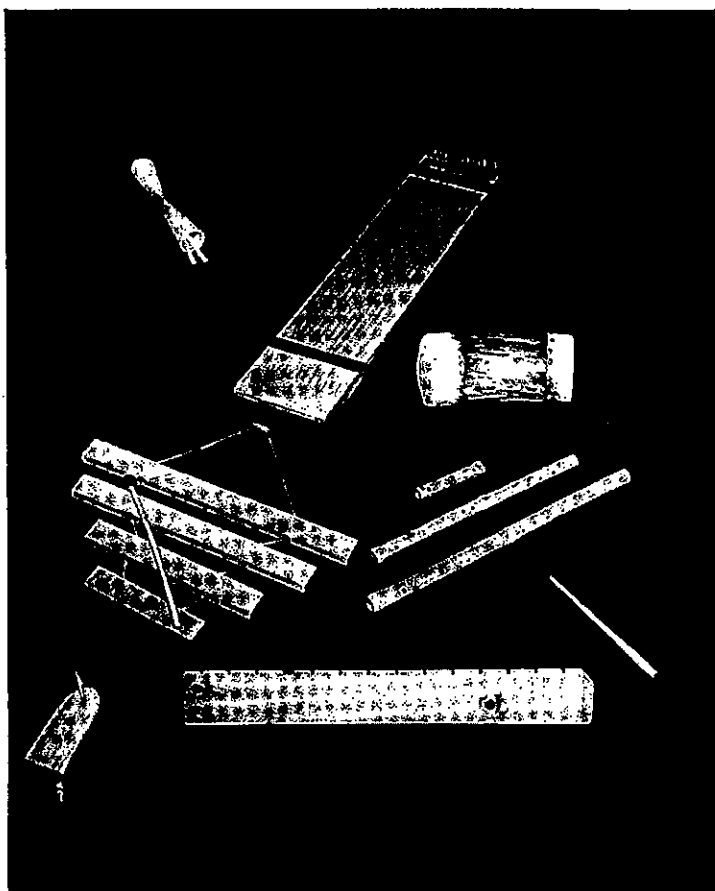
nylon strings, tin can resonators

Copper Xylophone

various lengths of copper tubing
to be struck with hard or soft beater



STUDENT-MADE INSTRUMENTS



Double Shaker

hollowed-out tree limb,
split-bamboo clappers

Stringed Instrument

strings mounted on hardwood board

Log Drum

hollowed-out log, deerskin heads

Flutes

made of bamboo fishing pole

Wooden Xylophone

pieces of hardwood flooring,
to be struck with beater

Wire Block

graduated lengths of wire
to be plucked or struck with stick

Wooden Bell

hollowed-out wood block

CHAPTER 14

MOVEMENT AND VISUAL DESIGN

MOVEMENT AS VISUAL EXPERIENCE

Individual Study

ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

Individual and Group Studies

line
plane
volume
mass
contrasted elements
texture
light and color

DESIGN IN ORDINARY THINGS

Individual Study

DESIGN BASED ON MOVEMENT

Individual Studies

in sand or snow
drawing
sculpture, construction
finger-painting

Group Study

MOVEMENT BASED ON DESIGN

Individual Study

Group Study

BASIC MOVEMENT DRAWINGS

Individual Studies

in place
place to place

Movement is basically a motor experience, sensed through the muscles (kinesthetic sense), independent of ear and eye. It is possible to have a dance experience without hearing or sight. Nevertheless the complete dance experience may involve all the senses, of which the kinesthetic sense is the coordinating element.

Regardless of whether we are constructing a single lesson or a complete course of study in dance, our teaching progression is usually:

from PURE MOVEMENT

to SOUND

to SIGHT

The kinesthetic sense is the most inner of all of our senses, informing us of occurrences within our own body. Our most outer sense is the sense of sight, which enables us to perceive things at a great distance from ourselves. Hearing is both inner and outer: we can hear things which are outside ourselves but they must be near enough to set our own ear-drums vibrating in accord. It is our experience that, no matter what preference a student may have for one area or another, his creative expression develops most naturally if he is first given studies in pure movement, then studies in sound, then studies in sight.

Line is one-dimensional in feeling, in contrast to plane which is two-dimensional, and volume and mass which are three-dimensional. (See note on Dimension, page 248).

CHAPTER 14 MOVEMENT AND VISUAL DESIGN

MOVEMENT AS VISUAL EXPERIENCE

Movement creates visible patterns in space. We must learn to visualize our body movements so that, uniting our sense of sight with our sense of movement, we can employ both visual and motor imagination in the creation of expressive movement forms.

Individual Study

Improvise freely in body movement... as you move, visualize your movement... follow your movement with your mind's eye... see clearly the pattern it is making in space... be sure that the spatial pattern is clear... be aware of the direction of every movement... using your body as a tool, draw and carve out shapes in the space around you... all kinds of shapes... curved shapes... angular ones... vertical... horizontal... symmetrical... asymmetrical... any shapes which appeal to your visual sense...

ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

Line

Body movement creates line. Let us explore the linear quality of movement.

These studies in Line, using parts of the body, may be done in the lying position with eyes closed, or in the sitting or standing position.

Individual Studies

Problem 1

Body Parts

Draw lines in the space around you, using:

one finger...

the whole hand...

arm and hand...

both arms and hands...

head...

shoulders...

elbow...

wrist...

toe...

foot...

leg and foot...

The force, time and space patterns of a movement all influence its visual design, but the space patterns are the most definitive. Studies in space (Chapter 11) and studies in visual design may be interwoven in the fabric of a single lesson.

both legs and feet...

hips...

trunk...

Problem 2 Whole Body

Using your whole body as a single tool, with arms and legs subordinate, move through the room drawing lines in space...

Problem 3 Qualities of Line

Using any part or all of the body, draw lines which are:

long...

short...

curved...

straight...

swiftly moving...

slowly moving...

strong...

weak...

wide...

narrow...

Additional group studies in Line will be found in Chapter 11 (Space), page 223.

We have already been introduced to Plane as a spatial characteristic of movement in Chapter 11 (Space), page 237.

The concept of plane is difficult to communicate to a dance class except in relation to some tangible surface like the floor or wall.

Problem 2 Two or More Lines

Same as Problem 1, with two or more lines moving in relation to each other...

Plane

Movement can create planes. A plane is a flat two-dimensional surface. Three basic planes are: horizontal, vertical and inclined.

Individual Studies

Horizontal Plane

Lie down on your back on the floor... confining yourself to this position, make movements which are parallel to the floor... your movements are creating horizontal planes...

Continue to create horizontal planes in movement, while freely varying your position and moving about the room...

Vertical Plane

Stand with your front, back or side toward a flat wall... remaining in this position, make movements which are parallel to the wall... your movements are creating vertical planes...

Continue to create vertical planes while moving freely about the room...

Inclined Plane

An inclined plane is between vertical and horizontal.

Improvise freely in movement, creating inclined planes...

Contrasting Planes

Improvise freely in movement, contrasting horizontal, vertical and inclined planes...

Group Studies

Improvise freely together on the theme of plane...

Volume

Movement can create a feeling of volume. A volume is an empty enclosed space.

Individual Studies

Experiment freely in movement, creating a feeling of volume, using:

hands...

hands and arms...

legs...

whole body...

The body is a three-dimensional instrument but it can create movements which are two-dimensional, or even one-dimensional, in feeling. It is not hard to create movements with a feeling of line, plane, volume or mass if we imagine that the space around us is solid and that we are actually carving out shapes with our body as tool. The whole body is the tool and the use of it will vary according to the shape which we want to create. (See paragraph about shape of instrument, page 250).

Individual or Group Study

Improvise freely in movement on the theme of volume...

Mass

Movement can create a feeling of mass. A mass is a filled space, having thickness and weight.

Individual or Group Study

Experiment freely in movement, creating a feeling of mass...

Contrasted Elements

Individual or Group Study

Improvise freely in movement, contrasting line, plane, volume and mass...

Texture

Texture is perceived directly through the sense of touch and indirectly through the sense of sight. It is possible to experience and express tactile qualities through body movement.

Some of these tactile qualities have already been experienced in our study of free vocal sound (Chapter 12, pages 271 - 273).

Individual Studies

Express these tactile qualities in body movement:

rough...

smooth...

hard...

soft...

coarse...

fine...

prickly...

fluffy...

fuzzy...

sticky...

slimy...

slippery...

scratchy...

bumpy...

rubbery...

velvety...

silky...

oily...

greasy...

airy...

watery...

misty...

sandy...

stringy...

hairy...

furry...

muddy...

granular...

syrupy...

gravelly...

cottony...

wet...

dry...

hot...

cold...

In our studio two very interesting discoveries have been made concerning the relation of movement expression to visual experience.

1. When asked to express light and darkness in body movement, every student without exception expresses light in out-going, expansive, open movement, and darkness in movement which is in-drawing, withheld, and closed.
2. When asked to express the colors red and violet, students always express red with active movement, and violet with movement which is passive in feeling.

This reveals a deeper biological relationship between movement expression and sight than one which is based on pure intellectual association ("purple suggests kings", etc.). According to universal human experience, light furthers growth and expansion, darkness results in restricted motion and decay. The colors toward the red end of the spectrum require more tension (activity) on the part of the eye muscles in focussing them on the retina than the colors toward the violet end. Because of the danger of mistaking intellectual association for authentic movement feeling, we must proceed carefully in our study of visual experience in relation to dance.

Light and Color

Although sensations of light and color are almost exclusively visual, they have meaning for the body as a whole and can be expressed in body movement.

Individual and Group Studies

Improvise freely in movement on each of these themes:

light...

darkness...

red...

violet...

DESIGN IN ORDINARY THINGS

Individual Study

Look around you for something which has an interesting visual pattern: a tree, a chair, a lamp shade, any ordinary thing. Look at it carefully. Study its shape: lines, planes, volume, mass, texture and color. Sense the qualities of its unique design through your whole body. Now express it in movement...

Experiences like these are not only for children. They are basic to everyone's aesthetic experience in movement and design. The average adult's level of creativity today is actually below that of the child's and needs primitive experiences to give it vitality.

Newsprint (because it comes in large sheets and is very inexpensive) and the kind of heavy black crayon which is sold for marking packages are especially good materials for this sort of work.

Picasso has been quoted as saying
"When you draw, close your eyes and sing".

These drawings should be evaluated not as diagrammatic representations of movement but rather as expression of feeling translated from one medium (body movement) to another (visual design).

It was suggested in connection with instrument-making (page 304) that a workshop be available where dance students can extend their creative activities in the direction of construction and design. Such a workshop would be useful at this point in our study. Creative experience in dance releases creativity in other directions, and students will find the studies in this chapter a bridge to activity in the visual arts.

DESIGN BASED ON MOVEMENT

Individual Studies

- in sand or snow If possible, go out into the sand or snow and, using your feet and legs, or arms and hands, or whole body, make movements which result in interesting visual designs...
- drawing Spread out some newspaper on the floor and have ready a thick black crayon or piece of charcoal...
- Make a single movement with your whole body which has a clear and interesting visual design... repeat the movement several times until you know exactly what you are doing... now, sitting or kneeling on the floor with your crayon on the paper and your eyes closed, reproduce the design of your movement with your hand and arm and, as far as it is possible in this position, with your whole body... do this again and again, using large free movements and retracing the pattern continuously... when you feel that you have really captured the feeling of the movement in the design which you have drawn, open your eyes and see what you have done... now take a clean sheet of paper the same size as the newspaper and recreate your design on this, improving it in any way you can to make it more expressive of the feeling of your movement and more satisfying to the eye...
- sculpture,
construction Make a movement with a clear and interesting visual design... recreate the design of the movement in some material or combination of materials (wire, string, paper, glass, wood, screen, cotton, clay, etc.), choosing your materials carefully to bring out the particular design elements...
- finger painting Using finger paints and paper, move freely with arm, hands and fingers to create interesting visual designs...

As a result of these studies, the dance student will find a creative relationship to all visual design through movement. Not only will he feel free to express himself in drawing, painting and sculpture, but he will also find a new enjoyment in contemplating works of visual art.

Group Study

One member of the group (or each member in turn) creates a movement with a clear visual design then shows it to the other members of the group who recreate it (each individually) in graphic, plastic or construction materials.

MOVEMENT BASED ON DESIGN

Individual Study

First create a design, using any medium, with a clear movement feeling, then recreate the feeling of your design in body movement...

Group Study

Each member of the group creates a design with a clear movement feeling, then shows it to the other members of the group who recreate it (individually or all together) in body movement.

These studies, which enables the student to experience visually and tactually the pattern of his movements while he is executing them, strengthen the relationship between the senses of movement, sight and touch. They also include hearing, if the student will vocalize his movement at the same time (see Free Vocal Sounds, pages 267-279). The experience of expressing a single impulse through movement, sound, sight and touch all at the same time, can help overcome even the most serious handicaps in students whose rhythmic feeling is hard to develop. A large blackboard accomodating a number of persons gives opportunity for group work, which is especially desirable for beginners.

BASIC MOVEMENT DRAWINGS

Individual Studies

in place

Standing in front of a blackboard with chalk in one or both hands, repeat continuously some basic movement, drawing as you move... try to transfer the feeling of the movement to the drawing...

Suggested Movements

jumping...

pendular arm swinging...

place to place

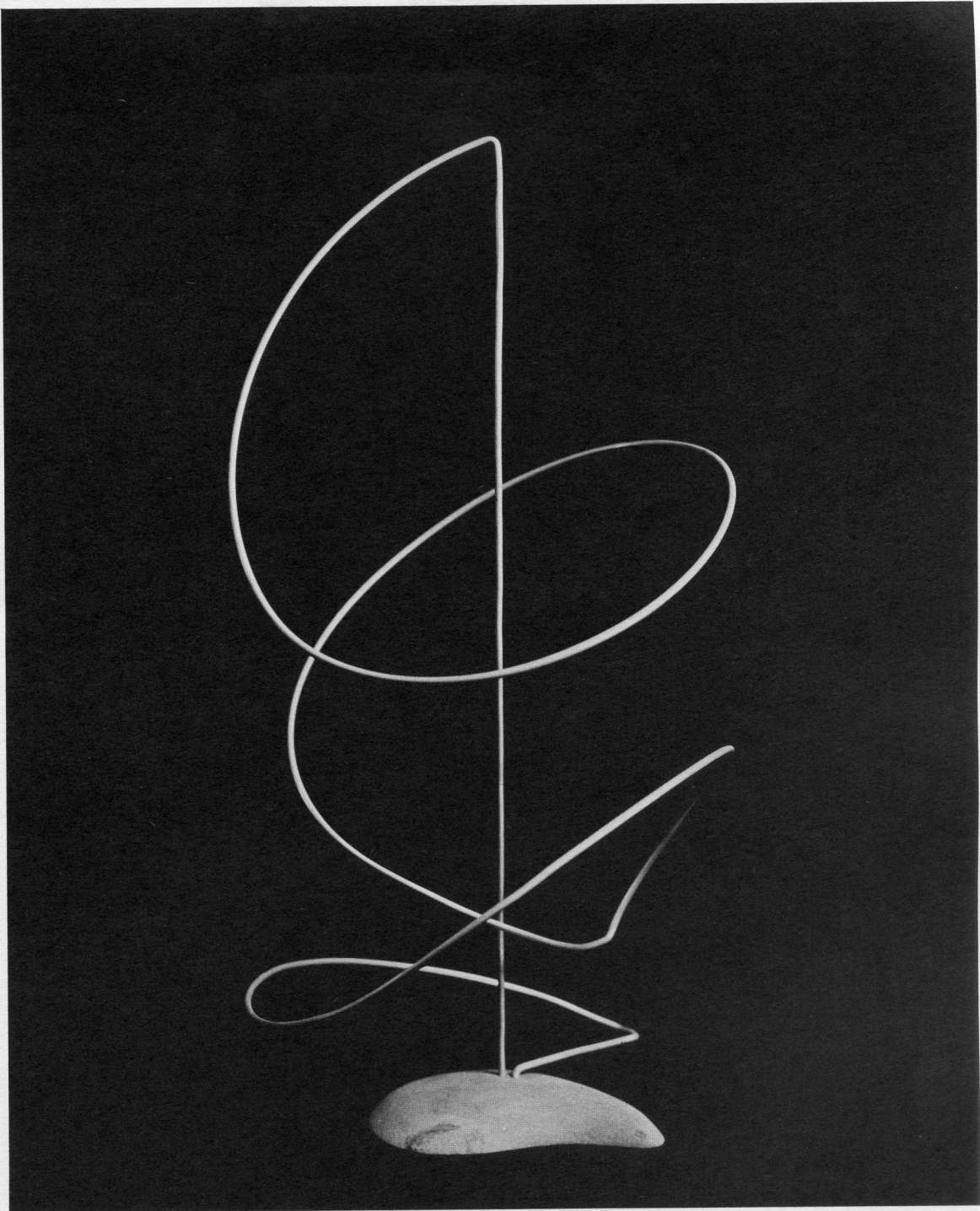
Using any graphic materials, express the feeling of some basic movement such as:

skipping...

galloping...

leaping...

turning...



Movement Sculpture (aluminum wire)

ADDITION TO CHAPTER 14

Smooth Walk and Run

When creating designs in movement, it may sometimes be necessary to walk or run smoothly without any spring in the knees or arm swing.

Exercises in walking and running, smoothly and otherwise, will be found in my book BASIC MOVEMENT EXERCISES, published in 1973.

Area

In contrast to line, which is one-dimensional, and volume and mass, which are three-dimensional, the basic two-dimensional element of visual design should be called area instead of plane.

This chapter should include the following study in area:

Freely create movements which have the feeling of two-dimensional forms.

CHAPTER 15

DESIGN IN MOVEMENT ENVIRONMENT

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Body Coverings

Outdoor Things

Indoor Things

Basic Materials

paint

cloth

other materials

Conventional Clothing

Portable Objects

Outdoor Things

Indoor Things

Basic Shapes

Tools and Equipment

Stationary Forms

Outdoor Things

Indoor Things

Basic Shapes

Architectural Forms

Moving Things

Natural Forces

Man-made Things

Living Creatures

Light and Color

Masks

Designing Costumes and Settings

GROUP STUDIES

Our body movements are an expression of a creative force within us. They are also an adjustment to an outer environment. Their form is the result of an interaction between us and our environment. Environmental influences can completely alter the natural form of our movement. On the other hand, our movement can change the form of the environment. Movement is a medium of exchange between us and the things around us. Our successful orientation in the physical world depends on a control of this medium. Lack of control over our movements in relation to our surroundings leads to clumsiness and inefficiency. Clumsiness creates feelings of inferiority and discontent. One of the results of a creative movement training is to enable us to move about the world less awkwardly, in harmonious relation to our environment.

Outdoor Dance is discussed on pages 304 and 360.

It is astonishing what an influence such decorations can have on our body movements. Through the enhancement of our physical form, our entire personality seems to take on new dimensions and characteristics which call for the creation of entirely new kinds of movement. The conscious creation of movement patterns in relation to various kinds of body covering can extend our movement experience in directions which would otherwise be unknown to us.

CHAPTER 15 DESIGN IN MOVEMENT ENVIRONMENT

The form of our body movement is influenced by the designs in our environment. This environment begins with our body coverings and extends to everything around us.

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

Body Coverings

Let us explore the influence of body coverings on our movement expression.

Outdoor Things

If you are outdoors in the country, go into the fields or woods and find something which you can wear somewhere on your body as an ornament: a flower, a feather, leaves, etc. Fasten the object to you somehow, using only natural materials as fasteners...

Indoor Things

If you are indoors in the city, find some ordinary thing like a paper bag, a towel, a piece of string, etc. Use it as a body covering or decoration. Do not use an actual article of clothing. Rather, transform into a costume something intended for another purpose...

Put your ornament or costume on and begin to move... see how its size, shape, weight, texture and color influence your movement... let it become an extension of your body, enhancing your movement... move in such a way as to bring out its unique tactile and visual qualities... it may even have movement and sound qualities of its own, like a piece of newspaper used for a skirt or a wristlet of dried leaves; if so, let your movement bring out these qualities also... let your costume stimulate you to move in new ways...

Adjusting our movements to the painted appearance of our body can completely transform our movement expression. It is an excellent means of getting out of the rut of our habitual movement patterns. At this point in our study, the use of a mirror can be helpful, since paint is primarily a visual medium. Moving in front of a mirror can help us clarify the visual design of our movement.

Studies in mask-making will be found on page 365.

Learning to express movement feelings suggested by body coverings establishes a creative basis for the wearing of clothes, and for costume design in daily life and in dance.

The principles underlying our use of all materials are the same: awareness of the design elements inherent in the material and expression of the movement feelings which they suggest.

Basic Materials

paint

Wearing a minimum of clothing and using ordinary or theatrical body make-up, paint your face or body in ways which suggest interesting movement qualities. For example, a long line painted down the arm suggests one kind of movement, whereas circles painted around the arm suggest another; if one arm is painted one color and the other arm another, still a different quality of movement is suggested. Painting the face can create an abstract, mask-like expression, suggestive of many interesting movement experiences. See how you can transform your body, by painting it, into an entirely new instrument of expression...

cloth

Any piece of cloth may be used as body covering, and experiments should be made with various kinds in various sizes, shapes, weights and textures. Use the cloth to clothe first one part of the body then another. See how each different costume makes you want to move.

Some suggested ways of using the cloth :

Pile it on top of your head...

Hang it over your head, covering your face...

Wrap it around your neck...

Drape it over one or both shoulders...

Wrap it around one arm or leg...

Let it hang over your wrist...

Tie it around your waist or hips...

Bind together both hands or feet...

other materials

Rope, paper, metal, plastics, almost any material can be used as body covering. Many things should be tried with the aim of extending the range of your movement expression as widely as possible.

Using conventional articles of clothing for their pure design elements rather than for their everyday usefulness requires a shift of emphasis from utilitarian to aesthetic experience. (See paragraph on aesthetic experience, page 399)

Some of the studies in this chapter are closely related to the study called Design in Ordinary Things on page 343 in Chapter 14, with this difference: the study in Chapter 14 is the translation of an experience from one medium (visual design) to another (body movement); the studies in this chapter are the adjustment of our body movements to the design in our environment.

conventional
clothing

Wear some article of conventional clothing and improvise freely with it in movement, adjusting your movement to its design, its visual and tactile qualities.

Some suggested articles:

glove...

shoe...

hat...

skirt...

trouser...

Portable Objects

The same things which we have used as body coverings may be used more freely as objects held in the hands. For example, a piece of cloth may be waved, whipped, swept across the floor, tossed in the air, etc. In addition, we can find any number of portable things which offer new and interesting movement experiences. Choose one and make a dance with it.

Some suggestions:

Outdoor Things

rocks, branches, shells, etc...

Indoor Things

book, plate, pencil, etc...

Basic Shapes and Materials

ball, rod, rope, block (wood), sheet (paper, metal), cloth, etc...

A study of movement expression in relation to utilitarian tools and equipment (as well as to clothing and architecture) could become a subject for important research in such fields as physical education, psychology, therapy, and industrial design.

The visual design of a movement is an outgrowth of its space pattern. Our studies in Space (Chapter 11) are the basis for our studies in Visual Design (Chapters 14 and 15). Studies presented here under the heading Stationary Forms are related to studies in Chapter 11, pages 233 and 245.

Outdoor Dance

We are so accustomed to dancing indoors in man-made surroundings that few of us realize how enlivening the experience of outdoor dancing can be. The outdoors has a life of its own, vibrant and powerful, which calls forth all our natural creative resources when we move in relation to it (see note on page 304). The use of voice in accompanying our own movements can intensify the naturalness and freedom of outdoor dance (see Chapter 12: Sounds of Voice, Hands and Feet).

The construction of basic shapes large and strong enough to be used as settings for individual or group movement would be an interesting project for students who have inclination and skill in the direction of construction and design.

Here is an interesting variation on the theme of Stationary Forms which might be called:

<u>Living Stationary Forms</u>	Two (or more) members of the group, assuming a position which has an interesting visual design, unite to create a single stationary form. With this form as setting, one member (or several members) of the group dance in relation to it.
--------------------------------	--

Tools and Equipment

broom, hammer, baseball bat, cooking utensil, etc...

Stationary Forms

The same things which we have used as body coverings or portable objects may be used as stationary forms. For example, a piece of cloth may be laid on the floor. It may lie in graceful folds or in a rumpled heap, or it may be spread out in a smooth rectangle, etc. In any case, the design of our movement will adjust to the design of the material on the floor, establishing a creative relationship between it and ourselves.

Outdoor Things

Move in meaningful spatial relationship to a tree, flower, fence, rock, hill, etc...

Indoor Things

Move in a meaningful spatial relationship to a chair, table, rug, lamp, etc...

Basic Shapes

It is worthwhile for the dance student to improvise, if possible, with specially constructed stationary basic shapes such as cube, sphere, cylinder, cone, pyramid, steps, etc. These should be used separately at first, then in combination, to provide various spatial settings for movement.

Architectural Forms

Improvise freely in movement in relation to some architectural form such as a corner of the room, a door, a window, stairs, etc...

The idea of creating dance experiences in partnership with the wind, the rain, or a cat or dog, or a machine, may seem fantastic. Yet are we not always trying to adjust our body movements to the movements of our environment? Have you never bent your head or turned your back to protect your face from a driving rain? What about our abrupt startings and stoppings in response to traffic lights, our dodgings in and out among vehicles, the jostling of crowds in a busy street? Unless we are able to move creatively in relation to these things, frustration will build up tensions and our nervous systems will suffer. Creative movement experience is basic to daily life as well as to dance. There is no need to draw a sharp dividing line between utilitarian and aesthetic movement experience. As a result of these studies we should be able to dance through daily life.

Light and color in relation to body movement have been studied in Chapter 14 (Movement and Visual Design) page 343.

Moving Things

At this point the student of movement expression will enjoy trying to shape his movement creatively in relation to moving forces such as these :

Natural Forces

wind, rain, ocean waves, fire, etc...

Man-made Things

rocking chair, swinging door, bicycle, etc...

Living Creatures

Finally, we can experiment with movement in relation to living creatures such as a cat, dog, etc. These too are aspects of our environment which offer us opportunity for creative adjustment through the movements of our bodies. So are our fellow human beings. Every phase of our study of movement expression should further our creative relationship to them.

Light and Color

Light is a basic factor in our environment. The student of movement expression should have opportunity to experiment with movement in bright light, dim light and total darkness. Wherever possible, colored lights should be used to provide settings for movement experimentation. Different colors will be found to suggest different movement qualities. During these experiments, the student should wear colorless body coverings, unless special relationships between the color of the costume and the color of the light are desired.

These three areas of study are closely related :

Face Movement

page 35

Painting the Face

page 357

Masks

opposite page

Masks

Our face is the most personally expressive part of us and covering it up is a final step in learning to use our body as an abstract instrument of expression. We can use paint and other materials to ornament or alter the face, or to exaggerate certain features.

After you have changed your face to suit your imagination, improvise freely in body movement, shaping your movements to express the quality of your mask. This is one of the few times in our course of study when working in front of a mirror may be desirable...

Any ordinary thing can be used as a mask. If you are outdoors in the country, you can use a large leaf or piece of tree bark, etc. If you are indoors in the city, you can cover your whole head with a paper bag or pillow slip, etc.

Masks can be made out of paper, cardboard, metal, cloth, or any other material. For those who would like help in the craft of mask-making, there are books on the subject.

The problems outlined in the preceding sections of this chapter are now reversed. Instead of adjusting our movements to the designs in our environment, we create designs in our environment which are adjusted to our movements.

Designers of clothing, tools, equipment, furniture and houses, as well as designers of dance costumes and settings, should accommodate the body in motion, giving us ample opportunity to express ourselves freely according to our particular needs for movement. The design of our costume and settings can cause us to move with naturalness and freedom or with artificiality and inhibition, with ease or with difficulty, enjoyment or discomfort. It can evoke movement patterns which have some particular quality such as swiftness, smoothness, irregularity, heaviness, expansiveness, roughness, or any other. Let us be bold in exploring the use of all kinds of material to create designs which further creative movement expression.

The use of sound as movement accompaniment (vocal or instrumental sound, speech or music) can enrich these design studies, providing dance experiences which include movement, sound and sight. (See Chapters 12 and 13: Sound and Movement)

Designing Costumes and Settings

Problem 1

Design and make a costume for a movement study...

Wearing the costume, improvise in movement...

Problem 2

Design and construct an architectural setting for movement...

Move in relation to the setting...

Problem 3

Move in relation to a costume or setting designed by someone else...

GROUP STUDIES

Any of the individual studies presented in this chapter can be adapted to groups of various sizes.

CHAPTER 16 - REVISED

MOVEMENT AS DRAMATIC EXPRESSION

PREVIOUS STUDIES LEADING TO DRAMA

SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

Suggested Themes

for individuals

for couples and small groups

for large groups

Drama and Dance

Drama expresses a particular mood or emotion by representing the action of someone (or something) doing something. Dance expresses a general feeling-state by presenting a rhythmic pattern (see Supplementary Notes on Rhythm, pages 397 - 400).

Contrasting Characteristics

DANCE

presentation

rhythm

force, time, space patterns
equally important

general

feeling-state

abstract

sensory

DRAMA

representation

action

force patterns dominant

particular

specific mood, emotion, story

concrete

sensory-intellectual

Dance is the art of body movement. Because, as we have learned in the preceding chapters, body movement is both audible and visible, dance can lead us into the arts of sound (music, speech) and the arts of sight (drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture). Because body movement creates action, dance can lead us into the art of action (drama). Drama (like speech, music and visual design) can be an enrichment of dance, but the difference between dance and drama must be clearly understood. The material of dance is movement, the material of drama is action. The two arts are frequently confused because they use the same instrument: the human body.

CHAPTER 16 MOVEMENT AS DRAMATIC EXPRESSION

Our body movements can express a specific mood or emotion. They can tell a story. When they represent the action of someone (or something) doing something, we are acting.

We can dance and act at the same time. A single movement may be both dance and drama. Whether the movement is more dance or drama is revealed by its development. If it is more dance, then its abstract form will determine the form of the movements which follow. If it is drama, a story-like sequence will evolve.

Previous Studies Leading to Drama

Movement studies leading us from dance into drama have already been presented in these chapters:

Chapter 3
Everyday Language of Movement
page 73

Chapter 5
Movement Qualities Derived from Familiar Things
pages 93 - 101

Chapter 7
Force: Poles of Movement Expression
pages 131 - 141

Chapter 12
Sound and Movement: Speech
pages 287 - 293

There remains only one basic area of movement for the dancer to study: expression of specific emotions.

The following studies should not be attempted too soon. Until the dance student has acquired some control over the abstract elements of movement, it may be difficult to dance representational themes.

Some students will greatly enjoy dramatic movement expression while others will find it difficult. We should not expect all students to be equally responsive to all areas of dance. Dance is the central art, interpenetrating all others. Some dances are dramatic, others are musical, while still others are like drawings or sculpture in their emphasis on design. Only by approaching dance from many angles can we free it from bondage to any other art, and free the student to find not only his particular kind of dance but his natural creative relationship to all the arts.

Dramatic movement improvisations may use vocal or instrumental sound accompaniment, or they may be accompanied by speech. If there is accompaniment, it should be improvised simultaneously with the movement. (See Chapters 12 and 13, and Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407 - 408.)

SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

Improvise freely in movement expressing a specific emotion.
Voice sounds are not necessary but may be used if desired.

Suggested Themes

For Individuals

fear
rage
joy
sorrow
freedom
restraint
greed
generosity
reverence
pride
shame
wonder
frustration
begging
despair
contentment
revolt
submission
nightmare
pleasant dreams

For Couples and Small Groups

hide and seek

meeting and parting

competition

loyalty

conflict

harmony

For Large Groups

fear

mutual aid

celebration

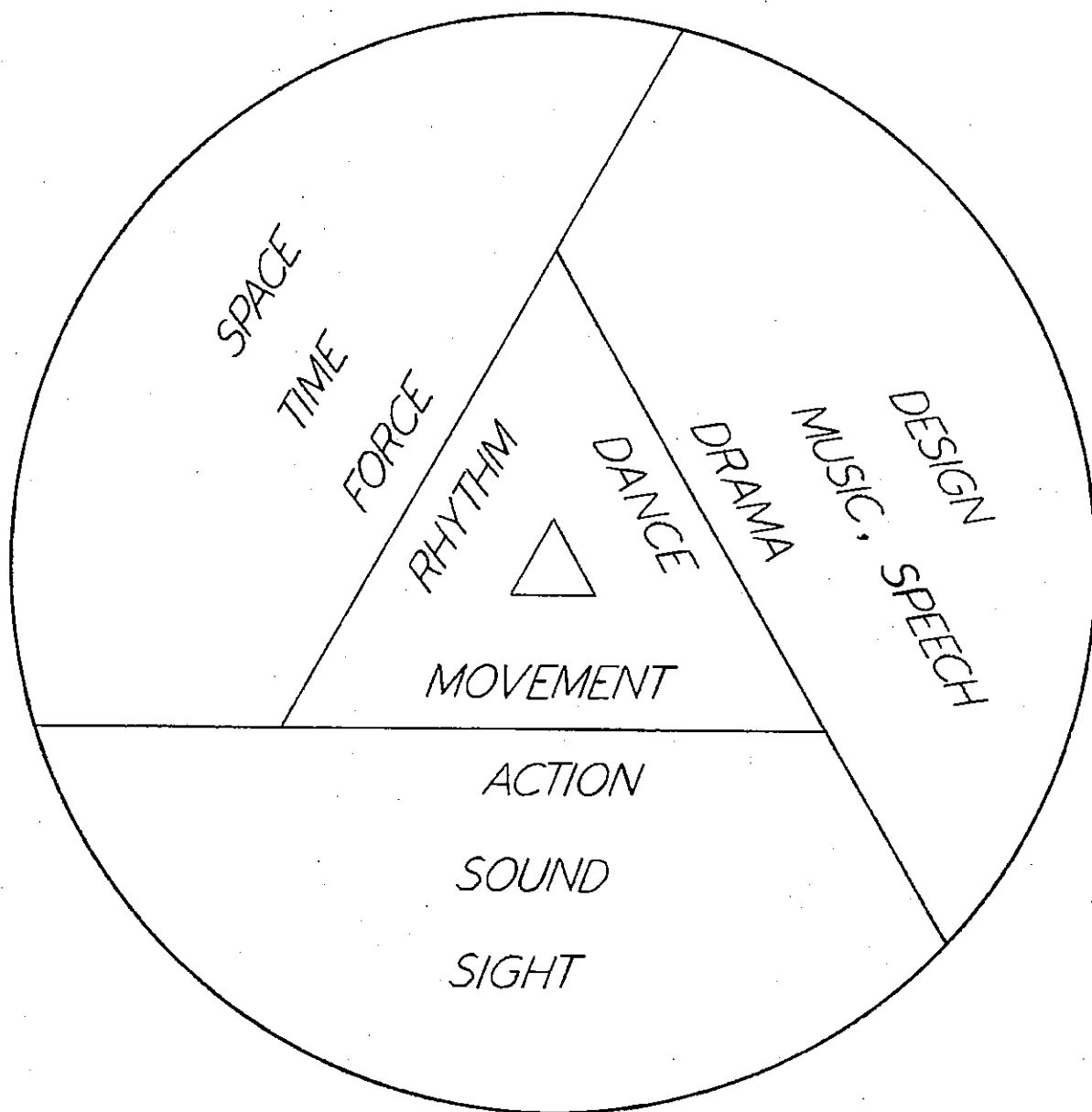
lament

victory

defeat

lost

parade



DANCE — THE CENTRAL ART

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

RHYTHM	397
IMPROVISATION	401
GROUP MOVEMENT EXPRESSION	403
ACCOMPANIMENT	407
PERFORMANCE	409
ROUTINE EXERCISES	413
CREATIVE TEACHING	417

RHYTHM

What is Rhythm?

Ask anyone at random: "What is rhythm?" and he will answer something like this: "It's a beat", "It's a flow", "It's a swing", or "Rhythm is order". Emerson said, "Rhythm is polarity". Rhythm is all of these things and much more. It is a creative principle of movement.

Movement is a manifestation of force in time and space. Force (energy), as we experience it in the movements of our own bodies, is not a steady undifferentiated stream but a succession of impulses, each distinct and yet continuous with the preceding and following one.

An impulse is a wave of energy rising out of rest to a peak of activity, then falling back to rest again.

Just as any wave tends to produce another wave, every impulse tends to create another. A succession of movement impulses, one growing out of another, is what we call a pulse.

In every movement impulse there is a peak of activity and, after the energy is spent, there is a stillness, a rest point before the new impulse occurs. It is the wave-like nature of the impulse, the alternation and balance of activity and rest, which we experience as rhythm.

"Rhythm is a beat"

In a rhythmic movement, the peak of activity (climax of accumulated force) is felt as a beat.

"Rhythm is a flow"

In a rhythmic movement, the wave of energy rises and falls in one continuous flow from beginning to end.

"Rhythm is a swing"

In a rhythmic movement there is the same effortless and inevitable growth of one movement out of another that there is in the swing of a pendulum.

"Rhythm is order"

Rhythm is the unifying principle of movement; the living flow of force which binds the separate parts of a movement into a whole and establishes a creative relationship between one movement and another.

"Rhythm is polarity"

The fundamental characteristic of rhythm is alternation and balance of activity and rest.

Sources of Misunderstanding

Today our understanding of rhythm is sometimes limited by these factors:

- ... We look for the source of rhythm in sound rather than in movement. Sound is audible movement, and rhythmic sound patterns can always be traced back to their motor origins.
- ... We over-emphasize the time element of rhythm, neglecting other factors.
- ... Rhythm is confused with metre. Rhythm is a creative principle of movement, metre is a form of measurement.
- ... Rhythm is confused with repetition. A rhythmic pattern may become more perceptible through repetition, but repetition does not make a movement rhythmic. A single movement, never repeated, may be as rhythmic as any number of its repetitions.

Rhythmic Awareness

All natural body movement is rhythmic, although its rhythm may or may not be perceived. Unrhythmic are only those movements which are inhibited, or distorted by disability or disease.

We must make a distinction between rhythm and rhythmic awareness. Rhythm is an objective reality, inherent in the movement. Rhythmic awareness (subjective) is perception of the movement's rhythm.

Everyone is capable of some rhythmic awareness. There is no-one who has no "sense of rhythm", although there are many in whom the functioning of this sense is undeveloped, inhibited or otherwise impaired.

A movement's rhythm may be perceptible to one person and not to another. Ability to perceive rhythmic patterns of movement, and to create them, is naturally stronger in some persons than in others. It is a faculty which can, to a large extent, be developed through training.

Rhythmic Patterns

There is a difference between rhythm and rhythmic pattern. Rhythm is the inner life of the movement. Rhythmic pattern is the outwardly perceptible aspect of that life. All natural movement is rhythmic, whereas individual movements differ according to rhythmic pattern.

A movement's rhythmic pattern is the particular wave-form of the impulse, determined by the amount of force and the way in which it is exerted. The pattern may be simple, having only one impulse, or it may be complex, having minor impulses within the major one. Rhythmic patterns of body movement can be analyzed in terms of force, time and space. The time element can sometimes be measured mathematically.

Every rhythmic pattern expresses some feeling within us, although the feeling is not necessarily one which can be put into words. Rhythmic feelings are too deeply rooted physically and psychologically, and too much a part of the creative core of our being, to be easily verbalized. Although it is simple enough to analyze the form of a rhythmic pattern, we are always at a loss for words when we try to describe the feeling which the form expresses. Rhythmic feelings cannot adequately be described. They must be experienced.

Function of Dance

The creation of rhythmic experience is the function of dance. Dance is the art of body movement. Its material is movement. Its instrument is the human body. Its substance is the rhythm of the movement of the body.

Insofar as other arts depend on movement, they too are concerned with rhythm. Music creates rhythmic experience in tone, poetry in words, painting in color, etc. Because all rhythmic experience is derived from movement, all arts are rooted in the art of movement, dance.

Our entire study of dance is a study of rhythm. Unless body movements are experienced rhythmically, they are not dance. From the first lesson to the last, the teacher should make every effort to awaken and cultivate the student's natural feeling for rhythm.

Part II of this book makes a concentrated study of rhythmic elements of movement. Awareness of these elements, and craftsmanship in using them to provide aesthetic experience, is the primary objective in our study of dance.

Aesthetic Experience

Art is the shaping of some material to provide aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience is enjoyment of the form of the material (movement, sound, color, etc.) for its expressiveness. A form is expressive insofar as it expresses the qualities inherent in the material and the feelings which these qualities may evoke. The fundamental quality of movement is rhythm. Body movement provides aesthetic experience when its form expresses the rhythmic impulses inherent in the movement and the feelings which these impulses evoke.

Pure and Applied Dance

Dance is the art of body movement: a central, basic and independent art. Pure dance may be combined with other arts, or applied to fields other than art such as recreation, therapy or entertainment. The more understanding we have of the nature of pure dance, the more we can enjoy it as art, and the more successfully we can apply it in any direction we wish. A study of pure dance is a study of form and rhythm of body movement. Every study in this book is a study of pure dance.

Because rhythmic patterns of movement may be audible, visible and may tell a story, pure dance may be enriched by music, speech, visual design and drama. This is quite different from deriving dance experiences from some other art or using dance to interpret music or drama. Pure dance is an experience of the rhythm of body movement. Its source is within us and we need not look elsewhere to find it.

Organic Dance Form

Rhythm is the inner life of a movement, enabling it to grow and evolve out of itself like a living thing. In our study of dance as a creative art activity, we learn to create body movements according to natural laws of rhythm. By allowing our body movements to evolve naturally, one growing out of another, we achieve what we call organic dance form.

The opposite of organic dance form is a sequence of movements arbitrarily constructed to fit into a preconceived form. Organic dance form allows movements to develop in accordance with natural rhythmic laws. These laws are biologically founded and only partially subject to the will of the dancer. The more craftsmanship the dancer has in working with them, the more perfectly he can form the movement as an expression of himself, and the more satisfying will be the dance.

In organic dance form, the form of the dance is the result of its function. Its function is the expression of the rhythmic feeling of a particular individual or group. No two dances are alike. Each one is unique, being an expression of the uniqueness of the individual dancer or group. Nature provides us with an unlimited variety of unique forms: no two trees, no two snow-flakes, no two human beings are alike. The form of a dance, if it is a living growth, is also unique, vital, true, inevitable.

IMPROVISATION

Every study in this book presents a theme for dance improvisation. A dance is improvised when it is created spontaneously by the dancer, or dancers, while dancing.

A dance lives only in the dancing, and the most creative moment of a dance is when it is first being created. Improvisation is a continuous process of creation in which forms may recur but are always new without exact repetition. If dance is an expression of life, exact repetition is impossible because we are never exactly the same at any moment of our life.

Improvisation is a creative skill which can be developed with practice. There is nothing more rewarding in our entire study of dance than the practice of improvisation.

Experience in improvisation makes it possible to improvise with so much awareness of form and continuity that the difference between improvisation and composition tends to break down.

A dance composition is a fixed dance form, created for the purpose of being repeated. Improvisation and composition are two different kinds of dance creation: the free and the fixed. Improvisation may be used as preparation for composition, but this is not its main function. It is an end in itself. We should aim to make each improvised dance a completely satisfying experience. It is our dance here and now, to be created and performed with all the skill at our disposal whether we are alone in our studio or sharing our dance with an audience. If there are a thousand spectators, or none, it makes no difference. We are giving ourselves as completely as we can to the creation of this dance.

With such an approach, every improvisation can be a fulfillment and a joy. Each dance is unique according to the time, the place and the people. Spectators can share creatively in the experience as they watch the movements unfolding before them.

In our improvisations we make no attempt to stir an audience by summing up vast areas of life experience originating outside ourselves. Our improvisations need not have impressive climaxes and conclusions. They are not interpretations of life, they are authentic life experiences - casual, flowing, irrevocable and precious - to be begun, continued and ended as simply as any other phase of life. These are life experiences on the aesthetic level, but let us not arbitrarily tear apart utilitarian and aesthetic experience. Any utilitarian daily life movement can have aesthetic value, and every dance has the utilitarian function of satisfying a need for rhythmic experience.

A program of dance improvisations can be as satisfying as - or more satisfying than - a program of dance compositions. Each improvisation may, or may not be, limited to a particular movement theme. A variety of themes gives color to a program of improvisation. Any of the studies in this book may be used as a theme for either improvisation or composition. Whoever has learned to improvise will find it easy to compose.

If a dance is to be composed, the most creative approach is to improvise it over and over again until the form falls into place of itself. As we improvise, certain movements will appear which are particularly satisfying, and these will tend to repeat themselves. Gradually, through repetition, some movement sequences become fixed while others naturally fall away. This process cannot be hurried. The more time we give to improvisation, the richer are the creative resources which we tap. A composition forced into shape too soon is likely to be a sterile construction.

"Choreography" is a word frequently heard today in connection with dance. Actually, choreography means dance-writing, but it seems to be used more and more to mean the structure of any composed dance. It may be a useful term when the functions of composer and dancer are separated, but we do not need it in our study of creative dance.

GROUP MOVEMENT EXPRESSION

Individual and Group

A group of persons, like an individual person, is a living organism, made up of various differentiated parts, all of which must work together as a whole if the organism is to function effectively. Just as no two individuals are alike, no two groups are alike and no two move in exactly the same way. To enable each group (as well as each individual in the group) to develop its own unique powers of creative movement expression is the aim of all our group studies in dance.

An individual reaches his creative fulfillment as a member of a group. In a creatively functioning group, each member has ample opportunity to express himself as an individual, while at the same time subordinating himself to the total group expression. The group expresses itself through its members just as its members express themselves through the group. Too much emphasis on individual expression, or too much emphasis on the group, can destroy the natural balance between individual and group.

The interaction of individual and group is a theme which runs continuously through our study of dance as a creative art activity. Every chapter in this book contains practical studies in group movement expression.

Group movement expression is a natural outgrowth of individual movement expression, and the creative work of a large group rests firmly on the work of small ones. In any new area of study, the solving of individual problems precedes the solving of group problems. Group studies begin with duets and proceed gradually to larger and larger groups until the individual learns to assume a creative role in a group of any size.

Group Body: Group Movement

A group body, like an individual body, has certain natural potentialities for movement, which can be discovered by any group which sets out to explore group movement through improvisation.

An individual body is characterized by two arms, two legs, a head, ten fingers, etc., each with its relative position and capacities for movement. In a group body, these individual features are quite subordinate to features which characterize the group body, such as:

Number of members: a group of three moves in quite a different way from a group of four or five, etc.

Nature of members: persons of different age, sex, size, health, temperament, etc., have different capacities for movement.

Arrangement of members: a circular arrangement makes possible certain movements which are not possible in a line, etc.

A group movement is not a sum of individual movements. It is something quite different: a different kind of movement. In group movement expression, each separate member of the group must be aware of the movement which he himself is making, but this awareness must be subordinate to an awareness of the group movement as a whole. The development of the group movement is the dominant factor in determining every movement which the individual makes.

Theme Development

The satisfactory development of a group improvisation depends on the ability of each member of the group to recognize and to create group movement themes. The individual member of the group must continually ask himself throughout the dance: what form is the group movement trying to take, and how can I help it achieve this form?

Sometimes one can further the development of a theme by merely allowing oneself to be drawn along by its flow. At other times one must take the lead in helping clarify the movement's form. There are times for unison movement when all are moving in the same way, times for some members of the group to be still while others are moving, times when the group breaks up into sub-groups with contrasting movements, times for an individual to dance by himself against a background provided by the rest of the group.

The form of any movement has a particular quality depending on its patterns of force, time and space. As a movement emerges in group improvisation, every member of the group must be aware of its quality, so that all can cooperate in developing it. If the movement's force pattern is dominant, it may require dramatic development, possibly even use of speech. A movement with a dominant time pattern may be developed musically, using available sound (sounds of voice, hands, feet, etc.). A movement with spatial emphasis may require development as visual design. If some members of the improvising group are aware only of the force pattern, while others are aware only of the pattern of time or space, there will be conflict instead of cooperation in the development of the movement theme.

The level of group movement awareness is determined by the level of individual awareness. All of the studies in this book provide material for raising this level.

Improvisation or Composition

The most creative form of group dance is the dance which evolves organically as a result of group improvisation. Whether this dance remains an improvisation or becomes a composition, it is created by the dancers themselves while dancing.

Some dance groups prefer to have their dances composed by an individual who directs the group from the outside. Although this has the advantage of giving free rein to the individual imagination of the director, it can never fully express the live collective entity which is a group.

Teaching Progressions

Our study of group movement follows these two basic teaching progressions:

I FREE AND UNISON MOVEMENT

Step 1 Free Movement

Every member of the group improvises freely, adjusting his movements in any way he wishes to the movements of the rest of the group.

Step 2 Unison Movement

All members of the group make the same movement at the same time, first with a leader, then without a leader.
(See below: Led and Leaderless Group)

Step 3 Free Movement

Same as Step 1. As a result of the discipline of Step 2, the group expression is now on a higher creative level.

II LED AND LEADERLESS GROUP

Step 1 Leaderless Group

The group improvises freely without a leader.

Step 2 Led Group - Constant Leadership

One member of the group leads the improvisation, while all others follow. Every member of the group should be given a turn as leader.

Step 3 Led Group - Leadership Changing According to Plan

One member of the group leads the improvisation while all others follow. At the conclusion of every movement, the leadership passes from one to another according to a pre-arranged plan of succession.

Step 4 Led Group - Leadership Freely Changing

Same as Step 3 with this difference: the leadership passes freely from one to another according to the development of the movement, without a pre-arranged plan.

Step 5 Same as Step 1. The group improvises freely without a leader. As a result of the disciplines of steps 2, 3 and 4, the group expression is now on a higher creative level.

The above progressions should be used again and again as a means of developing group movement awareness and expression. They appear many times in combination with other problems throughout this book.

Craftsmanship

A group which has had time to develop craftsmanship in the art of body movement, through a systematic study of the creative material presented in this book, will be able to create group dances, improvised or composed, which are completely satisfying as dance experiences.

There are no short-cuts to this goal. A mature group movement expression can be produced only by a group which has had time to grow to maturity as a living, moving organism.

In the meantime, if the effort is honest, all that the group creates will have true aesthetic value and will be an enjoyable experience.

ACCOMPANIMENT

In our study of dance as a creative art activity, we never use music as background for movement. Nor do we ever use musical accompaniment to supply some element which is lacking in the movement, or to make the movement more interesting. If the movement of a dance is not complete and interesting in itself, no amount of musical accompaniment can make it so.

Only if a dance is inherently musical do we create musical accompaniment to make audible the otherwise unheard sound of the movement which is already an integral part of the dance.

Let us not limit ourselves, in our approach to music, to the traditional diatonic scale. Music is the art of sound: the shaping of sound (any sound) to provide aesthetic experience. Creative dance needs creative music, and creative music must have freedom of expression. Too much reliance on conventional musical scales and instruments can cramp the creative activity of a dance group.

A dance may be silent, or it may be accompanied by sounds of music or speech. If the dance requires sound, the dancer may accompany himself, or he may be accompanied by someone else. The accompanist should, if possible, be a member of the same dance group, sharing with the dancer a common background of experience in movement, and in sound as movement accompaniment.

The dance and the sound accompaniment should be improvised at the same time, even when the goal is composition. Only in this way can the two be developed as a single unified creative expression.

All the study material needed by a dance group to provide musical accompaniment for its dancing is presented in our studies in Chapters 12 and 13 (Sound and Movement). These studies, being grounded in primitive modes of expression, are suitable for all kinds of groups, with or without previous musical experience. At the same time, they are free enough to give ample opportunity for creative expression to the most highly developed musical imagination.

In the most creative form of dance, every aspect of the dance including sound accompaniment is created by the members of the dance group. However, if a dance group wishes to use music created by someone else, this will be easy to do on the basis of our studies in sound and movement, which are the best possible creative preparation for any use of music as accompaniment to dance.

Teacher's Use of Sound

The sound of the teacher's voice, giving verbal instructions, is a form of accompaniment and an important creative element of every dance class. Instructions may be given in a loud or soft voice, with a feeling of activity or passivity, at a fast or slow pace, etc., according to the nature of the movement problem. Every teacher should make an effort to cultivate his voice as an instrument of expression on the highest possible aesthetic level.

Only occasionally is it necessary for the teacher to provide sound accompaniment for class other than the sound of his own voice. For occasional use, the most practical instrument is a hand drum, easily carried about and played with a felt-head beater. Skill in handling the drum and beater while teaching can be acquired with practice.

Some uses of the drum as class accompaniment are suggested on page 124, and throughout Chapter 10.

PERFORMANCE

Purpose

The purpose of a dance performance is the sharing of a dance experience. Dance, like every art, is an activity. It is primarily something to do and only secondarily something to show.

The student of dance must learn to create dance experiences which satisfy his own needs for creative experience. Because we are social beings, these experiences will be enriched if they are shared. In this sense, dance performance can be the fulfillment of dance creation.

Principles

Experience in performance can begin in one of the first lessons. After being given ample opportunity to improvise freely unobserved, students may be allowed to observe one another.

This first performance should not be an individual one. Rather, it should be a duet or trio. Individual performance can come later, after there has been some development of group feeling.

As students gain experience performing for each other, they should learn these principles of performance:

- ... to approach performance as the sharing of an experience.
- ... to choose a position in the room according to the needs of the dance and the group situation. Sometimes it may be best for the student performers to remain wherever they happen to be when called upon. At other times it may be best for them to go into the center of the room or to some other part of it.
- ... to walk to the place and assume a starting position with assurance and calm.
- ... to pause for a moment in both starting and finishing position to frame the movement of the dance in no movement.
- ... to maintain uninterrupted concentration throughout the dance: for the sake of the experience itself, for the sake of fellow-performers, and for the sake of the audience

Not only the student performers, but also the audience, need instruction. Members of the audience must not remain on the outside of the dance, observing it passively, analytically, critically. They must observe creatively, making an active and generous effort to identify themselves with the dancers, to sense the movements in their own muscles, to breathe with the dancers, to be a part of the dance. A lazy attitude (expressed in body position) on the part of the student audience should not be permitted. The observers must make an active effort to receive the experience which the performers are trying to share with them.

If these principles are adhered to, there will be no difference between a performance for one's fellow-students and one for an audience of strangers. Performance does not change a dance, it merely amplifies it. As students become more at ease in showing their dances to each other, outsiders may be invited to come and observe them at work and, finally, a public performance may be given.

Audience Participation

In offering a dance performance to the public, it would be a mistake to step out of our field of art education into the field of show business. A shift to show business might well attract a larger audience, but we must not judge the success of a dance performance by the number of people who attend it. The purpose of a dance performance is the sharing of a dance experience, and a performance is successful only insofar as an authentic dance experience has been shared.

Sharing depends not only on the ability of the performers to give clear form to their dance experience, but also on the receptivity of the audience. Today, when the average person has so little opportunity for free movement expression himself, the average audience is totally unprepared to receive a creative dance experience. But any audience, no matter how sophisticated, appreciates being taken in "on the inside", and the gap between performer and audience can be bridged by some form of audience participation.

Audience participation can take any number of forms. Here are a few suggestions:

Preparatory Exercises

At the beginning of the program, the audience may be directed through a few very simple movement exercises which can be done sitting down and which provide enlivening kinesthetic experiences.

Example: Alternately sit up and slump. (The entire audience, following a leader, should do this together.)

Stretching and Relaxing

In the middle of the program or at the end, after the audience has been sitting for some time, opportunity to stand up, stretch freely and relax is appreciated.

Improvisation

The audience may be directed through movement improvisations on themes which are related to themes used in the performance.

Example: Hand movements. Experiment with various qualities: slow, fast, jerky, smooth, etc.

Accompaniment

The audience may improvise in sound and movement on the basis of a regular pulse: clapping, stamping, humming or using as instruments objects found in pockets and hand-bags (jingling keys, tapping pencils, rustling paper, etc.). It is also possible for the audience to improvise a sound accompaniment for movements performed by the dance group.

Group Dance

The audience may join the performing group in a simple movement sequence composed especially for its needs.

Sample movements: swaying, standing up and sitting down, turning around, knee springing, arm raising and lowering, head nodding, stepping side to side or forward and backward.

Other Audience Helps

Short explanation at the beginning, and at intervals when needed throughout the program. Concluding question period.

Some theater-minded persons may object that these audience helps make the performance a "demonstration" rather than a "concert". Such a distinction is unimportant. Important only is the necessity to enable the audience to understand what it is seeing so that it can participate actively in the dance experience. For the average person today, creative dance is a wholly unfamiliar type of experience and, unless he is permitted to become acquainted with it first-hand through active participation, he may remain an unmoved outsider.

Arena Staging

Dance is the art of body movement. It is primarily a motor, not a visual, experience. Although it may be perceived through the eyes, its appeal is to the muscle-sense.

Body movement is three-dimensional; and the power of a dance experience is weakened by placing it in the two-dimensional framework of the conventional theater where it must be seen, like a picture, through the proscenium arch. A much better setting for a dance performance is the arena, a circular area with the audience all around.

Although there are few theaters today constructed to provide this sort of setting, it is possible to set up chairs in a circle in any large hall. It may not be possible to seat as many people with this arrangement, but those who attend will have a better dance experience. Arena staging has the advantage of freeing the movement in all directions and of enabling the audience to feel a part of the dance.

Performers

Who shall our performers be? Who is ready to perform? That depends on the nature of the audience. As we have seen, any beginner is ready to perform for his fellow-students. For a wider audience, the performers may include dancers on various levels of experience, or they may be limited to experienced dancers.

Program

What about the program? Are our dances going to be improvised or composed? That is a matter of choice, since both types of program can be successful. If the performers are children, or very experienced adults, a program of improvisation is recommended. If the performers are adults with limited experience, they may have more success with composed dances. A composition is an improvisation which has been fixed so that it can be repeated. Any individual or group which has had experience in improvisation can compose a dance.

The dances on the program should include both individual and group dances (if possible, both small and large groups). They should cover a variety of themes, including pure movement themes (silent), movement with sound accompaniment (music or speech), and movement with visual settings (costume, stationary forms, etc.). The more varied the program, the easier it is for the average audience to find a relationship to it. Any of the many movement themes presented in this book are suitable for dance performance.

Sound Accompaniment

For a wholly creative experience, the dancers should make their own accompaniment, accompanying themselves or each other. (See Chapters 12 and 13, and Supplementary Notes on Accompaniment, pages 407 - 408)

Visual Settings

For costume the dancers should wear some basic garment designed to show the natural beauty of body movement. For dances with visual design emphasis, special body coverings may be worn, or stationary forms used as settings. Costumes and settings should be designed and, if possible, executed by the dancers themselves (see Chapter 15). Except when a mask-like effect is desired, special make-up is not necessary. There should always be a sufficient amount of light on the dancing area to make the movement visible, but special lighting effects are unnecessary except when light and color are part of the movement theme.

ROUTINE EXERCISES

Definition

In our terminology, a routine exercise is a particular body movement, or sequence of body movements, which is practiced over and over again in exactly the same way for the purpose of developing a certain kind of movement awareness.

In addition to the creative problems presented in this book, our study of dance includes a systematic progression of routine exercises. Our routine exercises are too numerous to be described here and will be presented in another volume. In the meantime, the following discussion of principles may be helpful to the users of this book.

Relation to Creative Problems

The solution of creative problems and the practice of routine exercises represent two sides of our study of dance.

Whereas creative problems offer opportunity for movement experiences which are uniquely characteristic of the individual person or group, routine exercises assure a balanced expression by providing movement experiences which are universally human. This is true, of course, only if the creative problems offer real freedom of expression, and if the routine exercises consist of truly basic movements.

Basic Body Movements

What are basic body movements? Basic body movements are those which are characteristic of the healthy human body and which appear in some form wherever human beings are able to move freely.

These are some of the basic body movements upon which our routine exercises are based:

breathing	shaking	skipping
standing	collapsing	galloping
stretching	falling	leaping
bending	jumping	hopping
twisting	turning	crawling
springing	contracting	rolling
swinging	walking	
undulating	running	

Some of these movements are more commonly experienced as locomotion, others as occurring on a stationary base. Some are more characteristic of the body as a whole, others of a particular body part. Although some may seem more familiar than others, all have been experienced by all of us at one time or another, and many are a regular part of our everyday lives.

We could, of course, add many natural body movements to the above list (see Chapter 3: Everyday Language of Movement), but we limit our practice of routine exercises to the most essential ones.

Fixed Form

If a basic body movement is to be used as a routine exercise, it must have a fixed form with a definite pattern of force, time and space. The form must provide experience in some basic element of movement.

For example, a walking exercise may have a fixed direction (forward, backward or sideward; or a combination of these) in order to provide a distinct feeling for direction (space).

Or, a forward-and-backward arm swinging exercise may have a fixed dynamic pattern: a completely relaxed drop of the arm as it swings through, with very little tension on the recovery, in order to provide a feeling of passivity in relation to the pull of gravity (force).

Or, the same backward-and-forward arm swinging exercise may have a fixed time pattern: a regular pendular back-and-forth swing, in order to provide a feeling for beat and regular pulse (time).

Variation and Development

The form of a routine exercise may be varied or extended to provide additional movement experience.

For example, the backward-and-forward direction of the arm swing (above) may be changed to a side-to-side direction (spatial variation).

Or, a side-to-side two-beat pendular arm swing (above) may be extended to become a three-beat circle swing (development in both time and space).

Or, in a walking exercise, the natural spring in the knees may be gradually extended until the feet leave the ground and (with vertical emphasis) the walk becomes a skip or (with horizontal emphasis) the walk becomes a run (development in force, time and space).

Relaxation

In all our routine exercises, as well as throughout our creative problems, the element of relaxation is stressed. Every exercise begins and ends with relaxation and, during the execution of the movement, the entire body is relaxed except for those parts which are necessarily involved.

This emphasis furthers the development of natural body movement and movement awareness. It also liberates creative movement imagination.

Preparing the Instrument

Through the practice of graded routine exercises covering a wide range of movement experience, the student gradually develops awareness and control of his body as an instrument. During improvisation he makes free use of this instrument in the creation of expressive movement forms.

Routine exercises should never be used in dance creation. Their purpose is to prepare the instrument so that it can be used freely in the expression of feeling, not to supply movements which can be pieced together to make a semblance of a dance. Creative dance does not have a "vocabulary" of movement: a limited number of movements to be learned, then combined in various ways. In our way of work, dance movements are not learned. They are native to the dancer and discovered anew for each dance.

Discipline

Routine exercises represent a discipline of quite a different kind from that imposed by creative problems. The discipline of creative problems is that of limiting one's creative imagination to one area of movement expression while exploring it to the fullest. The discipline of routine exercises is that of adjusting one's own natural body movements to dictated movement patterns.

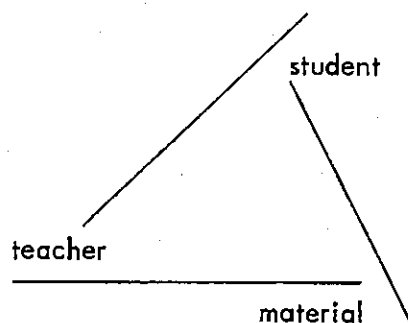
Routine exercises supplement creative problems. The two areas may be freely interwoven according to the needs of the student.

CREATIVE TEACHING

A Creative Experience for the Teacher

A creative dance class should be a creative experience for the teacher as well as for the student.

The teacher should select material and present it according to his own needs for creative expression as well as to satisfy the needs of his students. Only in this way can the three elements which make up a dance class become a living whole:



No two teachers will ever teach in exactly the same way, and each should feel entirely free to find his own relationship to the material.

Organic Form of Class

If each class is a creative experience for the teacher, no two classes will be alike. The teacher will improvise freely with the material as he prepares the class, just as the students improvise with it when it is given to them.

The form of each class will be an organic growth, one creative problem growing out of another to meet the needs of a particular group at a particular time. Each class will grow out of the preceding one in accordance with the students' development from lesson to lesson.

Every class should be a satisfying experience in itself - it should never be approached merely as preparation for some future satisfying experience.

A class should be like a dance, having continuity from beginning to end, clarity of form, variety of material, theme development, balance of activity and rest, and all the other factors which make up a complete dance experience.

The success of a class as a complete dance experience depends both on the creative skill of the teacher and on the receptivity of the students. Some students are easy to teach, some are difficult. The more difficult the teaching situation, the more creative effort is required of the teacher. Just as the student is expected to solve creatively the problems given him by the teacher, the teacher must solve creatively the problems which are given to him by the class.

Value of Large Mixed Groups

The study material in this book lends itself especially well to large classes - the larger the better because, in this method of teaching, the class teaches itself. Students improvising together in various combinations and having to adjust their movements to each other can teach each other far more in the way of movement expression than can any teacher.

Mixed groups including persons of both sexes, and various ages, physical qualifications, temperaments, economic backgrounds, racial origins, etc., have a richer creative potential than groups consisting of only one type of person. This is because more effort is involved in finding common denominators of movement expression. Such effort can stimulate creative imagination.

Meaning of Creative

To create means to bring into existence something new which has never existed before.

Each human being is new on earth and unlike any other. Insofar as a human being's activity expresses his newness and bears the stamp of his unique self, it may be called creative. This is true of any activity, work or play, in daily life or dance.

Everything a child does, before he has learned to imitate others, is creative. The more the adult can preserve and cultivate the child's natural creativeness, the more enjoyable all his activities will be.

Dance is creative if it is a true expression of the inner life of the dancer - his innate patterns of movement, feeling and thought - in relation to the world around. Because dance is the art of body movement and body movement is basic to life, the practice of dance as a creative art activity can further our creativeness in everything we do.

