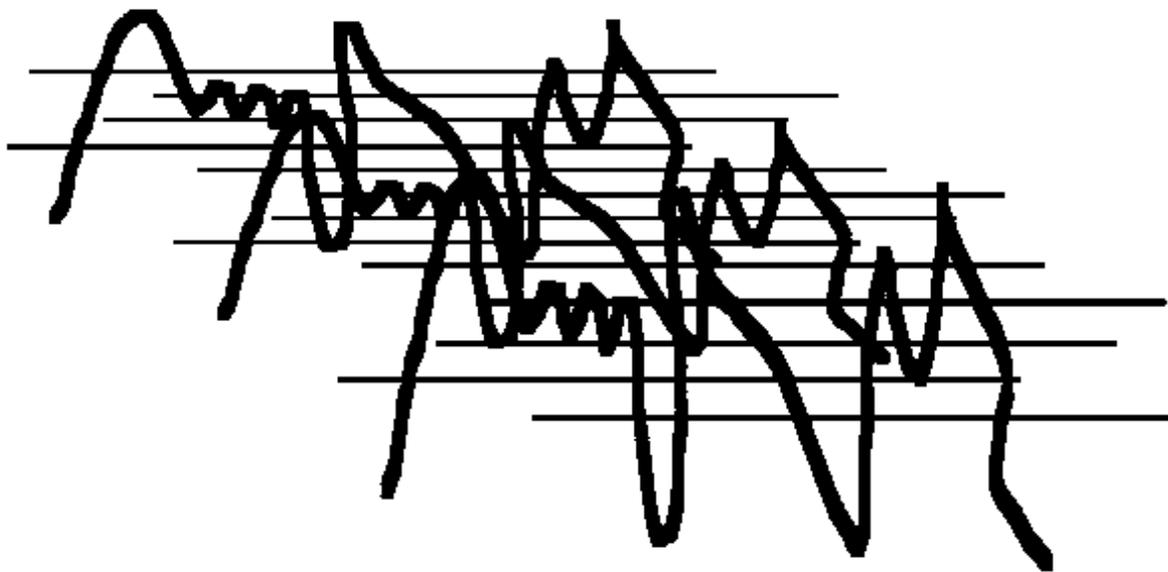


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# International Guild of Musicians in Dance Journal

Volume 2

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## **Editor's Notes**

The annual *Journal* for the International Guild of Musicians in Dance consists of an array of articles which address issues within the field of Dance Music. This year, the *Journal* has expanded to include sections on curriculum and reviews of dance music.

The Guild gratefully acknowledges those who have contributed to this second issue. Special thanks to the Information Science Research Institutehouse4 within the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas for the use of their computer and equipment for this publication.

***Beth Mehocic***

# ARTICLES

## The Evolution Of Martha Graham's Collaborations With Composers Of Music For The Modern Dance

John Toenjes

### Introduction

At the same time that Martha Graham (1894—1991) was revolutionizing modern choreography, she helped conceive of new relationships between dance and music and developed new ways of collaborating with composers which spurred tremendous growth in music for the dance. She commissioned more than fifty scores from America's most important composers, and inspired the creation of some of the world's most enduring music. "The great patron of twentieth century music has been the art of dance," proclaimed William Schuman, a leading composer who wrote several scores for Graham. "The music of our time is accepted in the choreographic world—not tolerated, but needed. More than any other single factor it is the need of the choreographer for contemporary music that has supplied the composer with warm spiritual and practical nourishment." In fulfilling this need, Martha Graham became one of the major patrons of twentieth-century music.

Those who composed for Graham form a star-studded roster of musicians: Wallingford Riegger (1885-1961), Henry Cowell (1897-1965), George Antheil (1900-59), Aaron Copland (1900-90), Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), Carlos Chavez (1899-1978), William Schuman (b. 1910), Samuel Barber (1910-81), Vivian Fine (b. 1913), Carlos Surinach (b. 1915), Gian Carlo Menotti (b. 1911), Norman Dello Joio (b. 1913), and Halim El-Dabh (b. 1921) all collaborated with her on one or more dances.<sup>2</sup> Each of these composers, working with her at various stages of her evolving musical sophistication, singles out their association with her as the most satisfying and rewarding experience of this kind that they have had. In this paper, the more important collaborations between Graham and these composers will be explored—those relationships which trace her personal musical development and the development of music for modern dance.

### The Development of Music for Modern Dance

#### The Evolution of the Composer-Choreographer Relationship

Martha Graham herself became known to composers and artists of the day as an artistic genius of great charisma and personal power. They described her as a "goddess,"<sup>3</sup> possessed of "an almost mesmeric power, and a nobility which demands respect, even if understanding on the part of her auditors is wanting."<sup>4</sup> None less than the caustic bad boy of music, the composer George Antheil, called her "one of the greatest artists I know"<sup>5</sup> and further characterized her genius:

One... needs to understand the dancing of the immediate past as well as contemporary dancing to understand just exactly how tremendous her revolution, how important her contribution. ...Martha Graham is the very essence of America.... an American expression of something completely contemporaneous that cannot nor will not be squelched....

This perception of Graham as a powerful, revolutionary American genius inspired the new breed of American composers, dovetailing neatly with their attempts to pull away from European models in order to create a uniquely American musical voice.

Graham utilized her genius and personal power to elicit appropriate and theatrically effective music from composers. Vivian Fine, who composed the score for *Alcestis* (1960), observed that:

Miss Graham's compelling power is as operative in the composer-dancer relationship as it is in the theatre. But in the working relationship she never overwhelms. Rather, she evokes through the magic of her imagery and feeling.<sup>6</sup>

Her successful method of collaboration took years to develop, however. Graham herself outlined the evolution of the composer-choreographer relationship in modern dance:

[At first,] dance accompaniment and costume were stripped to essentials. Music came to be written on the dance structure. It ceased to be the source of the emotional stimulus and was used as background.... As dance evolved into larger forms, music began to evolve also. The composer gained a greater strength and a more significant line from composing to meet the passionate requirements of the dance.<sup>7</sup>

This earlier form of dance score mentioned by Graham, though a necessary first step, eventually proved to be somewhat less than successful, as a contemporary reviewer observed:

A number of modern American composers write for [Graham], setting her dances to music after the dance has been composed. In general they..., stick literally to the rhythmic detail of her dance.... It isn't a good method.... For the musicians the result..., is that instead of making their piece a whole, they divide it up into a series of brief phrases, each stopping on an accent.... A dance needs a certain rhythmic independence.... But to give this freedom to the dance the music must have a life of its own as music.... In any case it is no fun seeing a dancer dance smack on his [sic] *Gebrauchsmusik*.<sup>8</sup>

A more sophisticated approach to music for the dance developed out of these faltering beginnings. Graham later described her more evolved method of collaboration:

When I work with a composer I usually give him a detailed script. In the script are notes I have taken from books . . . quotes from this and that. There is a kind of order, a sequence... Here, for instance, I will note that there is to be a solo, and here a duet... and so on, throughout the script... When I get the music, I start to choreograph. I have never, ever, cut a note of music... because if I do that, then what am I asking for? I do not want, nor do I need, a mirror of myself.<sup>9</sup>

This later method of collaboration produced better theatrical results than the earlier approach. The music became stronger as it was freed to follow its own formal and rhythmic dictates, while still serving the spirit and the overall structure of the dance. Vivian Fine observed, "Of all the dance works I have written, I feel *Alcestis* comes off best as a musical work. ... This is in good part, I believe, to the fact that my only guide lines were dramatic, allowing more freedom in the development of the musical material."<sup>10</sup> By 1960 (the date of *Alcestis*), and indeed, much earlier than that Graham had succeeded in breaking down the old ways of interacting with music and had arrived at new and more effective ways of handling the composer-choreographer relationship.

## The Collaborations

### Louis Horst and the Aesthetic Principles of Modern Dance

In order to examine Martha Graham's influence on American music, one must first examine the influence upon her of the musician Louis Horst (1884-1964), often called "the father of modern choreography,"<sup>1</sup> and Graham's mentor for the first half of her career. "He had the most to do with shaping my early life," she recalled. "I learned all about music from Louis."<sup>12</sup> In addition to the knowledge gained from Horst, Graham was appreciative of his contributions of a more personal kind. "[He] . . . is the first composer I ever collaborated with. His sympathy and understanding, but primarily his faith, gave me a landscape to move in. Without it, I should certainly have been lost."<sup>13</sup> Although toward the end of her career Graham was honored for using the work of contemporary American composers, much of the credit for this should be given to Horst, who encouraged her to commission original scores and directed her toward promising contemporary composers.<sup>14</sup>

Horst believed that a new approach to music for dance was needed, as well as a new approach to choreography. He and Graham "discarded in one gesture all the procedures of the previous theatre dance."<sup>15</sup> The use of rhythm, the type of music best suited for dance, melodic and harmonic texture, the conception of form, the instrumentation, and the content of the dances were scrutinized and reformed. With regard to rhythm, Horst taught that "dance must move to America's pulse. 'It is a characteristic time beat, a different speed, an accent, sharp, clear, staccato.'" "New, American music had to be composed for the modern dance. "We must look to America to bring forth an art as powerful as the country itself,"<sup>17</sup> agreed Graham. Thus she began to commission scores from American composers in order to realize this new conception of her art.

The free use of dissonance in music was a vital concept that had its corollary in the new choreography. "The importance of the drawing away from tonality (mood) and the harmonic concept of music (more mood) toward a free dissonant counterpoint cannot be overestimated. Without doubt it has influenced the dance in its use of free, asymmetric, striking space-patterning."<sup>18</sup> These words of Horst refer to a style of choreography perceived as contorted and full of tension, in contrast to the seemingly effortless and flowing effect of ballet movement, for which Graham became famous.

Modern dance choreographers attempted to give the dance an independent strength of form and content separate from the music. This led to the creation of dances conceived and performed in silence.<sup>19</sup> Horst supported this trend as a necessary step in the evolution of new art. He insisted, however, that "the old general laws of compositional form remain the same... it is the style in their application which changes."<sup>20</sup> Horst saw these laws at work in art and poetry, but it was the appearance of these laws in music to which he alluded most frequently in his teaching. Even as modern dance was attempting to break from dependence upon music, its proponents turned to music for guidance in giving it structure.

The stripping of the content of the new dances to "the expression of an inner compulsion" required a similar stripping down of the musical forces to their bare essentials.<sup>21</sup> "In one sense, contemporary dance is like chamber music. It is enormously concentrated, direct, exposed... The modern dancers have seldom used lavish decor, costumes, and the color and blandishments of the symphony orchestra."<sup>22</sup>

"Economy of instrumentation, functional relationship to the dance, harmonic appropriateness to the emotional scheme of the work, rhythmic integration— these are the main principles that guided Horst."<sup>23</sup> According to Graham's own admission of Horst's influence in her life, they were her operative principles as well. Louis Horst, then, emerges as one of the more influential musicians of the twentieth century, having defined principles of musical style in relation to modern dance that held sway until the ground-

breaking union of John Cage and Merce Cunningham was formed in the 1960's.

Horst set a new precedent in dance composition, giving more prominence to the role of the choreography in shaping musical structure. He claimed that *Fragments* (1928) was “the first original musical score to be written for a dance after the dance had been composed.”<sup>24</sup> Horst felt strongly that “starting with the dance is important, because the dance should be the center of interest, the point of tension... Music can enrich the dance, but should not influence its creation. Dance is an independent art, and its motivation should be the feeling of the choreographer, not of the music.”<sup>25</sup> He regarded himself as a purely functional composer whose music served the purpose of the dance by helping to give it an audible structure—“by confining it,” as he expressed it—and deepening its meaning.<sup>26</sup>

Horst's music also contributed a modern context for Graham's choreography, without taking precedence through complexity and too much purely musical interest. His scores for *Primitive Mysteries* (1931) and *Frontier* (1935) show a marked simplicity in melody and harmony. These elements are treated in a thoroughly modern way, functional harmony is not an organizational principle, and melodies and harmonies tend to be modal or quartal and rather sparse and severe. Rhythmic elements either parallel the steps, or contrast to them, but always are composed in relation to them. The overall form of the scores comes from the dance.

### **Wallingford Riegger**

Wallingford Riegger, who some regard as “the preeminent composer for the modern dance during the years in which it became a major and indigenous American art form,”<sup>27</sup> first composed for Graham when he wrote the score for *Bacchanale* (1931). Riegger's challenge in writing for Graham at this time was to fit the rhythms of his music to the complex rhythms of her dances. At first he chafed at writing music “to fit into some such design as this; five bars of four-quarter time, two bars of three-quarter time with the accent on the second beat of the measure, four bars of five-quarter time with a hold over the last note... etc.”<sup>28</sup> Yet he dived in, and this experience helped to develop the exciting rhythmic sense for which Riegger's music is known.

When Graham rejected Riegger's first effort for *Bacchanale* as “too flowery,”<sup>29</sup> Riegger learned another lesson in composing for dance—be simple and direct in communicating to the audience. His melodic and harmonic textures became sparser, in line with the developing “sound” of modern dance music. His instrumental textures became leaner, too, utilizing the clear articulate sound of the winds and percussion instruments (which Horst also preferred) and dispensing with strings. Riegger also defined and simplified his musical form, attempting to adhere to the details of the choreography while maintaining a coherent musical structure. “The experience of working so extensively with these... forms gave Riegger the ability to create architectural substitutes for sonata forms in many of the later instrumental and orchestral works,” such as his String Quartet No. 2 (1956), or his Fourth Symphony (1957).<sup>30</sup>

Riegger believed that “dance, and its music would probably be America's unique contribution to the arts.”<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, he strove for something more than merely supporting the dance with music. In his scores for two later Graham dances, *Frenetic Rhythms* (1933) and *Chronicle* (1936), Riegger attempted to make the music equal in importance to the dance. The seriousness of his intention can be seen in his use of music from his dance scores in later compositions. Riegger so valued the musical statements made in *Chronicle*, for example, that he later incorporated its themes into his Fourth Symphony.

### **Aaron Copland**

Considered the high point of Graham's “Americana” period, her work with Aaron Copland on *Appalachian Spring* (19~) initiated the second phase in the development of her relationships with composers. Erick Hawkins, her closest partner during those days, described her working method:

In Martha's earliest works, she chose either a completed musical score or had a new work in hand before creating the dance. With *Appalachian Spring*, she wrote the scenario and worked out some of the dance without the music, sending Aaron the timings for the sections and general ideas for each segment.<sup>32</sup>

Graham and Copland communicated exclusively through the mail. She sent him numerous scripts for his suggestions and approval before they both settled on something to their liking. Graham's new method of collaboration suited Copland, as he explained:

When composing for the dance, I found it best not to know the choreography in advance. Finding the musical ideas to suit the feeling and the spirit comes first. Then, when the composer has a general idea of what the dance is about and approximate timings for the sequences, it becomes possible to set the musical ideas on paper.<sup>33</sup>

She encouraged him to "let the music take its own life and urge"<sup>34</sup> and left him alone to compose the score, corresponding only from time to time. She had come to the point once more of allowing the music to influence the form but not the content of the choreography.

I do know that when I hear your music it will give a new and different life to the script... the ending will be better than I could devise as the music assumes its own life and character... Perhaps it is wrong to make you take that responsibility. But that is the way I work... to make a skeleton and then to be ready and willing to change when the music comes.<sup>35</sup>

When the music finally arrived, she was overjoyed with the result.<sup>36</sup> She proceeded to choreograph movements that sometimes closely match the music, and at other times depart from it, using it for inspiration and mood.<sup>37</sup> Neither slave to nor rebel against the music, Graham had grown enough to allow her to trust Copland to write a workable score and to meld her ideas with his to create a truly collaborative work of art.

The result was an American masterpiece, which greatly increased Graham and Copland's stature and visibility as artists. Copland won the Pulitzer Prize in 1945 for his score, which, he said, "had a great deal to do with bringing my name before a larger public."<sup>38</sup> The musical establishment began to take note of the impetus dance was giving to the creation of important compositions. "Ballet is giving rise to a whole new school of serious American music,"<sup>39</sup> marveled one New York reviewer. Many performances of this dance were (and still are) given, and the orchestral suite from the score took on a life of its own to help make Copland the leading "serious" American composer of his day. *Appalachian Spring* was also hailed as an artistic milestone for Graham, increasing even more her esteem among musicians of the time.<sup>40</sup>

## **William Schuman and Gian Carlo Menotti**

After *Appalachian Spring*, Graham turned to mythology for artistic inspiration and subject matter. She now collaborated with the upper rank of American composers for her masterpieces of the late 1940's:

Carlos Chavez, *Dark Meadow* (1946); Samuel Barber, *Cave of the Heart* (1946); Gian Carlo Menotti, *Errand into the Maze* (1947); William Schuman, *Night Journey* (1947); Norman Dello Joio, *Diversion of Angels* (1948); and *Judith* (1950), also composed by Schuman. Of all of these composers, Schuman became most "deeply devoted to the art of dance"<sup>41</sup> and the one most deeply affected by Graham.

"I first met Martha in 1940," recollected Schuman. "Those eyes looked at me, and [she] said, 'Mr. Schuman, your music moves me.' I wanted to yell 'Mama!' I knew I would never be the same again..., and I have never *been* the same again!"<sup>42</sup> She influenced him through her personal power and her movements and her technique, "but those characteristics don't have much to do with the technique of how you write," related Schuman, "they have to do with the desired impulses you have."<sup>43</sup>

Their working relationship began in the same way as *Appalachian Spring*, with Graham sending him a letter describing her ideas for a new dance, eventually entitled *Night Journey*. But Schuman, wanting more information,

wrote in reply:

‘What is the aural ambiance that you want? Is it fast, is it slow, is it loud, is it soft? What are the adjectives that you would use, and how long does it go on?’ I eventually got her to say, ‘Well, it opens in the following *kind* of spirit...and this might go on for two and a half minutes, at which point I might take it in such and such a direction.’ So...what I would get was not a specific story line, but rather the unfolding emotional climate...Being guided by what her needs were, I would then sit down and compose the music... then she would set the ballet to it. In other words, the impetus came from her to the composer; then the composer would write his score; then she would proceed from the score.

Schuman’s *Night Journey* is a model of concise, focused dramatic music. Fused with Graham’s dance structure, this work became a powerful artistic expression in a new style that emerged during this period of her career. The score uses “darkly expressionistic language”<sup>45</sup> of a type characteristic of a “new Schuman”<sup>46</sup> of this period, too. “Martha’s style is so powerful that many composers start sounding like ‘Martha Graham composers,’ **Schuman** observed, referring as well to his own change as a result of working with her.

Schuman and Graham went on to produce *Judith*, which at its premiere was hailed as:

A triumphant success...a new form for the theatre...the dance concerto... There is no reason why Miss Graham should not appear with all of our leading orchestras in the work, just as Szigeti might play the *Berg Concerto*. The two artists worked in close and careful collaboration, having benefited by their labors on *Night Journey*. The result is a theatre piece in which dance and movement are fused in seamless unity...*Judith* is a work that will have a profound influence in the theatrical and musical worlds.<sup>48</sup>

Unfortunately, *Judith* did not have the kind of influence predicted by this reviewer. The “dance concerto” was a short-lived art form. *Judith* was important, though; commissioned by the Louisville Philharmonic Society, it was one of the first modern dance scores for full orchestra, thus affording Graham the opportunity to expand into this area of music.

Gian Carlo Menotti’s *Errand into the Maze* is another score that sounds as if it were written by a “Martha Graham composer.” *Sebastian* (19~), a traditional ballet score written just three years earlier for the choreographer Edward Acton, sounds nothing like his score written for Graham. A multi-movement work with varying emotional effect, *Sebastian* is something of a throwback to the nineteenth-century ballet score. *Errand into the Maze*, like *Night Journey*, is a tight, focused, single movement work (with sections) with a unified sense of dramatic urgency, using modern sounding harmonies as its tonal language. One reviewer remarked that “it is unlike anything else which he has done and it may or may not be *echt* Menotti, but it is...a great advance over...*Sebastian* both in dramatic unity and in the basic quality of its material.”<sup>49</sup> *Errand into the Maze* and *Night Journey* are prime examples of how Graham’s dramatic insights compelled extraordinary efforts on the part of her composers.

### **Norman Dello Joio, Halim EI-Dabh, and Robert Starer**

From 1948 on, when she worked with Dello Joio on *Diversion of Angels*, Graham preferred personal contact and discussion to the purely written communication of earlier creations.<sup>50</sup> Halim EI-Dabh, the composer of *Clytemnestra* (1958), recalls how this epic dance was created:

This dynamic contact...between the collaborators inspired the composer to write the first section of the music right in the dance studio. The emergence of the new born sound-energy set the dancer immediately to realize the choreography. This in turn inspired the composer and additional music was written...This...give and take... went on for six months, until...*Clytemnestra* was completed<sup>51</sup>

Graham and composer Robert Starer (b. 1924) also were in such close communication when they created *Phaedra* (1962). She invited him to spend a weekend with her on Shelter Island, New York, to discuss the work. During this weekend, Starer experienced “a sense of artistic union, a feeling one does not often have in collaborations with others... -Thereafter, until the score was completed, they would converse often about the score and its development. *Phaedra* was truly a joint creation, Starer and Graham working together every step of the way.

Towards the end of her extraordinarily long career, in addition to creating new dances with commissioned scores,

Graham choreographed to pre-composed music, such as Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1984) and Joplin's *Maple Leaf Rag* (her last dance, 1990). Perhaps the effort required to collaborate with a composer was too taxing for her at her advanced age to choreograph only to specially-commissioned music. Never after the early 1940's, however, did she have music composed for an already completed dance. Her evolution had taken her from revolutionary rebellion against the precepts of music to appreciative partnership in the inspiration of artistic creation.

## Conclusion

On May 7, 1959, Robert Ward, President of the American Composers Alliance, spoke these words to Graham:

In the history of the arts there have been but a very few artists who have been both the pioneering spirit and the culmination of an entire new development.... From the very start... [you] realized... that new movements set to music of the past would be a hopeless anachronism. The result has been a long list of dance scores of outstanding merit written by composers of our day... For all the things you are, then, and all the wonderful work you have created and inspired, the members of the American Composers Alliance present you, Martha Graham, with *their Laurel Leaf Award* for distinguished service to American Music.<sup>53</sup>

Ward's speech eloquently outlined Graham's contributions to twentieth-century music. A tireless genius in pursuit of the deepest expression of the human psyche, she brought her musical collaborators along with her on an exploration of modern dance's expressive potential. This venture inspired great music, affording it the important opportunity to be heard again and again, as a result of her company's world-wide touring from the 1930's to the present. Those who composed for her furthered the development of modern dance music from Horst's simple scores of the late 1920's to Copland's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Appalachian Spring* to Schuman's "dance concerto," *Judith*, to El Dabih's two hour epic *Clytemnestra*. When Martha Graham died on April 1, 1991, not only a long and important chapter in the history of twentieth-century dance came to a close, but a significant chapter in the history of twentieth-century music ended also.

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## Appendix

### SELECT LIST OF IMPORTANT COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN MARTHA GRAHAM AND CONTEMPORARY COMPOSERS.

1. William Schuman, "Foreward," *Composer/Choreographer*, ed. A.J. Pischl and Selma Jeanne Cohen (Brooklyn: Dance Perspectives, Vol. XVI, 1963), 3.
2. See appendix for a select list of composers and their scores for Graham. It is interesting to note that although El-Dabh and Surinach were not born in the United States, both of them worked mainly in America, El-Dabh going so far as to become an American citizen. It is also interesting to note that of her collaborations, the least successful of them were with Carlos Chavez and Paul Hindemith, the two composers not resident in the United States.

3. Robert Starer, *Continuo: A Life in Music*, (New York: Random House, 1987), 116.
4. Merle Armitage, [Remarks on Martha Graham], *Martha Graham*, 3.
5. George Antheil, [Remarks on Martha Graham], *Martha Graham*, 71-76.
6. Vivian Fine, [Remarks on music and dance], *Composer/Choreographer*, 11.
7. Martha Graham, [Remarks on dance], *Martha Graham*, 86.
8. Edwin Denby, *Dance Writings* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 42-3. This quotation is taken from a review of *Chronicle* (1936), scored by Wallingford Riegger.
9. Martha Graham, *Blood Memory*, (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 224-5.
10. Fine, *Composer/Choreographer*, 11.
11. Ernestine Stodelle, *The First Frontier: The Story of Louis Horst and the American Dance*, (Cheshire, Connecticut: Ernestine Stodelle, 1964), 4.
12. Walter Sorell, "The Music Man of Modern Dance: Louis Horst," *Dance Magazine*, LVIII/1 2, (December 1984), 89.
13. Martha Graham, "Introduction," *Composer/Choreographer*. 4.
14. Don McDonagh, *Martha Graham. A Biography*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 192.
15. Louis Horst and Carroll Russell, *Modern Dance Forms in Relation to the Other Modern Arts* (San Francisco: Impulse Publications, 1961), 19. Although the focus here is Martha Graham, three other choreographers were also involved in the development of American modern dance: Doris Humphrey (1895-1958), Charles Weideman (1900-75), and Hanya Holm (1893-1992). They, along with Graham, are commonly considered the "pioneers" of modern dance.
16. *Ibid.*, 17. The quote within this quote comes from Martha Graham, [Remarks on dance], *Martha Graham*, ed. Merle Armitage, (Los Angeles: Merle Armitage, 1937; reprinted New York: Dance Horizons, 1966), 105.
17. Martha Graham, [Remarks on dance], *Martha Graham*, ed. Merle Armitage, (Los Angeles: Merle Armitage, 1937; reprinted New York: Dance Horizons, 1966), 107.
18. Horst and Russell, *Modern Dance Forms*, 33.
19. The most famous of these silent dances are *Water Study* (1928), and *Drama of Motion* (1930) by Doris Humphrey, and *Project for a Divine Comedy* (1930) by Martha Graham.
20. Horst and Russell, *Modern Dance Forms*, 29. The underlining is original.
21. John Martin, *The Modern Dance*, (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1933, reprinted Brooklyn, N.Y.: Dance Horizons, 1965), 6.
22. Robert Sabin, "Louis Horst and the Modern Dance in America: Part 4—The Summing Up," *Dance Observer* XXVII/4 (April 1953), 38.
23. *Ibid.* "Contemporary dance" is a term used with as much frequency in these early years as the synonymous "modern dance." "Ballet," though in its specific meaning a misnomer as applied to modern dance, is sometimes used as a generic term that refers to any style of dance.
24. Stodelle, *The First Frontier*, (12).
25. Horst, [Remarks on music and dance], *Composer/Choreographer*, 6-8.
26. *ibid.*
27. Stephen Spackman, "Wallingford Riegger and the Modern Dance," *The Musical Quarterly* LXXI/4, (1985), 437.
28. Wallingford Riegger, "Synthesizing Music and the Dance," *Dance Observer* I (1934), 84, cited in Spackman, "Wallingford Riegger," 442.

29. *ibid.*, 442
30. *ibid.*, 465-6.
31. Wallingford Riegger, [unnamed article], *Dance Observer* III (1934), 116, cited in Spackman, "Wallingford Riegger," 467.
32. Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: Since 1943* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 39.
33. *Ibid.*, 32.
34. *Ibid.*, 32. Also found in Graham, *Blood Memory*, 228.
35. Graham, *Blood Memory*, 228.
36. *Ibid.*, 230.
37. Copland and Perlis, *Copland*, 55.
38. *ibid.*, 48.
39. Copland and Perlis, *Copland*, 46. "Ballet" is used here in the sense of meaning "dance" in general. 40. *Ibid.*, 47.
41. William Schuman, *Composer/Choreographer*, 3.
42. Katherine Teck, *Music for the Dance: Reflections on a Collaborative Art*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 34.
43. *Ibid.*, 35.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Christopher Rouse, *William Schuman Documentary: Biographical Essay, Catalogue of Works, Discography, and Bibliography*, ([No location:] Theodore Presser, 1980), 16.
46. *Ibid.*, 15.
47. Teck, *Music for the Dance*, 35.
48. Robert Sabin, "The Dance Concerto: Martha Graham and William Schuman Create a New Form for the Theatre," *Dance Observer* XVII/1, (February 1950), 22.
49. Robert Sabin, "Martha Graham and Her Company Give Repertory Season," *Dance Observer* XIV/4, (April 1947), 43.
50. Norman Dello Joio, [Remarks on music for dance], *Composer/Choreographer*, 19.
51. Halim El-Dabh, [Remarks on music for dance], *Composer/Choreographer*, 44.
52. Robert Starer, *Continuo*, 110.
53. Robert Ward, "Laurel Leaf, 1959," *Bulletin of the American Composers Alliance* VIII/4, (1959), 18.

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# Dancers, Musicians, And Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics

Monica Dale Johnson

Musicians in dance sometimes lament that they have no source or system of training. Another common complaint is the dancers' ignorance of music. There may be no panacea, but for those of us working within the dance-music continuum, there is a valuable philosophy and method of working that remains little-known: the life's work of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze.

Reviving the ancient Greek axiom that "Music and Movement are One," Jaques-Dalcroze devised a system for teaching music through movement and vice-versa. Alternately called the "*Methodes Jaques-Dalcroze*," "*La Rhythmique*," and known today as "Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics," the method has profoundly influenced the history and development of modern dance.

Eurhythmics deals directly with kinesthetic realizations of music, and conversely, of music created to embody and inspire movement. As an educational method, it further provides a perfect vehicle for teaching dancers music through their own medium .movement. For musicians, it provides a kinetic experience enhancing the perception, performance, and understanding of music. Yet, unfortunately, Jaques- Dalcroze's work is less likely to be encountered in our educational experiences than stumbled upon by chance, and the pursuit of the method can present its own challenges.

In my own case, a dual training in music and dance had engendered a fascination with their connection, an unwillingness to give up either, and a determination to find a means of developing dancers' perception and understanding of music. After returning to Connecticut College from studying dance at the most renowned studios in New York, after working as a dance accompanist, after years of piano study toward a music major, I was no nearer to my goals. One day in my senior year, I lamented my situation to an enlightened dance professor who said, "You know, you ought to look up Jaques-Dalcroze in the library." To which I, even after my long quest, responded, "Who?"

## **Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950)**

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss pedagogue and composer who became a professor of harmony at the Geneva Conservatory in 1892. Noting that his students lacked an inner sense of music, but rather carried out their assignments intellectually from visual rather than aural sensory input, he sought a way to bring music as sound into the theory class and to fully involve his students in the experience of music. Recognizing that the ear, mind and body are inseparable, he sought a way to connect listening with physicality. One day, he had his students clear away the furniture, moved the piano to the center of the room, and asked the class to walk in time as he improvised music. Immediately he could see which students could move in time, changing tempo with the music, and which could not.

Not only could he see where problems existed, he found he could affect students' musical skills and understanding through kinetic exercises he devised. To facilitate his experiments, he had his students take class in comfortable, uncorseted clothing and bare feet. All of this was shockingly radical to the conservatory administrators, and when Jaques-Dalcroze requested facilities similar to a dance studio (with mirrors, dressing rooms, and showers), he was told to conduct his experiments elsewhere. He rented space in nearby Victoria Hall, and his students followed him there.

Jaques-Dalcroze presented lecture-demonstrations throughout Europe to exhibit his developing method, and published writings describing his emerging philosophy. He extended his class work to children, and became involved in the direction of large-scale choreographed "festival" performances. Beyond his eurhythmics classes, Jaques-Dalcroze developed a unique system of ear-training integrating eurhythmic experiences while approaching education in pitch and harmony in new ways.

Moreover, he espoused an educational philosophy, governing all of his work, that complies with the Swiss tradition of developmentally-oriented educational philosophers, such as Jean Jaques Rousseau and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. All emphasize the natural development of the child, adapting the curriculum to the child rather than vice-versa, and a learning process involving direct sensorial experience.

Jaques-Dalcroze's pedagogical ideas and techniques soon gained international attention. He received an invitation

to relocate to Germany from Wolf Dohrn, who had attended a lecture-demonstration in Geneva.

As a member of the *Werkbund*, an association uniting workmen, artists, and businessmen, Dohrn was planning an ideal community in Germany, near Dresden, with optimal conditions for work, health, education, and the arts. The ideology was an early, positive form of planned communities in Germany. Dohrn saw Jaques-Dalcroze as an ideal leader for the artistic life of his new community both for the aesthetic recreation of the works and the education of their children. For Jaques-Dalcroze, the invitation represented an opportunity to have a campus designed and built to specification; an educational program organized according to his own judgment; vast potential for the implementation and development of his ideas; and a ten-year contract. He accepted.

*Hellerau* (translated “on a high plateau”) lit a beacon for Jaques-Dalcroze’s work that shone throughout Europe. Beyond serving as a resource for the community, the *Institute Jaques-Dalcroze*, opened in 1911, simulated a continent of artists. Among those who ventured to Hellerau were Max Reinhardt, Konstantin Stanislavsky, Ernest Bloch, Ernest Ansermet, Upton Sinclair, George Bernard Shaw, Paul Claudel, Darius Milhaud, Rudolph Laban, Hanya Holm, Mary Wigman, and Marie Rambert. In these last three names, we begin to see Jaques-Dalcroze’s significant influence on dance.

Marie Rambert studied with Jaques-Dalcroze for nearly four years, first in Geneva and then in Hellerau. When Serge Diaghilev, director of the *Ballet Russes*, needed someone to assist Vaslav Nijinsky in choreographing Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du Printemps*, he went to Jaques-Dalcroze’s institute and selected Rambert. Her participation in this revolutionary production was significant, as the score presented vast problems to the choreographer. Rambert taught at the Dalcroze School in London before returning to dance to become known as the mother of British Ballet, fostering the careers of Frederick Ashton and Antony Tudor.

Mary Wigman was a Germany modern dance pioneer who studied with Jaques-Dalcroze in Hellerau before beginning any formal dance training. Hanya Holm studied at the Dalcroze schools in Frankfurt-am-Main and Dresden, passing examinations for the Dalcroze proficiency certificate, before embarking upon her career in dance. As a student of Mary Wigman, she directed the Mary Wigman School of Dance in New York, which later became the Hanya Holm School. She figured importantly in American modern dance.

The foundation of modern dance in America was influenced in a more direct way, as well. Dancers Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn founded the company and school known as Denishawn, which was perhaps the single most significant force to the development of our modern dance. Denishawn spawned the generation of dancers that included Martha Graham, Charles Weidman, and Doris Humphrey. Franchised Denishawn Schools sprang up throughout the country. These schools included eurhythmics in their curricula. Doris Humphrey studied eurhythmics in Chicago even before joining Denishawn. The influence of Jaques-Dalcroze’s work is evident in the Denishawn interest in “Music Visualization,” and in the musicianship of these dancers and their techniques.

A living legend in the relationship of music, eurhythmics, and dance is John Colman, who holds the Diplôme Jaques-Dalcroze and studied directly with Emile Jaques-Dalcroze. Colman worked as a musician with Doris Humphrey, Kurt Jooss, George Balanchine, Erick Hawkins, Hanya Holm and many others. In addition to teaching eurhythmics at the Paris Dalcroze School, the New York Dalcroze School, and Dartington Hall in England, he taught eurhythmics to dancers in many of the companies for which he played and composed. These include the companies of Doris Humphrey, Jooss-Leeder, and Pauline Koner, as well as dance departments such as Colorado College where Hanya Holm taught, Sarah Lawrence where Bessie Shoenberg was head of dance, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Eleanor King was a dancer with Humphrey’s company when John Colman first met her, and was among the group he taught eurhythmics. She later formed a separate company with Colman’s sister Betty Colman, for which John played, composed and taught eurhythmics.

I was privileged to meet Eleanor King through John Colman. In a letter I’ll always cherish, she wrote to me:

“I am in full accord with your wish that all dancers should be submitted to a good dose of Dalcroze. Believe me, I think dancers especially need it. The lack of it is a real stumbling block so many times working with young dancers. I find their inattentiveness to music a tragic lack, and their unawareness.”

## The Loss of Eurhythmics in Dance

Although their experiences in eurhythmics may have influenced these dance luminaries' performance, choreography, and teaching, the pedagogy of eurhythmics is a separate skill most did not master. They were unable to pass their experience on to the next generation. Therefore, the succeeding generation of dancers, such as Limon, Taylor, and Cunningham, absorbed the effect of the eurhythmic experience, but did not directly experience eurhythmics study themselves. Subsequent generations of dancers have lost the eurhythmics effect still further. This may be one reason that the earliest modern dance techniques and compositions generally seem the most musical.

Other factors, of course, have influenced today's dancers' lower degree of musical understanding. Most notably, technique classes now usurp most all the time a dancer "trains - and that is a lot of time. When I was in New York, my friends and I routinely took three or more dance classes a day at different studios; the rest of our time was spent traveling between them and waiting tables for survival. Sheer technique is the order of the day, and today's dancers' pursuit of technique approaches martyrdom. To miss a class [in order] to work a lunch shift is a sacrifice; to miss one to eat lunch is just laziness! To go to another type of class - even one related to dance such as acting, music, or art - is often seen as a waste of time that would be better spent in technique class. Even as a teenager in a summer session at the North Carolina School of the Arts, I noticed that most of my fellow students didn't bother to attend the music class that was a part of our tuition.

Technique, meant to free us, can be an insidious trap. The more we offer audiences displays of technical feats, the more they will demand them, and the more dance education will produce them. This vicious circle is not new; even Jaques-Dalcroze lamented it in writing about the ballet of his day:

If only we had the enterprise - artists and public alike - to repudiate the anti-aesthetic spectacles so consistently presented to us on the operatic stage! If only our composers and conductors had the courage and keenness to insist on ballet masters learning music and teaching it to their dancers! The facts speak for themselves: the majority of dancers concerned with interpreting music do not know their notes, or, if they do, have no real understanding of music, of the intimate relations of which with plastic art they are completely ignorant.' - from *How to Revive Dancing*, 1912.

Jaques-Dalcroze wrote these words the year before the riotous premiere of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, the ballet for which Diaghilev recruited Jaques-Dalcroze's pupil Marie Rambert to assist Nijinsky in working with Stravinsky's complex score. Since then, despite the growth of modern dance as a separate art form, ballet has begun to merge with modern dance study and choreography. While the roots of modern dance were intimately connected with musicianship, the influence of ballet may also have eroded some of its former span of musical energy for the sake of technical precision. (I studied at the Joffrey School even though I considered myself a modern dancer). Even contemporary dance critics have noted the difference in the performance of earlier modern dance choreography. Walter Terry noted:

All pioneering modern dancers exploited the dramatic force of gravity rather than flaunting it with charming insouciance or dazzling virtuosity as ballet does. Thus, today's modern dancer, whose extensive ballet training has become part of a regimen, tends to modify, or even lose, the almost primitive neuromuscular and motor origins of the modern dance of the 1920s and 1930s. When Graham recently revived her historic *Primitive Mysteries*, it was not easy for today's dancers to recapture the deep, heavy, remorseless tread that the dancers of 1931 brought to it.....In Humphrey's creations, today's dancers too often step lightly through the majestic patterns.<sup>2</sup>

The movement techniques alluded to here reflect uses of energy and weight that can be seen as musical in essence. The range of early modern dance's gradations of energy is greater than that included in traditional ballet technique. This is also apparent in comparing the music of the two forms before their merger.

Additionally, aspects of eurhythmics itself may have contributed to its decline in dance training. First, Jaques-Dalcroze's method is not a commercially ideal method because it is not performance-oriented; it does not focus on any specific outward result. As opposed to learning to tap dance, to twirl a baton, to juggle, to play the oboe, to paint, or to act, there is no such verb as "to eurhythmic." Rather, eurhythmics is an educational process informing many art forms. In a culture interested in "quick results" and the overt, exterior image of a product, this approach can be difficult to market successfully. Although eurhythmics certainly yields results, they begin internally, effecting perceptions and sensations, and then outwardly assert themselves in subtle yet profound effects.

Another reason eurhythmics remains elusive is that it is not based on a specific methodology, but rather on an educational philosophy. The method itself is not based on books or specific music materials, as are other popular music education methods such as Orff and Suzuki. Instead, teacher-training in the method comes from first-hand experience with a mentor/teacher.

This has several ramifications: first, the method is more difficult to learn to teach, because it is oriented entirely in the individual's abilities, rather than in materials. The eurhythmics teacher learns musical and pedagogical skills, as well as an educational philosophy governing his/her practical use in a classroom. These skills, which involve kinesthetic as well as aural music, are not abilities that everyone can attain. It is a relatively rare individual who is able to merge music and movement in this way and be effective as a eurhythmics teacher. Obviously, this hampers the commercial viability of eurhythmics.

Secondly, because the method is learned via personal experience from the teachers' own personal experience, it is not fixed in the way that methods based on specific texts, guides, or music materials maybe. Rather, it is highly variable. Naturally, the Jaques-Dalcroze teacher-training schools throughout the world reflect aspects of their individual cultures. In this country alone, the handful of teacher-training institutes vary in their approaches to the method, because the teachers themselves differ.

This flexibility of Jaques-Dalcroze's philosophy lends texture and variety to the method, and also allows it to develop and adapt in accordance with regional, cultural, and contemporary influences. However, it also renders the method elusive and nebulous when one is trying to pinpoint its precise definition. Thus, one must experience the method to understand it, but may understand it differently from experience with various teachers. Judgment cannot be passed based on one experience. Each eurhythmics teacher follows his or her own path, according to individual experiences, interests, curricular needs, and focuses.

## **The Method in Practice**

If you walked into one of my eurhythmics classes, it might seem at first glance to resemble one of my dance classes: you'd hear live piano music, and see people moving. But the movement in the eurhythmics class has a musical purpose. The elements of movement-time and energy in space-are utilized to create an intense experience of music-time and energy in sound. For dancers, moreover, allowing these music elements to effect movement also expands kinetic range and elucidates every aspect of time and energy as it occurs in space.

While there are many ways of teaching "Music for Dancers," Jaques-Dalcroze's particular use of movement in the classroom is the distinguishing element of eurhythmics. The rationale for movement rests on one essential tenet of method: "Theory Follows Practice." According to this principle, the experience of music must precede any abstract explanations about it.

Other methods of music education share similar ideas, but the nature of the experience-the "practice - differs greatly. In some cases it is simply blunt rote teaching at an instrument. In contrast, eurhythmics works with music concepts in the most elemental, sensorially-concrete way - kinesthetically. By providing music in sound and leading the participant to interact with it, the theory of music is not an abstraction, but fully operates in practice, in sound and movement simultaneously.

For example, rather than explaining, "This is a quarter note; and here are two eighth notes, which fit into the quarter note and are twice as fast," eurhythmics provides a logical sequence of kinetic exercises in beat and division, always in relation to music in sound, leading to a clear conceptual understanding; that experience may then be followed easily with explanation of various notational representations and/or may be linked to other areas of music or movement performance.

Because music in sound is essential to the eurhythmics class, everything revolved around the students' listening. In fact, their listening skills are used and developed as a focal element. The purpose of the piano thus differs from its role in a dance class. Rather than serving as accompaniment to movement, the music in a eurhythmics class is created by the teacher, and functions as the basis of the entire process -the musical environment with which participants act, react, and interact by listening.

We've all wanted to shout to dancers, "Please, listen to the music!" but that won't help them to do it. At best, most move to music, and execute combinations while staying with that music (more or less). Imagine putting them in a position where they will be completely unable to move correctly unless they listen carefully to the music. This is

what eurhythmics does .it requires the students' ears. For example, an exercise may require students to step, clap, sing, or otherwise perform a specific rhythmic pattern the teacher plays; or, they may be required to work in direct opposition to what they hear, such as clapping in 3 when the teacher plays in a meter of 2, changing to 2 when the teacher plays in 3; or, they might be called upon to perform in canon with the piano.

Various pedagogical techniques are employed in order to integrate the ear, mind, and body and strengthen the efficiency of their connection. One important technique is the "quick reaction" exercise, in which a musical or verbal stimulus from the teacher incites the students to change their activity. The exercises described above are examples of quick reaction exercises led from the piano; another might involve students moving their arms to the beat while stepping the divisions, then upon the teacher calling, "change," switching the roles of arms and legs so that the arms take on the divisions, while the legs assume the beats.

In contrast to a dance class, the focus in eurhythmics is not on refining movement technique for its own sake; however, technique is addressed in order to enhance the participant's musical experience. For example, if a student is not elevating in a leap sufficiently to sustain the time indicated in the music, the teacher must work directly with elements such as the plié or bent knee in preparation for the leap, the use of the foot, the principles of weight, gravity, and resistance, etc. For this reason, it is imperative that the eurhythmics teacher understand movement from experience.

Another distinguishing element of Jaques Dalcroze's method is the role of improvisation. Once the students have a grasp of the specific music element(s) being taught in a given lesson or curricular unit, they are called upon to improvise, using those elements as a structural basis .for example, improvising rhythm physically in a particular meter studied, employing specific rhythmic patterns indicating phrasing by renewed breath streams and/or changes of direction.

This manipulation of concepts ensures that the students gain a true working vocabulary of the material studied, and are not merely parroting back ideas. In addition, improvisation provides the teacher a diagnostic assessment of the students' skills and understanding. By rendering inner musical understanding and skills visible, improvisation allows the teacher to ascertain whether, for example, the students can keep a steady tempo, fit rhythmic patterns within a given meter, sense and convey the phrase, and/or use repetition and variation to create logical musical form.

Improvisation functions on two other levels in the eurhythmics class, as well. As mentioned earlier, the teacher's piano improvisation provides the basis of the class. When the students are not moving as the teacher had intended, the piano improvisation is looked to first - perhaps one rhythmic line needs to be brought out, or the articulation isn't quite right; maybe the overall tone is too heavy or too light, or the particular tonality is bringing the class down; or too much repetition could be mesmerizing them. Moreover, the eurhythmics teacher's piano improvisation incites movement from the class because it is the product of the teacher's own experience in eurhythmics. Having learned to transfer physical sensation to the instrument, the teacher is able to impart his or her own eurhythmic experience to the students through the piano.

Finally, the eurhythmics teacher improvises pedagogically to meet the needs of the class. While the exercises in a eurhythmics class are carefully layered, bridged, and sequenced so that skills are gradually developed in a spiral fashion, the responses of the class determine what happens next. The teacher must be vigilant in observing the student's activity, and provide the next increment of challenge. Sometimes this means creating a solution with an exercise devised on the moment .one never implemented before, and which might never be employed again. This is why books of specific exercises and lesson plans could only fail the eurhythmics teacher.

As an exploration of the relationship of music to movement, eurhythmics leads us to discoveries about this connection based on our own experience of the physical realities of music. These result in an open-ended correlation of music concepts and their physical manifestations.

For example, some basic concepts in this interrelated study are the linear quality of simple meters, as opposed to the rounded, rebounding nature of compound meters; or the sense of opposition and resistance inherent in the pulled-out durations of syncopation. The study remains open-ended because there is no one correct answer, and no end to the process; as we continue to explore the music-movement continuum, we discover and rediscover physical realities as insights into music.

Although it was the ancient Greeks who wrote the axiom that "Music and Movement are One," the study of the

connection and correlation of music and movement remains in its infancy. Eurhythmics provides one basis for such study, and leads to a unique performance art reflecting that connection, known as *Plastique Animee*.

## *Plastique Animee*

*Plastique Animee* is the applied music of the eurhythmician. Eurhythmics teachers sometimes end their classes or units by presenting the students a piece of music exemplifying the concept(s) they have just studied. The students listen to the music, improvise kinetically to what they hear (enlightened by their eurhythmic experience), and read and analyze the score. Finally, working alone, in small groups, or collaborating as a class, they devise a choreographic representation of that piece, delving into its essence both musically and physically (which are now the same thing).

As a performance art, *plastique animee* requires further refinement of technique, not only for the sake of musical experience, but now also for the sake of musical communication with an audience. The result is a visceral experience of music for both the audience and the performers.

Doris Humphrey and other modern dancers from the Denishawn lineage choreographed "Music Visualizations." John Colman, whose *Dipl6~ne Jaques-Dalcroze* is in *Plastique Animee* and who worked with Humphrey, has said that her music visualizations were her unconscious expression of her experience in Jaques-Dalcroze eurhythmics. How does such work differ from *plastique animee*? The differences lie in the process of each, more than in their respective products.

Humphrey choreographed her music visualizations according to her own experience and understanding of music, and then taught that choreography to her dancers. As an outgrowth of *eurhythmics*, *plastique animee* is created by the performers themselves. The process emanates from the inside out, beginning with their own perceptions and responses to music. The exterior result is rooted in their inner experience of music.

While *plastique animee* results from the study of music, music visualizations are the result of the study of dance. Viewed by an audience, both music visualization and *plastique animee* may convey the essence of the music composition in movement. The dancers may display a greater interest in space and technical accomplishment, while the musician's movement is rooted in their own physical experience of music and may indicate a more sophisticated analysis of the music.

## **Eurhythmics for Dancers**

*Plastique Animee* is not necessarily the final goal for all dancers, but it is a good starting point. Before attempting to teach, create, or perform dance that makes sense with music, it is important first to be able to respond to the music directly. This thorough understanding of the music and its choreographic reflection is essential to intelligent work as a choreographer, dancer, or dance teacher.

Some choreographers attempt to isolate dance from music, but to ignore their interconnection doesn't eradicate it. even in silence. Because the relationship of music and dance is inherent, to separate the two cannot alter their fusion, just as disassembling a jigsaw puzzle into pieces won't alter the fact that the parts fit together to form one picture. The result of such an effort is not dance devoid of musical qualities, because the elements of time and energy where dance and music meet are still present. Remaining oblivious to that meeting results only in nonsensical kinetic music, not an absence of kinetic music.

Eurhythmics expands the options for the choreographer in working with music, or without it, allowing informed choices about the relationship of choreography to music, and clarity in carrying them out. Some dancers refer to the musical elements in dance performance as "musicality," an extra, superfluous talent a dancer either has or has not, like a long neck or strong knees, rather than an area for study and development.

"Musicality" is, in fact, a strange word to substitute for the more appropriate "musicianship," and may limit the full range of what musicianship encompasses. When I first start to speak to them about music in dance, some dancers assume that I am speaking only of lyricism, which is their definition of "musicality." But kinetic musicianship, just like music in sound, involves a full range of the dynamic use of time and energy .sharp as well as smooth, boisterous as well as subtle, dissonant as well as consonant. Kinetic musicianship is everything that makes static spatial positions become movement in time and energy. This is the realm where music and movement overlap, and

where music in sound can effect and inform movement in space, while broadening its range.

performers to experience eurhythmics in order to perform the classic works of their repertoire. Reconstructions will fail unless the dancers can penetrate their original essence, as created by early modern choreographers highly sensitive to music, and usually influenced first-hand by eurhythmics.

In the classroom, heightened musicianship facilitates the teacher's communication with accompanists. Additionally, an increase in dancers' ability to listen and respond to music goes a long way toward narrowing the gap between what is considered "dance-class music" and any other music. Why should musicians, trained professionals in their field, need to downgrade what they do to condescend to a lower level of those they seek to inspire?

An increase in the dance teacher's knowledge of music and music repertoire would allow for collaborations in class involving more varied metric and phrase structures, and less formulated "dance music" (especially in the ballet class). The performance practice of music would not need to differ from any good musical performance. For example, we could at last do away with extraneous "accents" on strong beats. Teaching dancers to listen through eurhythmics frees musicians to create music as they are fully able, stimulating greater work in both arts.

As Jaques-Dalcroze wrote,

"Music should be to dancers not a mere invitation to the play of corporal movements, but a constant and profuse source of thought and inspiration.

Today more than ever, eurhythmics can help make it happen.

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# A Singular Impulse Musician And Dancer As One Performer

Michael Seaver

Since I began working with dance as a musician I have found myself on stage with dancers, some times performing very simple movement patterns whilst at other times merely playing alongside the dancers. This has nearly always led to problems and questions of ascertaining the relationship between musician and dancer on the stage and also the relationship between music and movement.

Working with a small company here in Ireland I was fortunate to gain experience in performing with the dancers onstage and found myself choreographed into repertoire usually whilst playing clarinet or saxophone. This work developed and culminated in my being granted a Music Project Award by the Irish Arts Council to prepare a performance of *Harlequin* by German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen. This is a 45-minute piece for solo clarinet where the instrumentalist “dances the seven characters” that make up this Harlequin character.

During an intensive rehearsal period of thirteen weeks various aesthetic and practical problems arose and got worked out, often times addressing and questioning the purest relationship between music and movement.

## **Time and Personnel**

Due to budget constraints (what else?) the rehearsal period for *Harlequin* was only thirteen weeks, pared down from an original sixteen. Although this amount of time may seem extravagant one must bear in mind the size of the task in hand. Playing a solo wind instrument piece of this length is physically tiring without the additional stress of dancing. This required a physical, stamina-building preparation on top of the time spent memorizing the movement and intricate score.

Three weeks of the thirteen was spent with Ian Stuart, an English clarinetist and one of the few people who have considerable experience performing the work.

*Harlequin* was composed in collaboration with Suzanne Stephens and from the outset was never ‘learnt’ like a conventional score. Many of the movements were set on her body by Stockhausen with little regard or sympathy for others learning the work. These difficulties are not idiosyncratic but are common to all learning the score. Working with Ian, with his experience of learning and performing the work, proved to be invaluable as many of these could be tackled and fixed at the outset. However, I was particularly anxious to have ‘my version’ and had to avoid copying his movements or solutions.

During the other ten weeks I worked on and off with a choreographer, Cathy O’Kennedy, on the movement that was not notated in the score and also in cleaning up and choreographing the movement directions.

## **The Rehearsal Process**

Each day began with taking class, either alone or with Cathy. The first major problem was in co-coordinating the music with the movements. Although marching to Sousa may come naturally to most people, the differing meters and phrase lengths in Stockhausen meant even the most basic foot movements to the music had to be practiced. Only then would it be possible to co-ordinate larger body movements with the same music. A lot of the early rehearsals with Cathy, therefore, involved a process of setting very basic movements to selected phrases to become comfortable with playing and moving, and then developing these into more interesting movement phrases. The score itself is quite rhythmical with a constant pulse so this helped in fitting the two together. Had there been wild fluctuations in tempo then we would have had to work very differently and may have had to decide on the final movements at a much earlier stage.

Needless to say, the clarinet is quite restricting physically and the upper torso is quite fixed in terms of freedom of movement. Upper-torso movement must use the lower back muscles rather than the upper back as the shoulders tend to get tense and restrict finger movement. Certain movements and attitudes can affect breathing or can be too tiring for a specific part of the work. (The work-rate has to be carefully paced throughout the 45 minutes). The feet and legs, therefore, became a main focus for the choreographer and these play a significant part in the latter parts of the work where you must tap out rhythms with your feet in counterpoint to the rhythms that you are playing.

## Working Within The Score

By far the biggest restriction was the score itself. Every note is set (there are no improvised sections) and dynamics are meticulous as are metronome marks. In one section they change nearly imperceptively every sixteen measures, eighth note = 200, 190, 180, etc. through to quarter note = 36. Cathy was considerably straitjacketed into what she could do and the usual give and take that is part and parcel of dance/music collaborations was not possible. What she did was very much a response to the music but even this was unlike choreographing to a pre-written score since even then it is possible to change music for the sake of the dance. We could have strayed from the score, of course, but I set myself (and subsequently set Cathy) the challenge of trying to be as faithful to it as possible and was interested in how the problems could be resolved. What happened, of course, was that good movement ideas were abandoned because they couldn't fit with the score. More often than not, however, specific movement ideas were abandoned because I physically couldn't realize them. Jumping was out since I was scared of a slip or a fall (considerably more dangerous with a clarinet in your mouth, although I have since safely incorporated it into my movement repertory). I also found it difficult to get down to the floor (and particularly back up from it) whilst sustaining a steady tone.

Some movements, as I said, were specified in the score and these often times provided the most grief. After a page or so of no movement directions Stockhausen would suddenly specify "squat and run away completely stooped over" or "1/2-step backwards." The reason that these random movement directions are there is due to the fact that, as I said earlier, the work was originally developed with Suzanne Stephens and presumably Stockhausen saw something that he liked and wrote it into the score at these particular points. But the problem is, if he wrote them in, then he wanted them to be significant and surely they can only be significant if what precedes and proceeds them is suitably different? In other words if you had spent two minutes taking 1/2-steps backwards and forwards and then took "1/2-step backwards" the latter would not have the importance that warranted it being specifically written into the score.

These directions got in the way some of the time but in other ways served as very useful pillars on which to build the movement. And as mere directions they were open to interpretation just like music symbols and directions. There are hundreds of different ways to take a 1/2-step backwards.

## Filling the Gaps

In between these pillars were the sections which needed choreography and this was dictated, in general, by the music. There are seven characters which make up this harlequin character: the dream messenger, playful constructor, enamored lyric; pedantic teacher, roguish joker, passionate dancer; and the exalted spinning-spirit. Although these help in defining overall character for the various sections Stockhausen instructs that "the composition... was conceived and written as a whole. Only after it was completed were the several sections designated and named as such. For this reason, the sections must follow one another without pauses or drastic character changes..." These characterizations dictated little in the way of movement material only suggesting the character of that movement, but again helped one's perception of the overall work.

We worked, therefore, with the music material at hand for the sections and choreographed in a step by step way, putting movement on phrases and notes. This led to a lot of the movement being a visualization of the notes, the 'Mickey-mousing' that all us composers for dance try to avoid. Remarkably, it worked very effectively in this case because the music and the movement were from the one source. Had we choreographed the same movement on a dancer and had them dance it to the same music the result would have had us cringing. (Interestingly the score notes "As a performance possibility a clarinetist plays the piece without performing the dance movements, while a dancer with a "clarinet" in his hands dances the prescribed movements to the music." It is difficult to see how this arrangement would be in any way as effective as the version for one performer, although it would secure more performances of the piece).

## Impulse For The Action And Sound

So it seems the effectiveness of *Harlequin* relies to a large extent on the fact that one person is the source of the movement and the music and the impulse is never perceived as being from one or the other but from the combination of the two. In the case of different people being the sources for the movement and music there is a perceived tension between the dancer and the musician. This is not a bad thing, of course, and this tension is one of the reasons that we fight so hard for live accompanists and live performances of our music.

But when experiencing a performance by a musician and a dancer there is a part of us that wants them to remain separate, we don't want one to do the same as the other (i.e. 'Mickey-Mousing'). We want to experience the interaction between the two disciplines to heighten the overall experience - the synergy principle. Yet we think this synergy only possible when there is a lack of dependency between the two. If this is the norm then how do we access a performance that, by its nature, hasn't got this tension and portrays an almost total dependency between the two? Is it a lesser experience than had the one performer tried to keep the two elements as separate and disparate as possible?

The issue largely revolved around the questions of impulse. In the case of the traditional dance performance, although an impulse can come from either sound or from a movement, it usually comes from the sound. This is largely due to the fact that, in the absence of highly skilled conductors, dancers tend to follow with and take their cues from the music. This is even more the case with pre-recorded music. They dance to the music. (Also, dancers' bodies change from day to day and music can 'feel' too slow or too fast at different times even though it is at the same speed. These fluctuations in body rhythm occur to all who use their body as an instrument, including us class accompanists, but they are much greater in the case of dancers. Due to these fluctuations they would tend to rely on music for tempo. This is not to negate the innate sense of pulse and tempo that dancers do have, but they are the first to admit the differing 'felt' tempi of their bodies).

But the reason that the sound gives the impulse is more likely due to aesthetic reasons and the fact that if a dancer moves a split-second before a sound it 'looks' as though they moved early, yet if they move a similar split-second after the sound it 'looks' perfect. This may be a conditioning from constantly experience sound providing the impulse for the movement. Or it may be a simple matter of aesthetics. In the case of there being one performer providing the sound and movement it will always "look perfect" but we lose the aforementioned tension between the two.

In watching the one performer, do we consciously separate the elements or do we bypass this apparent conditioning and experience sound and movement in a different way? This is what the moving musician lays open to questions, namely, the single impulse behind the movement and music and how that changes the relationship between the two.

## **After Harlequin**

As I mentioned above the main source of frustration in choreographing *Harlequin* was the rigidity of the score. In order to free myself from this in future pieces I have begun using improvisation techniques, as a way of discovering more about the impulse behind a movement and sound which now I feel is the essence of this relationship. I have practiced a modified form of Contact Improvisation with dancers in order to help extend my palette of movements and this remains a priority. Although I can never hope to achieve the same amount of movement vocabulary in order to develop on the works learned to date.

My next project, however, is to commission choreographers to create works for me to work in the contemporary clarinet repertoire. What I want to explore in these is the effectiveness in introducing more divergence between movement and music material than there was in *Harlequin*. Effectively to try to separate the musician and the dancer within the one body on stage. Part of me tells me that this will not work as successfully as keeping them as one, but it is an exercise I'm looking forward to, hopefully to grow and understand more about this unique relationship.

## **A Singular Impulse**

Yet all of these works will involve just one performer on stage. What fascinates me more is the possibilities for more than one moving musician on stage. Here there can be all sorts of interactions between the sound and movement. Two performers would really equal four performers and the degree of collaboration between choreographer and composer in creating a work for them would increase enormously (and would be such a learning exercise for both). The issue of impulse would be less clear and much more complex, and the interaction of sound and movement would be fascinating.

All in all watching moving musicians, and the very singular impulse behind everything they do, makes us question how we think of sound and movement together. It remains largely uncharted territory, yet today's music college graduates are becoming less and less satisfied with the attitudes and practices of the professional music world and seem more open to developing their craft along less traditional paths. Maybe this is our cue to challenge them and challenge ourselves by writing works for them.

For me, improvisation is the path by which I hope to learn about impulse behind movement and music. I aspire to reach a stage when the movement will comfortably dictate the sound and the sound will comfortably dictate the movement. Then the fun will really start.

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# Craft And Inspiration Opening Intuitive Channels In Improvisation

William Moulton

## Introduction

This paper is part speculation, part personal experience, and part research, in a field where very little substantive research has been done. Any formality of tone in this discussion would imply more confidence in these truths and an implication of more factual research than is possible in this field. This then will be a lengthy and informal musing on a subject of great personal interest to me.

The subject of this paper is inspiration— maybe the fundamental experience of our art form. In it I will try to cast what light I can on the mysterious nature of the intuitive or inspirational moment and suggest ways to open our intuitive channels to encourage these moments to happen more frequently. It is written specifically for the musician working in dance, but the concepts are equally applicable to any creative or improvisatory experience.

## Craft and Inspiration

### The Duality

In our western society we are fond of trying to break things into dualities, even when they may not naturally exist. We are taught to think of creativity as having an element learned by study and rational left-brained effort. This we call craft. It is the part of the creative activity that can supposedly be taught. The other aspect of creative artistic pursuit is inspiration. This we are not taught. It is thought to be something gifted from the gods, not something learned –a gift bestowed on the rare few, and then, only capriciously.

I believe that there is great falsehood in this dichotomy. The basic elements of craft existed first in some moment of inspiration in the past. For instance, a composer discovers a certain harmonic progression and notices how it offers new and wonderful expressive possibilities. Years later we find this discovery has become codified into what I shall call the “craft” or the “technique” of composition. Our use of this composer’s discovery could be viewed as a mere imitation of another’s creative effort. None the less, for our purposes, it is important to remember that the very real roots of any craft are in inspiration.

Inspiration also has deep roots in craft. Composers (and improvisers) throughout the ages have learned, maybe only in unspoken ways, how to lift themselves to the necessary state of mind and body for inspiration to take them over. This is a “craft” no less than any lesson in harmony. The only difference is that it is a craft that is not often taught.

Despite my quibble about our use of language and the implication of the very un-holistic way we think, I’m going to use this separation of craft and inspiration in its traditional context. The only difference is that my principal focus will be on the craft of inspiration, i.e. what we can do to promote the intuitive and inspirational moment in our music and our lives.

### Intuition and Inspiration

I will often use the words intuition and inspiration together. Sometimes they may seem almost interchangeable. However, there is an important difference between the two. Intuition, in my use of the word, is something that is always present. If we direct our attention inward at any given moment we can experience a subtle response to external events that I will call intuition. It is a signal of the deepest response of our beings to the world around us. It is a well of information for us to draw upon, whether we act in accordance with this intuition or not.

Inspiration is something that occurs more rarely. Though it seems to come through these same inner pathways, it is not just a reaction to the outside world, but an outpouring of new ideas. Intuition can guide us, whereas inspiration informs us –sometimes with entirely new information. The inspirational moment often surprises us, and usually is distinguishable from the “still small voice” of the intuitive experience by its explosive nature. In athletics, phrases like, “in the zone”, or “out of his head” are the slang descriptions of this state. In the world of ideas, “breakthrough” is used to describe the bursting forth. In religion “conversion” refers not just to changing of religious ideas, but, in its purest form, an upsetting and reordering of the conscious mind by powerful internal experiences.

## **The Nature of Improvisation**

The extraordinary thing about improvising for a living –the hour-after-hour, year-after-year practice of this craft –is that it trains the mind. It trains the mind no less than athletics trains the body. This training in improvisation can either be dominated by the imitation of existing styles, or it can be a journey inward, following inner impulses. Our playing either becomes imitative and repetitive or we dip into the well of intuition and inspiration so many times that we become like a cloth that is repeatedly dipped into the dye; the color of the experience grows richer and deeper over the years. In this experience we become not only more and more able to trust the intuitive experience in our music making but often in other aspects of our life as well. (Actually, there are many days in which we drop our bucket into the well of inspiration and it clatters hollowly as it falls to the barren and dusty bottom –but that is the other side of the art of improvisation –endurance).

Improvisation then, in its purest form is this inner intuitive world brought forth and made concrete in the form of music. People respond to it so strongly because they can feel this play of the unconscious –and it is a delightful thing to witness.

## **Fear and the Creative Process**

In academia the creative moment is not often studied because it is a difficult subject to quantify in our rational, scientific, mode of inquiry. It too easily slips through the grasp of quantification.

For those of us in the creative arts however, our avoidance is almost superstitious. We are afraid that if we talk about something so ephemeral it will disappear. On the other hand we are equally afraid that if we do study it, the creative moment will end like many other areas of academic discourse—over-analyzed, squeezed dry, devoid of the juice of life. This is an important fear to possess, because this can happen.

There is another level of fear in creative work –particularly for those engaged in the deepest levels of artistic investigation. It is a level of fear that has been expressed quite openly in recent discussions of the National Endowment for the Arts. The artist at some level is a rebel, an upsetter of the status quo. He or she doesn't necessarily do this with the intention of upsetting any social order. It happens naturally from an artist's desire to look at what is. The artist is someone who is willing to bring the dark recesses of our consciousness to life, who touches the chaos of the unconscious and dredges up our real selves for us to look at. The Jesse Helmses of the world see no point in this exploration and are deeply troubled by it. They are afraid of this side of themselves

Possibly this fear of creativity is not a problem for musicians improvising in a dance class. But if the goal in this investigation is to constantly push ourselves improvisationally, it is my feeling that you have to be willing to stand quite vulnerably on the great windswept plains of this inner world, and this means a certain facing of fears.

A strong side of improvisation is its uncontrollable, unexpected side, and this can be, at the very least, discomfoting. Schubert described it well when he said that he often sat to compose in a buoyant mood and found himself writing the most intensely sad music (or vice versa). It is both a joyous and discomfoting adventure, going to the well of our beings, and we are in no way in control of this experience. I know many skilled musicians playing in dance classes who are good, sometimes even brilliantly good, at being able to come up with very appropriate music for almost any movement combination. What they often lack is that sense that I am looking for of someone digging deep and coming up with surprises. This is a sign of inspiration –surprise. Additionally there is a marvelous feeling of rightness in these surprises.

## **The Creative Person**

### **Fundamental Prerequisites**

I'm going to discuss four important qualities that seem to exist in the creative person. They are: discontent, trust, risk, and emotional engagement.

This list comes from observations by me and from the writings of those who have studied the lives of highly creative people. I will be making particular reference to *The Courage to Create* by Rollo May and *New Think* by Edward de Bono.

### **Discontent**

By discontent I mean a hunger for a higher level of artistic work. This hunger is an extremely important catalyst

psychically and psychologically. It triggers activity at a deep level in our unconscious. It sends out signals at that level to search for information or ideas. How it does this is a mystery.

If artists do not have this discontent they often fall into complacency. This complacency leads them to accept ideas they have heard before, levels of functioning that they are comfortable with, and a satisfaction with merely satisfactory results. In more simplistic terms, Hemingway called it having a ‘bullshit detector.’ This detector helps an artist to tell when his work is original and true to himself, or merely an imitation.

Most successful artists have a drive for perfection that many label unhealthy. Those who label it such, fail to understand the nature of this drive’s effect on the unconscious. As well as pushing one to look beyond standard solutions to creative problems, it ultimately pushes the psyche deep inside to look for new answers. Even the anger or frustration of intense discontent is useful if it propels the artist into exploration.

### **Trust**

Discontent does not lead the creative person to doubt his ability to find solutions, nor does it represent a general malaise or lack of self-confidence. The creative person believes there are solutions to problems. This comes not from some inflated ego, but rather from a trust that is deeper – a trust in the creative process.

### **Risk**

Risk implies a certain willingness to fail – a willingness that is extremely important for someone who wants a heightened experience creatively. It also implies an enjoyment of the heightened functioning that risk creates. This heightening creates real measurable change in body and brain functioning. This change in functioning, we must suppose, creates the neural integration needed for creativity at higher levels.

Rollo May suggests that the greatest obstacles the artist faces are inner obstacles. The commitment to face internal blocks or failures or impasses is the fearlessness and risk-taking needed by an artist who desires to engage deep levels of the unconscious.

### **Emotional Engagement**

Emotional engagement is the spark that ignites the fire. Surprisingly, documentation of people engaged in many different areas of creativity suggests that emotions are necessary not only for the creation of musical ideas but for discoveries in all areas of endeavor. Traditionally we think of the scientist or inventor as living in a more intellectual sphere. Surprisingly, empirical research shows that in all fields of endeavor, highly creative people work in charged emotional states no less than artists.

This working at a heightened state of feeling seems to be important for creative work. Any artist who works emotionally knows that it takes a great deal of energy to stay in this state. We easily lose that heightened state and grow dull. When this happens the spark is usually out of our work and we must leave it for awhile to let our batteries recharge.

## **The Inspired Moment**

### **A Description**

In all the literature on creativity, the moment of inspiration is described in many similar ways. This is true in a wide range of disciplines, from the sciences to personal psychology, to the arts.

Rollo May lists several qualities of the experience. (Here he is talking about receiving scientific insights, but it can relate to musical ideas as well.)

1. The insight “broke into my conscious mind *against* what I had been trying to think rationally. The unconscious, so to speak, broke through in opposition to the conscious belief to which I was clinging.”
2. At the moment of insight, “everything around me became suddenly vivid.”
3. The insight “never comes hit or miss but in accordance with a pattern of which one essential element is our own commitment.”
4. The insight comes “at a moment of transition between work and relaxation.” (May 57-60)

Rollo May then quotes the early twentieth century mathematician Jules Henre Poincare, who in chronicling his and

other scientists' path to important discoveries noted these additional qualities:

1. "The suddenness of the illumination."
2. "...the brevity and conciseness of the insight, along with the experience of immediate certainty."
3. "...hard work on the topic prior to the breakthrough."
4. "...a rest, in which the 'unconscious work' has been given a chance to proceed on its own and after which the breakthrough may occur." (May 67-70)

### **The Outer World and the Inner World**

These descriptions deal with the process of seeking solutions to fairly concrete problems. The difference between this process and improvisation is only superficial. In solving a problem there is an answer that can be verified, and often there is just one answer. In improvisation there could be many answers, and there is no sense of a right answer, although there is a great sense of rightness. As well, in improvisation, answers are derived in a split second, with no chance to go back and find the perfect answer, or musical idea. At a deeper level, the process of creativity and the experiential differences between the inspired artist and scientist appear to be minimal.

The above descriptions of the creative moment show a relationship between what we might call the unconscious and the conscious mind. (Let me say at this point that I am using the words conscious and unconscious as metaphors for what is happening on the surface and underneath. I am not at all convinced of the validity of many psychological ideas associated with these words. There could be many valid explanations for the mystery of this world inside us. In truth, no one knows much about it. The key word that I focus on is mystery. It is not only sufficient, but to me it is important that we as artists keep reasserting the mystery of all events).

Jung also felt that there is a kind of opposition between the conscious and unconscious mind. The conscious mind controls the necessities of day to day events, holding back the chaotic elements of the unconscious, while the unconscious mind deals in expressive and creative terms and functions as a natural balance to the rational mind. When there are ideas in the conscious mind in opposition to the unconscious, the unconscious generally finds a way to burst through, flooding the conscious mind with new images and sensations. Ultimately in Jung's understanding, the unconscious is in the driver's seat. If we grow too far from its needs and purposes, tremendous inner upheaval will in some way try to set things right.

The moments then of greatest creativity, the inspiration of ideas and musical invention, comes from this unconscious area –this field of mystery, if you will. These creative outpourings often surprise us. They flood us with information, and with this information there is a great sense of rightness. The total experience carries with it a heightened sense of reality, including a heightened sense of the world around us.

### **Self 1 and Self 2**

Maybe it is just a reflection of our out-of-sync times that we label these as two distinct parts of ourselves. Possibly in more "primitive" times there was less sense of separation between the two. Nonetheless, this is the difficulty contemporary humans are faced with.

Tim Gallwey and Barry Green in their book, *The Inner Game of Music*, name these two sides of us "Self 1," the conscious side, and "Self 2," the unconscious side. This labeling can help teach people to distinguish the difference between Self 1 and Self 2 control. The important work of Self 1 is as an observer, not a controller. Self 2 does the real work of learning, or in this case, creativity, and it does it far more effectively. Another important part of their thesis is that we have lost touch with our ability to use this Self 2 learner. This is because of the ways we are taught to learn in our society. Their ideas are not only sound in respects to learning, but they give teachers and students practical tools with which develop these new awarenesses.

### **Lateral Thinking**

Another aspect of the creative process is what Edward de Bono calls "lateral thinking." If linear thinking is thinking in an orderly rational way towards solving a problem, he suggests that people who were noted for being full of ideas thought in a different manner. They thought more obliquely, or laterally about a solution. His analogy goes, "It is not possible to dig a hole in a different place by digging the same hole deeper" (de Bono 27). In other words, to find solutions to problems you have to try radically new ideas rather than just expanding upon old ones. The

central problem in doing this is an idea he has called dominance. He suggests that the reason more people don't think laterally is because of the powerful dominance of already existing ideas and ways of doing things. We know this from learning physical skills. Old habits are hard to break. Our body wants to continue doing what it first learned.

The same is true with the mind. We tend to think in ruts society has built for us, as well as the ruts we build ourselves, and this tendency hampers creativity. The difficulty with this (remember I am presenting these ideas extremely simplistically) is that most of the time we can not even tell we are in a rut. We need outside stimuli to kick us in new directions, or a self-awareness that prompts us to do it ourselves.

An excellent example of the dominance of existing ideas is a joke. In a joke we are led along a certain train of thought, and almost everyone follows into the "logical" conclusion. It is then, of course, that the rug is pulled out from under us and the surprise of the situation is made clear in the punch line. Most people can be led along like sheep – it is part of our nature as human beings. This same tendency to be easily led down well-worn thought paths is also used effectively in magic tricks.

Few teachers focus on how to train your mind to think creatively. Most of our education deals with vertical thinking. De Bono makes the observation, "Nor is education really concerned with progress: its purpose is to make widely available, knowledge that seems to be useful. It is communicative, not creative," (de Bono 28). The danger of teaching creativity is that we would be teaching someone to question, and to possibly go against the status quo, and that is an upsetting idea for a society that spends so much time digging one little hole. We have become, whether we like it or not, expert at sheep-think, through years of mis-education.

The ruts we fall into as improvisers are both obvious and subtle, and it is worth spending time upsetting these old orders, because it is my observation *that these ruts are also blocks to intuition and inspiration*. Ideas that try to sneak in from the subconscious are buried, before they are even born, by the habitual pattern of our ears and hands. It is that split second of indecision, where the "still small voice," or even the larger voice of inspiration is trying to sneak into our consciousness, we grab for the known, we run to the safety of the usual and the comfortable, and these instincts are overpowering.

## **The Field of Mystery**

Just what is in this underworld of the unconscious that we are trying to unlock? First, and most obviously, no one knows. We, as artists, more than many, understand that it is the source of much of the richness of our lives, but scientists, psychologists, and religious leaders have already staked their claim to it. Each of their maps is incomplete, because each sees the world beneath conscious reality in terms defined by the nature of their art form. [You see, I am an artist, and to me, each of their worlds is an art form.]

We can see this world in dreams, in our imaginations, in visions (if we are fortunate enough), in our impulses and innermost thoughts, in our moments of inspiration, and finally we can get glimpses of it in the inspiration of great artists. Rollo May suggests that in truly engaging a work of art, something *unique is born in us*, and this is why "appreciation of the music... or other works of the creative person is also a creative act on our part. (May 73)

From these glimpses we know that the unconscious is an imagistic world; for us it is full of powerful, fearful, and delightful images. It is a world that has no problem with contradictions or inconsistencies. It is always engaging emotionally. It expresses every aspect of human experience. It is never boring, and it is most certainly unique.

In the end, if we have the courage, we are drawn to this world. We, as artists, are perhaps drawn to it more than others. We would like the walls of this other world to be paper-thin so that in our daily world, as well as our artistic world, we can draw from this well at will.

*This then is the basic goal: to creatively draw on the unconscious, for it is the basic field of all intuition and inspiration.*

## **Some Practical Suggestions**

I'm going to suggest some ideas, of which there are potentially thousands more to encourage intuition and inspiration. I want to reiterate, that most of these ideas are not particularly new – anyone who has done much creative work will react to them with easy familiarity. I put them forth as mere reminders of the task, and as points of departure for exploration.

## **Cultivate Eccentricity**

To cultivate eccentricity is to set your mind in the proper state for creativity. It welcomes whatever happens without prejudging the outcome. It celebrates the unusual. It embraces playfulness. It dances to its own drummer. This is the true state of our unconscious, and it doesn't necessarily mean wearing a purple hat. (However, if a purple hat helps, I encourage you wholeheartedly to wear one day and night). Eccentricity is the resistance to dominant ideas, patterns of thought, and ways of behaving. This, as I have stated before, is important in promoting original thought.

## **Engage Yourself Emotionally**

Emotional engagement is an important primer for the mind. It is evidenced in almost all creative people, and probably of more importance, it is in all children. It is only adults that become dull.

In making music for a dance class, this emotional engagement is an exhausting proposition. Since most exercises are short and there are many different ones throughout a class, it requires an almost emotional schizophrenia. In playing many classes a day, continuous engagement is almost impossible, but with a sensible number, emotional commitment throughout is possible. There is a subtle difference between playing fully and with energy and playing from a point of emotion. Again, this language of emotions is the language of the unconscious, and it will trigger inner musical responses that we could not begin to duplicate on our own.

## **Draw From Energy Fields**

Mundane at all times there are subtle, and not so subtle fields of energy. They are created by times of day and weather, people's energy, and how their energy collides, by seasons and phases of the moon, by geographic locations and the thoughts of masses of people. These are a few of the waves of life. They offer a rich field of material to draw from. Though we are aware of them, we are not trained to focus on raw fields of energy. Learn to draw creative energy from these waves.

## **Ride the Wave**

When you are on a wave, you can tell it. Your only job then is to continue to ride it, to focus on nothing else but this energy field. This energy wave can be pushed by the energy of the dance class or other situations around you, but the wave is deeply connected to you. Like all waves it ends in foam. When the ride is over, it's over. Your job is then to paddle out and sit on your board and wait for the next one. The moral in this image is to focus wholeheartedly on the energy when it is there. Lose yourself in it.

## **Get Lost in Your Playing**

Lose yourself in yourself and in your improvisation - no matter what. This sensation of being lost is an important one. It is the sensation when intuition is master and conscious control is set free. The more you experience this sensation the more it will happen to you spontaneously. Getting lost in your playing is also a commitment to stay away from the language of words. The language of words is another type of functioning. Think in purely musical terms as much as you can and empty your mind of any other language.

## **Diminish Self-Criticism to a Dull Roar**

Tim Gallwey and Barry Green deal with these problems in great depth in their book *The Inner Game of Music*. For some this is a greater problem than others, but when it is present it can be crippling to creativity. Understand this! Most of what we play in class is quite mediocre, and that is fine as long as it is fulfilling the needs of the class. Our job is simply to be patient through all the drivel and wait for those moments of life-giving inspiration. If you expect more than this of yourself then you have quite an extraordinary ego, or quite an extraordinary talent.

Another wonderful treatise on learning is *A Soprano On Her Head* by Eloise Ristad. It is an inspirational book on musical learning, and in it she dissects the many ways we let our heads interfere with the learning process. There is a child-like attitude we are after which is the essence of the creative personality.

## **Try the Unusual**

In our attempts to deal with dominant patterns in our hands or in our ears, sometimes we have to go to great lengths to purge ourselves. One of the most useful techniques, especially for an experienced musician who feels confident of extracting himself from something that isn't working, is to try very unusual choices for accompaniment, or very unusual harmonic or melodic choices, preferably something that you think won't work. My goal here is not to upset

a class. If you find you are doing that, you should return to something that you know will aid the class. The goal is to shock yourself, to put yourself on the edge and get some vitality in your playing. This sense of risk and vitality, even if it is humbling, will in the long run do marvelous things for your playing.

### **Let Your Hands Decide**

Again we are looking to create cracks in our playing that ideas can come through. In playing for a dance class, one is sometimes forced into this technique. If a teacher doesn't give an accurate tempo until the "ready and" before the combination starts, the musician is often forced to throw his hands at the keys with no musical idea in his head. Surprise – an idea often appears. For an advanced player, not thinking of an idea before you have to play can be a technique that you can use consciously.

### **Sing Your Idea In Your Head**

This is the opposite of the last idea. (Remember, opposites work. In the unconscious two contradictory ideas can live together. It is just our conscious mind that rebels at this.) Sing a musical idea while a combination is being demonstrated. Keep singing to yourself as you try to play what you have sung in your head. Then close your eyes to cut out that dominant visual sense. This will keep the habits of your hands and your eyes from deciding what to play and will keep your imagination working in purely musical terms. (Sometimes open your eyes just to make sure the class is still dancing).

### **Refrain From Thinking Theoretically or Analytically Unless It's An Emergency**

The emergency I'm talking about is that you are having one of those days in which you are feeling barren of ideas. Using theoretical or analytical thinking can force yourself out of ruts, to get new chords or types of sounds into your playing. Don't confuse it with intuitive playing. It should be used to broaden your pallet of sounds and possibly to shock yourself into new areas. This can create those cracks through which ideas can flow, but it is not the same as having an idea. If you are involved in academia there is a corollary axiom that I want to suggest. Despite protestations to the contrary, academia, particularly for students, is often more focused on passing knowledge, than on creativity. You need to be a rebel in their midst. It is my observation that creativity can be passed by osmosis. If you are intensely creative in their midst, students will pick up the intangible vibrations of this creativity. They will know it, recognize it, and want it.

### **Embrace Opposing Ideas**

I mean this in the largest possible context. Anytime you have an idea, embrace the opposite of that idea (or at least try it on for size). This exercise soon leads you to realize that dualities of the world both express truth. The flexibility this gives you is translatable into purely musical form, when in your playing you go against your beliefs and try sounds and styles that you wouldn't ordinarily try. Opening yourself up to opposites seems to free up the rigidity of your conscious mind. Any freeing of this rigidity will bear results.

### **Don't Take Anything Seriously**

Laugh a lot. It's a psychic breakthrough all on its own.

### **Don't Play Until the Impulse is Strong**

When you are in the chase for a musical idea, wait and see – don't play until you have a clear indication where to go. This is an intense inner listening; a waiting, an alertness, which can lead to following a musical idea, instead of just following your hands.

### **Let Ideas Unfold Without Interference**

Try and think of a musical idea as a living thing. It has a perfection that it is trying to be. Try not to get in the way of it. There is a real sensation in both composing and improvising of trying to sense the direction a musical idea should go. This discovery has a sensation of rightness to it. This feeling of rightness is a sign that you are in touch intuitively. Think of all composing and improvising as sharpening your intuitive awareness. This awareness will be useful in every aspect of your life.

### **Get Beyond Your Ears So Chance Can Lead You**

Playing beyond your ears means to play things on your instrument that you aren't quite sure how they're going to

sound. We use this and other similar techniques to let chance into our playing. The traditional view of chance as an entirely random event is not my experience of how the world functions. Documentation of great creative achievements, is full of the key “chance” element that triggered a creative outpouring. It seems as if these things happen so often that they can not be thought of as chance in traditional terms. Possibly they are just cracks that allow greater ideas to be triggered. Examine chance events in your life and see if there is a deeper pattern to the events. (Be careful. These ideas are dangerous).

### **Mix Up Your Coordination**

This is an extremely important idea to keep our dominant tendencies from dominating our improvisation. In this instance I advocate force. Keep forcing your hands (gently) into new or different figurations. This work needs to be ongoing or else the body will certainly overpower the musical moment. We will end up every time doing what the body loves to do, i.e. what it is familiar with, what it has done a million times (those scales, chords, progressions, that we are all so fond of).

### **Consciously Play Wrong Notes**

Having a bad ear as an improviser is at times a real advantage. By mistake you end up in areas you would have never tried if you knew what you were doing.

### **Never Think You Know What You’re Doing**

Are you beginning to get the idea where these ideas are leading? They are leading to openness, to spontaneity, and to vitality.

### **Look for the Cracks in Your Daily Life**

Looking for the cracks in your life means trying to allow your consciousness not too get too rigid, to keep a spontaneous and improvisatory sense about everything. Again, the final goal is to keep the barrier between our conscious minds and the mystery of life paper thin, and to understand that all of life is an improvisation.

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# To Splice Or Not To Splice?

Thomas Bourcier

There is a trend among modern dance choreographers, professional and student alike, which I feel is worthy of mention and/or debate. This is the splicing and dicing of music to accommodate a set piece of choreography. The technique of using partial sections of larger pieces of music has been practiced for some time. It is justly common among choreographers to use one or several movements of a multi-movement piece, such as, the Bourrée of a Baroque Suite or similar classic form, as these are somewhat intended as complete pieces in themselves and, more often than not, exhibit a sense of finality. A classic example of this technique is Doris Humphrey's 1920 adaptation of Robert Schumann's *Phantasiestücke - Aufschwung* (*Soaring*), currently being reconstructed by Rebecca Nettle-Fiol at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Problems arise, though, when a composition is deliberately shortened (or lengthened) in time to accommodate a shorter (or longer) piece of choreography. Choreographers often fail to ask questions, such as, whether the composer intended the work to be partially used and, whether or not the sound score satisfies basic aesthetic principals. One example is the dance *Untitled (detail)*, choreographed by Susan Marshall and performed by her company at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois in January, 1992. Ms. Marshall is a reputable person in the field, and the two programs performed during her stay were well-received. This piece, though, commissioned by the Krannert Center and premiered at this concert, is of issue. Her choice of music was

Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor, op. 132 - Molto Adagio*. Periodically throughout the dance the music would abruptly drop out. While at first it seemed to be a technical failure, it was later obvious that it was deliberate. Regardless of whether or not this technique proved effective or essential to the dance does not obscure the fact that the entire essence of the music was lost. No composition would stand up to such severe editing, let alone one from Beethoven's later period where continuity, expansive thematic development, and through-composition form the very foundation of his compositional intent. While synonymous with dance, this treatment of music is not restricted to it, but can also be heard in gymnastics, figure skating, and equestrian competitions. Quite common is the musical dressage rider's treatment of Strauss and Mancini; spliced at the end of the canter section rather than at a strong cadence.

There are situations, though, where partial uses of music have proven to be effective and complimentary to dance. If this is the case, the shortening or lengthening of the music is usually unnoticed by the audience. Murray Louis' 1957 piece *Belonging to the Moon* (recently reconstructed by Douglas Nielsen) is a perfect example of this. Adapted to *The Flowering Peach* by Alan Hovhaness, the original choreography was actually too long for the music. Thus, rather than use a longer piece, additional portions of the same music were added until the proper length was reached. While this challenges the issue of integrity described herewith, it nonetheless was professionally executed and is largely unnoticed by present audiences. Also worthy of mention as a successful piece of choreography utilizing only a partial section of music is the dance *Pearls Roll Away*, selected for inclusion at the 1992 ACDFFA National College Dance Festival. Beginning with a brief section of the electronic piece *Airwaves* by Maggie Payne, it proceeded to use in its entirety the string quartet *Fratres* by Arvo Part. As in the Murray Louis piece, great care was taken by the choreographer to retain musical and dramatic continuity between sections and, again, was of no apparent concern to the audience.

Most choreographers that utilize this technique are quite aware of the potential criticism at the hands of composers and music scholars. This, though, is generally not a deterring factor, for historical precedence has been set in other mediums, such as, the assemblage art styles of Georges Bracque and Robert Rauschenberg, and perhaps as far back as the Theme and Variations form in music.

The legality of this treatment of music at the hands of dance is, like subjective opinions of its effectiveness, a moot point. Professional dance companies are quite aware of performance royalty obligations. The Beethoven recording in Susan Marshall's piece, performed by the Melos Quartet, was used courtesy of Deutsche Grammophon. Colleges and universities in this country pay significant sums of money to music licensing agencies. The University of Illinois, for one, pays upwards of \$19,000 per year in royalty fees to ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC for unlimited use of music licensed by them and used in university sponsored performances. The proper individuals are being com-

compensated for use of their recordings and compositions, but they often are not aware of the extent of such use.

Are such editing techniques legitimized if the composer gives his or her consent? Of course there is nothing anyone can say in this situation. During the 1991-92 school year one dance student received permission from University of Illinois composer Scott Wyatt to choreograph selected parts of his electro acoustic composition *Time Mark*, scored for percussion and tape. Granted, in the case of abstract and electronic music it may be easier to adapt only sections of a given piece, but in this case the dance was choreographed to the percussionists practice tape, with click track! The limited performance venue (approximately 50-60 people) may justify the composer's consent, but being fond of the original composition and choreography by Patricia Knowles (premiered at the 1991 annual festival of the Society for Electro—Acoustic Music in the United States) made it very difficult to appreciate the mutation. Consensual agreements aside, most composers would prefer their music used in its entirety, without splices, drop-outs, or obligatory fades. Rebecca Nettle-Fiol, Assistant Professor at the university of Illinois, as an undergraduate dance student recalls seeking permission from John Cage to use a sections of his piece *26' .1499" for a String Player*. Cage replied, "I won't sue but I won't give my permission to cut the piece. I wish you well and hope your dances get longer."

In the case of student choreography, the trend of unabashed editing and apathetic selection of music can be reversed in several ways. Music Directors of dance departments, or appointed teachers of music to dancers, could make all courses (music theory, history and literature, accompaniment for dance, composer/choreographer workshop, etc.) a venue for exposing students to the vast selection of recorded and published music, including alternative styles such as World Music, Avant-garde, and Electronic Music to name a few. Dance students must be made aware of musical options other than Yannis, Peter Gabriel, or the host of minimalists being used at most colleges and universities. The solution lies not only in the hands of music teachers. Teachers of dance composition could require that musical compositions be used in their entirety, thus compelling young choreographers to get in the habit of using pieces in this fashion, while simultaneously broadening their musical horizons. Chicago-based choreographer and dancer Jan Erkert suggests that, if a selected piece of music is too short, simply begin or end the dance in silence. If too long, the excess music can be utilized as ambient sound for entrancing, exiting, or staging.

The issue is one of integrity. Not matter how profound or effective a dance is, if it uses music, the choreographer is obligated to respect the entire contents of the piece. If a marriage between dance and music is to exist, there must be mutual respect between the art forms. Effective choreography at the expense of musical continuity is contrary to artistic integrity.

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# How Copyright Law Affects Musicians For Dance

Katherine Teck

Musicians in the field of dance have several reasons to be concerned with copyright; first, as protection for their own creations, and secondly, as a responsibility in relation to using works created by others. In both cases, the legal considerations pertain to *performing rights* as well as *mechanical rights*.

## What Is Not Covered

If instrumentalists play only older classical or folk pieces plus original improvisations—for either dance classes or theatrical dance performances—then there is usually little chance of their inadvertently infringing on the copyrights of other composers. Improvising percussionists, for example, can feel free of any legal concerns about infringement because the type of rhythmic patterns heard in dance classes cannot be copyrighted.

Yet the other side of this picture is that if a musician innovates procedures of composing with electronic drum machines, for example, there is nothing to prevent others from adapting such methods and using them freely for profit. Purely rhythmic patterns, or the *processes* of “free improvisation” can be understood to fall into the realm of unprotected creation. As stated in the current U.S. Copyright Law: [Parag. 102(b)]: “In no case does copyright protection for an original work of authorship extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied in such work.”

But let a recognizable Broadway show tune burst forth during one of your classes, or perform a contemporary chamber piece as part of a dance recital, or make a photocopy of a published percussion score for your students, or play a tape of a colleague’s improvisations as part of a public lecture at which admission is charged, and you have entered the realm of copyright.

## Copy and Recording Defined

Basic to understanding the law’s protection are the legal terms. “Copies” are defined [Pang. 101] as: “material objects, other than phonorecords, in which a work is fixed by any method now known or later developed, and from which the work can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device.”

“Phonorecords” are defined [Parag. 101] as: “material objects in which sounds, other than those accompanying a motion picture or other audiovisual work, are fixed by any method now known or later developed, and from which the sounds can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device.”

“Sound recordings” have a separate definition [Pang. 101] as: “works that result from the fixation of a series of musical, spoken, or other sounds, but not including the sounds accompanying a motion picture or other audiovisual work, regardless of the nature of the material objects, such as disks, tapes, or other phonorecords, in which they are embodied.”

## Public Performance Newly Defined

While the rights for mechanical reproduction—including methods of recording and publishing—are clearly extensions of former law updated to accommodate modern technology, the same cannot be said for the definition of “public performance,” which has caused many questions to be raised in regard to music for dance classes.

The 1976 revision of U.S. copyright law states [Pang. 101]: “To perform or display a work ‘publicly’ means—( 1) to perform or display it at a place open to the public or at any place where a substantial number of persons outside of a normal circle of a family and its social acquaintances is gathered...”

The ramifications of this legal definition will be explored at length later in this article. But because so many Guild members are composers as well as instrumentalists, it seems appropriate first consider the concerns of musical creators in regard to the current copyright law.

## Securing Your Rights as a Composer

As composers, dance musicians' original works are protected from the moment of creation, as long as the music is preserved in some tangible way. According to the law, [Parag. 101]: "A work is 'created' when it is fixed in a copy or phonorecord for the first time." The section goes on to explain: "A work is 'fixed' in a tangible medium of expression when its embodiment in a copy or phonorecord, by or under the authority of the author, is sufficiently permanent or stable to permit it to be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated for a period of more than transitory duration."

In the past, such "fixation" was understood to include written notation on paper as well as actual sounds recorded on tape or disk. With the extension of electronic technology, however, the latest copyright revisions are careful to include broad definitions that allow for future inventions of ways to symbolize and transmit sound. To protect your compositions, the service organization Meet The Composer urges [in its booklet *Composers in the Marketplace*]: "It is *imperative* that you secure your rights to your creative property through copyright."

As noted already, your composition automatically has some protection from the moment you fix it in tangible form. But to secure full protection in case of lawsuits, you should at least affix to the first page of all your manuscripts the symbol © followed by the year, your name, and the phrase "All Rights Reserved." For tapes, affix P followed by same information. This is important if you circulate your materials, even on a loan basis. To register a composition, you must fill in forms available from the United States Copyright Office (Washington, DC 20559) and include two copies of your work plus the current fee for each submission. This done, your work is now assured full legal protection as explained in general in the body of the law [Pang. 302]: "Copyright in a work created on or after January 1, 1978, subsists from its creation and, [with a few exceptions]...endures for a term consisting of the life of the author and fifty years after the author's death."

## Entitlements of Copyright Ownership

As a copyright owner, you would now have [Pang. 106]: "the exclusive rights to do and to authorize any of the following: (1) to reproduce the copyrighted work in copies or phonorecords; (2) to prepare derivative works based upon the copyrighted work; (3) to distribute copies or phonorecords of the copyrighted work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by

rental, lease, or lending; (4) in the case of literary, musical, dramatic, and choreographic works, pantomimes, and motion pictures and other audiovisual works, to perform the copyrighted work publicly...." The current law serves not only to protect a composer's economic gains; it also provides for some control over artistic choices in regard to the use of one's compositions for theatrical dance.

One example of this was the experience of the choreographer Eliot Feld, who set his dance *Endsong* to Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs*. Although apparently many of those involved in the case found Feld's videotaped run-through very beautiful, nevertheless, the heirs to the Strauss estate denied permission on the grounds that the composer's original work was not intended as a dance score. Consequently, Feld's choreographic piece was premiered in silence in 1992, and audiences must wait until the year 2025 (when the music enters public domain) to view the choreographic work in its intended musical context. In connection with such veto power, however, it must be noted that if a composer assigns copyright to a publisher, then after the premiere, such decisions become the prerogative of the publisher.

## Work for Hire

Dance departments in colleges and universities may expect that collaborative scores be written by a composer as part of his or her regular job description. Sometimes a dance company may wish to own a score outright and asks that its resident composer assign copyright to the company.

Such cases may fall under the legal area of "work for hire" as specified in the copyright law [Parag. 102]: "a work prepared by an employee within the scope of his or her employment." One does not have to be employed fulltime for this to apply.

The ability to compose even an occasional brief piece may in itself enhance a musician's attractiveness as an employee in both theatrical and academic dance worlds, and so a skilled composer may want to emphasize this ability when it comes time to discuss salary. Indeed, it seems that among Guild members who work at colleges and

universities, composing music for dance recitals *is* part of their regular job descriptions.

Nevertheless, with regard to such assigning of copyrights, BMI's director of concert music relations Ralph Jackson warns: "I would never advise a composer to do that, because over the years there may be performances from their total catalog." And underscoring the point, Nancy Adelson of the New York Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts advises that it is preferable for creative artists to retain copyright of their own works.

Yet in some instances, when copyright ownership is not specifically spelled out in prior contracts, university musicians for dance are finding that their creative output is being treated as work for hire. Unless there is prior written understanding on this point, a musician may have difficulties, not the least of which may be the jeopardizing of one's relationships and employment within a department.

In recent years, a number of Guild members have been troubled by situations in which choreographers who are members of college dance faculties automatically expect that they can use music composed for the department for their own outside professional companies as well. Such double usage could certainly be efficient, but many composers understand that they are entitled to separate contracts specifying arrangements with professional companies. Musicians who foresee such possibilities can best protect their rights by negotiating a written agreement in advance specifying how their compositions may be used for dance.

## **Grand Rights**

Any copyrighted music presented as part of a theatrical dance performance involves what are legally called *grand rights*, which must be negotiated individually for each work. If a composer or publisher retains copyright ownership even for works commissioned by particular dance companies, the same music could be used subsequently by other choreographers and companies, with further fees negotiated for performing rights.

If the music is not published, dance companies must make arrangements directly with the composer. If the music is handled by a publishing company, then the publishing company often negotiates performance fees and in turn pays the composer a royalty according to their specific contract. Some composers increase their incomes by becoming entrepreneurs and self-publishing their own works—thus profiting not only through the sale and rental of their compositions, but also from the double royalty payments for the performing rights.

## **Services of Performing Rights Organizations**

When composers create solely for the dance departments or professional dance companies which employ them, then it may be practical simply to negotiate all financial agreements directly and not join any performing rights organization, especially if the situation involves *only* grand rights or work for hire. But once composers start achieving some degree of success in a variety of contexts, including some commercial recordings and publications, then they usually find it advantageous to become affiliated with one of the performing rights organizations in this country: ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Poets), BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc.), or SESAC. Members of the American Composers Alliance are licensed through BMI exclusively.

The main service of these organizations is to collect license fees from the public users of copyrighted music and to distribute performance royalties to affiliated composers based on actual documented performances or upon projections of statistical samples. In practice, the system works best for pop composers whose tunes are played often over major radio and television stations—as well as for well-known "serious" composers whose numerous concert performance credits are "weighted" to reflect the instrumentation, length, size of concert hall, etc.

The performing rights organizations do not enter into any legal arrangements involving grand rights. It must be noted, however, that both BMI and ASCAP bolster the success of affiliated composers by providing *publicity* for theatrical works with scores by their members. This in turn is felt to contribute to the overall development of composers' careers, as well as to their incomes. Moreover, many "grand rights" scores written for dance have been recast as concert works eligible for "small rights" royalty payments through the performing rights organizations. As BMI's Ralph Jackson noted, "Small rights can sometimes be *enormous*."

For example, people in the field are fond of citing *Appalachian Spring*, which ASCAP's Aaron Copland wrote at the request of Martha Graham for her concert dance work. It was originally titled *Ballet for Martha*. But the musical work has certainly found a far wider audience through its expanded orchestral version, which falls into the category of "small rights."

## **New Law, New Quandaries**

Grand rights practices, with regard to music written for dance performances, have been long-standing and are based on previous versions of the U.S. copyright law dating back to 1909. It would seem that the dance world still finds these legal traditions acceptable, though they may result in sizable fees for touring performances of repertoire.

It is the latest, 1976 revision of the copyright law that has raised controversial questions concerning the definition of a “public performance” of copyrighted music. As noted above, the new law defines “public performance” as one which occurs at a place open to the public or at any place where a substantial number of persons outside of a normal circle of a family and its social acquaintances is gathered. Performing rights organizations have used this definition as a legal basis for expanding their licensing coverage to include dance studios across the country.

There are exceptions, including the multitude of dance technique classes accompanied by Guild members at colleges and universities across the country. An amendment to the copyright law, enacted October 25, 1982, specifies that:

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 106, the following are not infringements of copyright: “(1) performances or display of a work by instructors or pupils in the course of face-to-face teaching activities of a nonprofit educational institution, in a classroom or similar place devoted to instruction... (2) performance of a ...musical work... if (A) the performance or display is a regular part of the systematic instructional activities of a governmental body or a nonprofit educational institution; and (B) the performance or display is directly related and of material assistance to the teaching content of the transmission; and (C) the transmission is made primarily for reception in classrooms or similar places normally devoted to instruction... (3) performance of a ...musical work otherwise than in a transmission to the public, without any purpose of direct or indirect commercial advantage and without payment of any fee or other compensation for the performance to any of its performers... if (A) there is no direct or indirect admission charge; or (B) the proceeds... are used exclusively for educational, religious, or charitable purposes and not for private financial gain...

## **Legal Interpretation Affects Private Dance Studios the Most**

This latest revision of the copyright law has been interpreted to apply to all the music—both recorded and live—that is heard in any kind of dance studio, with the exception noted above, when face-to-face teaching takes place in a nonprofit educational institution. In studios not falling into the category of the exceptions, owners of the schools may be liable for substantial penalties if there is an infringement of copyright—either through the playing of recordings, or due to a live performance. Consequently, the new law as currently interpreted has been the source of great anguish among owners of private dance studios, who have gathered petitions for changing the law. One legislative attempt to do this has already been defeated in the House of Representatives.

## **Legal Responsibilities—for Whom?**

Under existing law, what responsibility does a musical accompanist have in regard to the performance of copyrighted music for dance classes? According to Barry Knittel, licensing director of ASCAP:

The copyright law says that the user as well as the performer can be held responsible for the fee. Since 1914, ASCAP has simply chosen to license the user, who is in more fixed surroundings than the musician is. Technically, under the copyright law, the musician can be held liable for copyright infringement also. But ASCAP has always wanted to make sure that there was never the perception that people were paying twice for the same product, so we have gone to great pains not to get ourselves into that situation.”

A differing legal viewpoint is presented in a BMI booklet entitled *For the Record: Questions and Answers on the Performance of Copyrighted Music*. In it, Jack C. Goldstein states [p.5]: “The proprietor of a place of business must bear the legal responsibility for the unlicensed performance of copyrighted music by musicians hired by the proprietor, even if the musicians are independent contractors over whom the proprietor has no control.” The legal expert further notes [p.61]: “The proprietor of a place of business may be held liable for copyright infringement even though the musicians performed the copyrighted music against the proprietor’s orders.” In practice, BMI’s director of marketing and licensing, Michele Reynolds, confirmed that BMI looks to the studio owner for the responsibility.

## Hostile Feelings Surface Among Dance Teachers

Perhaps it is not surprising that a dance teacher may grumble about how much money must be paid for a license to allow an instrumentalist to draw from the repertory of copyrighted music. Unfortunately, some of this discontent sometimes gets directed towards studio accompanists, who in fact reap no reward from the current licensing practices. It can be observed that while most dancers love music, some of them seem to have a not-so-latent resentment of the professional music “industry” in general. For instance, one irate critic in the dance field remarked privately to the author that people in performing-rights organizations are “a bunch of gangsters; nothing but Mafia-controlled extortionists.” How did she know this? “Because they have such elegant offices.” Yet a subsequent visit to the licensing department of ASCAP revealed offices which are comfortable but hardly extravagant by midtown Manhattan standards.

### The “Industry”

At this point it seems pertinent to point out that both BMI and ASCAP are not-for-profit service organizations, and that all their income from licensing is distributed among creative members and affiliated publishers (after payment of expenses covering about 20 per cent of revenues).

It should also be emphasized that with regard to “the music industry,” (a term which depersonalizes composers collectively), we are talking about the following:

every hit tune played on every radio station in every city in the country; spin-offs from the background scores for every show on TV and every commercial movie soundtrack; plus atmospheric background tapes for just about every restaurant, bar, bowling alley, beauty salon, shopping mall, hotel, baseball stadium, large elevator, and movie theater in America. That adds up to considerable amounts of music and millions of dollars in licensing fees annually.

Much of this music, obviously, falls more into the category of “entertainment,” or “popular” styles. Historically, jazz and concert works have not been noteworthy as money-makers for their creators. Similarly,

writing musical scores for ballet and modern concert dance is not something that musicians do in expectation of mega-buck rock-star incomes. But regardless of the styles of music that earn the most income, the central legal purpose of the performing-rights organizations is summed up appropriately in ASCAP’s articles of association: “to protect composers, authors, and publishers of musical works against piracies of any kind.”

### Who Gets the Royalties?

Leaving aside for the moment the question of what constitutes legal “piracy,” there is still the question of just exactly *which* composers benefit financially from the playing of copyrighted music in licensed dance studios. As pointed out by a letter published anonymously in *Dance Magazine* [June 1991]: “An unfair aspect of the situation involving performing-rights organizations is the way they distribute the royalties they collect....it would seem that those composers [whose specially-tailored music is heard in dance classes] should be entitled to a percentage of the royalties collected. This has never happened.”

When questioned about this viewpoint, licensing officers at both BMI and ASCAP pointed to the “impossible” task of monitoring just exactly which pieces are played during dance classes. They also felt that at least in the jazz, tap, and aerobics styles offered at most private studios, the music heard in class was likely to reflect the general proportions and selections heard over popular radio stations.

Ralph Jackson at BMI was asked about possible royalties for a composer who writes *only* for dance studios (particularly for ballet and modern dance). “Right now,” he stated, “there is no method of payment for such a person.” However, Jackson went on to clarify that when the total pool of income from licenses increases, then *all* BMI composers benefit, since disbursements are on a percentage basis. As an example, he cited such a “well-rounded” composer as Michael Torke, who has orchestral and radio performances in addition to his successful collaborations with New York City Ballet’s director, Peter Martins. Such a musician who concentrates on *composing—for* all possible uses—will benefit financially from the licensing of dance studios. In contrast, it seems that musicians who compose and improvise exclusively for dance somehow get short shrift or no financial benefit at all from the current performing rights system.

### Air-Play the Main Basis of Disbursements

The disbursement procedure at BMJ was explained in more detail by Michele Reynolds: “The only basis upon which we can pay royalties is air play,” she pointed out. (For concert music, the procedure is somewhat different, based on more of a census reporting, and royalties are weighted depending on the particular piece and the hall in which it is presented).

When asked if there are any procedures in place to extend royalty payments to affiliated composers whose works are in fact being “performed” during dance classes, Reynolds registered doubt: “We would have to establish a whole logging procedure for all dance studios around the country. That would be possible, but it would be an expensive proposition.” Reynolds was concerned with large numbers. Any personalized monitoring would immediately suggest considerable costs. “The reason that we are able to pay so much out to all our affiliates,” she emphasized, “is because we keep the overhead *low—very low*.”

When Barry Knittel at ASCAP was questioned similarly, he suggested: “For those people who believe that their songs are not being picked up in our survey, ASCAP has an awards panel. They need only write and say that these songs were played these days, and the awards panel will review the matter and pay a royalty for those performances.”

### **Fee-Free Recordings?**

Despite such avowed policies, some composer/ instrumentalists who specialize in creating music for dance seem to have given up on the prospect of earning any substantial royalty fees for the performance of their music in studio classes. Instead, they have opted for earning money more directly by producing and selling their own recordings of music for instructional dance. (Since all the arrangements between composers and performing rights organizations are negotiated contracts, even affiliated composers have the option of *not* including certain pieces among those covered by licensing.)

One finds, for example, Don Caron sending out brochures for Random Touch records with this italicized announcement: “No Licensing Restrictions. We are not regulated by BMI, ASCAP, SESAC, or any music licensing organization. When you purchase any of our recordings, you are extended permission to use them in all of your classes and performances without restrictions.” Similarly, Dansounds label announces in bold face at the top of its brochure: “Use Dansounds music in the Studio and in Performance. We are NOT affiliated with ASCAP or BMI.”

### **A System Unfair to Specialists for Dance?**

Perhaps most indicative of some unfairness in the disbursal of performing-rights royalties is the case of the late Lynn Stanford. Although he was always among the first to champion live music for *all* dance classes, he nevertheless was encouraged to record many of his original improvisations, as well as his stylized arrangements of tunes both from public domain and in copyright. With his partners, he found considerable success in this business precisely because so many ballet teachers across the country do not hire live musicians for their classes. By the time of his death in 1991, Stanford had seen the commercial release of 20 discs of music intended for instructional dance purposes, with sales totaling upwards of \$100,000.

Robert Weigel, business founder of Bodarc Recordings, confirmed that although Stanford had been a member of ASCAP for years, he received no performing rights royalties whatsoever on the substantial “public performances” of his own copyrighted music in thousands of dance studios around the country. This situation held despite the fact that this composer/pianist *had* applied for special ASCAP awards. His applications were turned down.

“This system hurts the dance specialist,” observed Weigel. Consequently, Bodarc has joined the list of record companies which will waive performing-rights royalties for classroom use only. However, it should be noted that such waiving of performing rights royalty fees is not automatic; individual dance teachers must write to the company and formally request permission for studio use of Stanford’s recordings. Moreover, it is important to note that such recordings are *not* “copyright free,” a term apparently coined by dance teachers who are opposed to licensing. The fact remains that if any of Stanford’s recorded music is to be used in dance recitals, for example, then *grand rights* still apply, and individual arrangements must be made with the recording company.

### **Private Teachers’ Reactions Seen as Typical**

The waiver of performing rights fees for recordings has been welcomed by private teachers and owners of small community-based studios. There are thousands of these across the country, offering everything from creative

movement for toddlers, to ballet, jazz, tap, aerobic dancersize, modern dance styles, and baton twirling. Most important to note in this context is that almost without exception, these private teachers use recordings rather than hire live musicians to accompany their classes. Many of these dance teachers apparently are accustomed to choosing any music they like and then duplicating tapes with no concern whatsoever for possible copyright infringement.

From one standpoint, perhaps they can hardly be faulted for this, for our entire culture has accepted the sale and use of “boxes” equipped with double tape decks precisely so that music can be re-recorded at home “for free.” Citizens who consider themselves otherwise law-abiding commonly loan each other recordings to copy. In fact, this practice has been rather surprisingly documented in *Copyright and Home Copying: Technology Challenges the Law*, which was issued by the U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, in 1989. Among its conclusions are the following points:

The survey found that most members of the public considered themselves to be unfamiliar with copyright law, but they nevertheless had clear-cut ideas about the acceptability of home taping....Perceived familiarity with copyright law did not reduce the likelihood of home taping, nor did lack of familiarity with the law increase it.”

“When asked about the acceptability of making a taped copy for your own use of a record, tape, or CD that you own,’ a majority (57 percent) gave a score of...perfectly acceptable. Moreover, 75 percent of respondents ranked this behavior on the acceptable side of the scale...Only 11 per cent of the public ranked copying of records, cassettes or CDs now owned for his own use on the unacceptable side of the scale.

The public acceptability of many forms of home music taping was even more clearly seen in considering situations in which the owner of the original materials did not retain the copies of the prerecorded music. When asked how acceptable they considered ‘making a taped copy to give to a friend of a record, cassette, or CD that you own,’ a majority of the sample (63 percent) rated the behavior as acceptable...while 40 percent rated it perfectly acceptable.”

In such a social context, it came as a big shock to owners of dance studios that they were suddenly asked to pay for something that was formerly theirs at no cost. Even BMI’s Michele Reynolds acknowledges: “When you use something for a long time for free and then you are told you have to pay for it, it’s not easy to take.”

## **Resentment Abounds**

For dance teachers, the occasion of initial letters from BMI or ASCAP may mark the first time they have had to confront a specific dollar value for the musical component of their classes, and their reaction is often a feeling that somehow it is “unfair” that they be expected to make ongoing payments for the energy of music just as they do for the energy of electric light in their studios.

Indicative of the ire felt by dance teachers are some of the excerpts from letters published anonymously in *Dance Magazine*, whose senior editor Marion Horosko has been spearheading a movement to exempt all dance studios from being subject to licensing fees for use of copyrighted music. Among the comments of her readers was this opinion: “Our feeling is that composers compose, and they should thank their lucky stars there are dance studios keeping their music alive.” And then there was this one: “For centuries, talented people have shared their talents....What a racket this is! ...What the performing rights groups are getting away with is wrong.”

Upon hearing such statements, ASCAP’s Barry Knittel remarked: “You take these people who talk about going to Congress and changing the copyright law. If they were writing the music, we would hear them weeping and gnashing their teeth at the thought that they were not going to be compensated for the use of their music. If someone were to choreograph a dance piece, and if someone else in that same town did the same choreographed piece, you would hear the screams across town.”

A similar reaction was elicited from Rosalie Calabrese, executive director of the American Composers Alliance: “Everybody who uses existing material that has been put together by other creators should be sympathetic to the idea that creators should get paid for what they have done. Certainly a choreographer would not like to find out that his or her dance piece has been copied and is being done somewhere else at many colleges, charging admission and so forth.”

## Collection Methods Seen as Intrusive

Not only do dance teachers resent the license fees in themselves; they also are critical of the ways in which they feel they are being approached. For instance, Florence Tsu Sinay reported in *Dance Teacher Now* [October 1990, p.35]: “These in- person visits are often by large men at off-hours—at least off hours for a dance studio, when the owner, usually female, is alone. There are reports of telephone calls to homes rather than business locations in the wee hours of the morning, which wake business persons from a sound sleep. There are numerous reports from teachers who have been forced to leave classes to respond to a licensing ‘agent’ and in some cases interruption of a recital where the ‘agent’ has implied that the business would be shut down then and there if a licensing check was not written on the spot.”

All that is fairly emotional language and an outsider has no way of judging the accuracy of such an allegation. ASCAP’s Knittel does not appear to be an ogre. In fact, he speaks cheerfully of how much his own young daughter has enjoyed various kinds of dance classes, and he offered a differing account of ASCAP’s licensing policies and procedures: “No business establishment is contacted in person initially. The first contact is always a letter which explains the copyright law, sends an application and a copy of a license agreement for them to review, and suggests that if they have questions they either speak to their lawyer or contact us directly.”

At BMI, Michele Reynolds emphasized that her organization’s employees are also trained in their approach, which includes a great effort simply to educate users of music in regard to the new copyright law, plus a policy of contacting teachers outside of class if they do not respond to information sent through the mail.

## Special Group Discounts

Despite the avowed policies of the performing rights organizations, complaints from dance teachers have mounted. In consequence, both BMI and ASCAP have attempted to ease tensions by offering discount licenses to members of Dance Educators of America and Dance Masters. The paperwork is handled through the offices of these professional associations; the teachers do not have to deal directly with performing rights organizations or worry about possible interruptions during their classes; and best of all, they pay less for the right to use copyrighted music in their classes.

Carol Bierman, president of Dance Educators of America, confirmed that a whopping 50% discount is available to member teachers who arrange their ASCAP and BMI licenses through the group. Yet some of this reduction is due precisely to the fact that DEA and Dance Masters are absorbing some of the administrative costs. It is a form of subsidy—which obviously in turn comes out of the professional organizations’ own annual budgets. “There is still a lot of misunderstanding,” said Bierman. She and others have noted that many private teachers have *felt* pressure; they have felt intimidated. This is understandable when one learns that in some cases ASCAP employees have come to the *homes* of the teachers. Perhaps it is no wonder some feel “hounded.”

The main objection on the part of private teachers has always been that they don’t come under the same classification as beauty parlors, conference centers, and other places licensed for the use of recorded and copyrighted music. They raise valid questions about differing legal treatment for educational dance based solely on the fact of whether the school is commercially owned or has been granted nonprofit status.

Dancers are not indifferent to the economic concerns of composers. For example, Carol Bierman observed:

“Many people in the music industry are not receiving benefit from their work. Surely the Billy Joel’s make money, but I don’t know if the ‘little people’ make very much money from licensing.” Focusing specifically upon the situation of creators of music tailor-made for dance, Bierman wondered if there couldn’t be a different method of collecting royalties.

## Exactly What Are the Fees?

With all the adverse publicity, one would think “arms and legs” were at stake in regard to performing rights fees. However, the reality may be somewhat more modest than the impression given by some owners of commercial dance studios.

For example, the average license fee collected by ASCAP from private dance studios is between \$50 and \$75 a year. The lowest proposed fee is \$37.83 a year for a ballet studio with 75 students per week. If a teacher has over 300 students per week, the negotiable fee would likely be a maximum of \$151.32 a year.

ASCAP's "combination" rates include jazz, classical ballet, tap, and modern dance, as well as acrobatic, gymnastic, square, folk, and ethnic styles—plus aerobics, baton, and slimnastics. Umbrella fees for such a variety of offerings range from a low of \$56.74 to a maximum of \$226.91. Finally, social ballroom and popular dancing require the highest fees, ranging from \$76.67 to \$302.65.

BMI (which is the larger organization) has a schedule of higher suggested license rates, ranging from \$91 for under 60 students to \$482 for over 375 students—regardless of what kind of dance is offered. The reader will be trusted to do some simple arithmetic to figure out just how relatively small these fees are *per student per year*. When broken down into rates *per student per hour*, it would seem that we are literally talking pennies.

How can the teachers gain extra income in order to meet these new fees? One wonders. In order to raise \$37.83 extra per year, would a ballet teacher have to raise her hourly fee a few cents per student? Would she have to accept one more student into one class per week? Could she encourage the parents of students to hold a benefit bake sale? Or could she pointedly in turn charge the parents an annual music use fee in order to highlight the cause of her extra expenses?

## Teachers Seek Alternatives

The legal alternative to paying for the use of copyrighted music is to do something like what the nation's broadcasters did earlier in the century to protest ASCAP's policies before the competitive organization of BMI was available: namely, to play "*I Dream of Jeannie With the Light Brown Hair*" a great many times.

Perhaps of interest to Guild members, a rather strange result of all this dissatisfaction among private dance teachers has been the suggestion that dancers can "save money" by hiring unusually creative musicians rather than using recordings. For instance, Scarlet Lynne King of San Antonio Texas wrote in *Dance Magazine* [March 1992, p. 9]: "There are many alternatives, such as finding local musicians who are looking for ways to bring their music into the limelight, or musicians who will play their own or public domain music live. Martha Graham used piano chords, and Doris Humphrey used a drum."

The aforementioned writer disregards the facts that both Graham and Humphrey also worked with outstanding composers. Yet this strange impression commonly persists: that services of talented improvising musicians and composers will cost less than performing rights fees for the use of recordings. Says Florence Tsu Sinay in *Dance Teacher Now*: "Little-known composers...may, for a small fee...compose some original music for you to use for whatever purpose you contract them....The University of Nevada at Las Vegas uses a staff member, Beth Mehocic, to compose original music for use in UNLV dance productions."

Such a viewpoint fails to acknowledge the considerable achievement by a highly-esteemed member of this Guild, in securing a position as composer-in-residence [for over nine years] at a major university. It seems odd indeed to think of musicians being commissioned precisely because a teacher believes she might save money by paying less for original creative work than it would cost to play a record.

In such a case, those who would gain most might actually be the students, because they could experience (perhaps for the first time) what it is like to work with a live collaborative musician instead of a mechanical tape deck or turntable. If some of the dissatisfaction about licensing serves to start a trend towards hiring more live musicians for dance classes, Guild members might be the first to applaud, while simultaneously voicing concern about reasonable financial compensation for creative composition and recorded improvisations that are tailor-made for dance.

## Some Questions for the Guild to Consider

As stated rather well in a booklet titled *The ASCAP license: How it works for you*: "The idea of copyright is to encourage creativity by making successful works of creative minds profitable for the creators. Nobody works for nothing, and...composers have to pay for rent and food just as you do."

On a practical level, musicians who are devoting their careers to the field of dance may want to devise and implement some new procedures for insuring that they receive all the financial benefits to which they are legally entitled for the use of their copyrighted music. Among other things, perhaps there needs to be some extended discussion among Guild members concerning reasonable definitions of "work for hire," as well as some dialogue concerning the existing licensing practices of performing rights organizations. Some of the present practices do not seem to benefit the very composers and improvising instrumentalists who devote substantial portions of their careers to creating music for dancers in both the studio and the theater.

## Sources

Interviews were conducted in New York City by the author with the following: Rosalie Calabrese, executive director of the American Composers Alliance, May 6, 1991; Ralph N. Jackson, director of concert music relations, and Michele A. Reynolds, director of marketing and industry relations, BMI, May 13, 1991; Barry Knittel, director of licensing and Jim Steinblatt, public relations officer, ASCAP, July 22, 1991. Ralph Jackson and Robert Weigel verified some facts by phone on July 22, 1991, and Carol Bierman was interviewed by phone on September 23, 1991.

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Though not quoted here, a brief introduction to licensing is BMI's pamphlet, "Questions Most Often Asked About Music at Health and Fitness Clubs," c. 1990. Also not quoted, but a clear presentation of the private dance teachers' viewpoint, is Marian Horosko's article, "Whose Rights?" in Dance Magazine, February 1991, pp 82-83. ASCAP President Morton Gould wrote a letter in response, published January 1992 [pp. 8, 10,137].

Among the helpful legal introductions is J. Gunnar Erickson, Edward R. Hearn, and Mark E. Hal loran, from the Bay Area Lawyers for the Arts, Musician's Guide to Copyright, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, revised ed., 1983).

Finally, an organization worth knowing about is the non-profit Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, with affiliates in 42 cities nationwide, all dedicated to providing free arts-related legal assistance to artists who cannot afford private counsel.

Grateful acknowledgement is made here for the assistance of Nancy Adelson from the New York office of the VLA, both for reading the entire manuscript and making some suggestions regarding a few legal points.

Among the helpful publications of VLA are the following booklets by Timothy S. Jensen, Esq.: *VIA Guide to Copyright for the Performing Arts* and *VIA Guide to Copyright for Musicians and Composers*, both available from the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019.

Katherine Teck is author of *Music for the Dance: Reflections on a Collaborative Art* (1989) and *Movement to Music: Musicians in the Dance Studio* (1990), both published by Greenwood Press, Westport, CT. She formerly worked for several years in the concert music department at Broadcast Music, Inc.

# Report On The Music Resource Center

Ray Brooks

In this article, I will describe the creation and functions of a music recording and mixing facility, the Music Resource Center, at the Dance Department of Florida State University. By means of anecdotal evidence, I will demonstrate some of the successes and failures of the materials and methods employed in the Music Resource Center (hereafter referred to as the "MRC").

## Creation of the MRC

The MRC was created through a proposal I wrote in the spring of 1990. I submitted my ideas for a workspace in which Dance Department faculty and students could create and edit music tapes and scores.

The original components of the MRC were as follows:

- \* Three Commodore Amiga computers and an M1 music workstation, for sequencing and editing MIDI music.
- \* A Tascam 644 four-track cassette tape recorder, for recording original scores and for tape collages.
- \* An extensive collection of sound effects CDs (shared with the Dance Theatre production facility).
- \* A dual cassette tape deck for two-track mixdown of scores, and for making rehearsal tapes.
- \* A CD player, for playing and recording commercial CDs and the sound effects CDs.

Added in 1991 were:

- \* A Roland SPD-8 drum pad, with internal percussion sounds, to be used for production of rhythmic scores and for use in class accompaniment.
- \* A Perfect Sound digital audio sampler, for connection to one of the Amigas.
- \* A Panasonic 11241 dot-matrix printer, for producing printed scores.

## Operation: 1990-1991

The Fall semester at FSU found the MRC up and running. The first project required the use of MRC computers by undergraduate students in Greg Presley's Rhythmic Analysis class. For this class, students had traditionally written their own three-part rhythm scores, and then had taught the scores to their classmates, who performed the scores on simple rhythm instruments. This semester a procedure was inaugurated in which the students transferred their written scores to the computers, using Dr. T's Copyist scoring program. These scores were then transformed into MIDI sequences by Mr. Presley and myself, so that they could be played by the synthesizer percussion samples.

Results were mixed in this first attempt to incorporate technological innovation in the classroom. While the students and faculty were pleased by the accuracy and speed of the MIDI performance of the scores, much time was consumed in the process. The students were frustrated by the steep learning curve of entering their scores. Many of the students had no experience with personal computers, and found this work tedious. The fact that there were only three computers for almost thirty students required the presence of a knowledgeable technical person for many hours, and cut down on classroom participation by the students. The conversion of the electronic manuscripts to MIDI sequences was also difficult, due to limitations in software design. Mr. Presley and I spent many hours correcting imperfections in the converted scores so that they could be replayed accurately by the computer. On the other hand, when a tape of the MIDI performance of the scores was played at the departmental end-of-term showings, much excitement was generated, and the students responded very positively to hearing their compositions.

The Spring, 1991 semester was the occasion for students who previously had taken Rhythmic Analysis to study Music History with Greg Presley. As part of this survey course, the students choreographed dances using their own music. This music was realized using the rhythmic MIDI scores from the previous semester

and changing them to atonal scores, using the sequencing software's algorithmic changes generator. A-B-A forms were generated by having the students select different instruments and tempi for each section. The students used recordings of the resulting scores as music for dances they choreographed. This project was quite successful, and accomplished in a relatively short time, since the major work had been done the previous semester.

This semester also featured the use of the MRC by the graduate-level Methods and Materials class, taught by Chairperson Dr. Nancy Smith Fichter. I gave a talk to this class on stochastic music and the use of scientific models (particularly chaos theory) as the basics for creating art. These graduate students had the option of either using the music notation software to produce chance music (by drawing notes at random the piano-roll notation screen, using the mouse) or creating a tape collage on the cassette four-track recording. Most students chose to do collages, although one student who used software to create a stochastic score was successful. During this time, electronic scores were realized by Greg Presley (music for dance by Lynda Davis) and by myself (various small works).

## **Operation: 1991-1992**

Due to the purchase of a Roland percussion pad in the Fall of 1991, we were able to alter and streamline the entry of rhythmic scores for the Rhythms Analysis class. The students learned notation and performance skills as before. They then played their music into the sequencer, using the drum pad. This method had the advantage of utilizing previously learned motor skills, obviating the need for computer skills. The amount of time consumed on this part of the class work was greatly decreased. The only concession to the students' lack of musical training was the use of a slower than "concert" tempo at the time the music was entered into the computer. The tempo of the computer playback of scores was adjusted to reflect an optimal "feel" for each piece. For example, a simple piece, using mainly note values of eighth-notes or larger, would have a much faster tempo than a piece having sixteenth note quintuplets. This revision of the operating procedure enhanced the advantages of using computers for this class.

During this semester, students and faculty continued to use the MRC for production of music for dance. Faculty member Anthony Morgan used the four-track machine to produce a tape collage for a dance he performed on the Twelve Days of Dance concert at FSU. One graduate student, Kelly Drummond, not only engineered the mixing of music for her MFA concert, she also used the MRC Amiga computers to produce a computer animation, which was projected onto the stage during the performance of her dance.

Spring, 1992 saw the production of another set of atonal music for the Music 1-history class. Greg Presley produced a second MIDI score for Lynda Davis' choreography. The purchase of an audio digitizer and related software for one of the computers enable led me to create a new project for the graduate level Methods and Materials class. I gave a talk to the class on originality, plagiarism and "ownership" of works of art. I then gave the students the assignment of selecting a fragment two to five seconds long from music they felt was culturally and/or personally significant. Each fragment was digitally sampled, and then manipulated and sequenced to form a musical score thirty seconds long. The students created dances to go with these scores. As the second part of the assignment, I took the four students' files and remixed them to my own design, creating a work two minutes long. The students collaborated in creating a two-minute dance, mixing motifs from their individual dances. After the performance of the resulting dance and music, we had a discussion concerning the ways in which art arises from individuals and, at the same time, from the general culture. I also worked with Lynda Davis' undergraduate composition class. These students used found instruments to produce sampled and sequenced music. This occasioned the first instance in which I heard a student exclaim, "This is fun!" with regard to using the computer.

## **Conclusions**

Two years of work in the Music Resource Center have given me several insights into the setup and operation of such a facility. Some of these conclusions are:

- 1) Technically Unsophisticated Users Of Electronic Equipment Prefer Simple Tools. I was aware of this fact before creating the MRC. I found that more training of MRC users was needed than I had anticipated.
- 2) A Greater Number Of Low-End Units (Computers, Tape Recorders, Etc.), Is Preferable To A Small Number Of High-End Units. This follows from Conclusion 1. Less expensive, "semi-pro" equipment will do the same job as more elaborate equipment, as far as teaching is concerned. The production value of resulting audio tapes will be adequate for classroom and, indeed, most concert applications.
- 3) Adequate Support Staff Is A Crucial Concern. In the first months of its operation, I ran the MRC virtually by

myself. Greg Presley was at that time in the process of learning the complex skills needed to operate the machines, so I had to be available for almost every minute the MRC was running. This was a tremendous burden on Greg and me. In school year 1991-92, we were able to have a graduate assistant.

4) Such A Facility Must Have The Support Of Administration And Faculty. Fortunately, at FSU this is the case. Faculty who were not interested in incorporating technology into their teaching still supported the mission of the MRC. Those who did use this facility were cooperative in working with me to design and schedule appropriate projects.

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# CURRICULUM ISSUES

## Master Of Music In Dance Accompanying At Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA

Karen Follett

The field of dance music has long been the most misunderstood aspect of dance programs across the nation. Considered more expensive and less reliable than recordings, or worse yet, simply an extravagant excess in the dance studio, the musicians are often the first to feel the effects of budget cuts and administrative belt-tightening. Beyond the dance instructors and their students, dance musicianship has rarely been regarded as a “necessity” by those who are removed from the actual studio setting. The formation of the International Guild for Musicians in Dance has been a decisive step forward in this struggle for recognition. Creating a forum for communication and the exchange of ideas, information and resources, the Guild has become a focused body of artists intent upon addressing numerous issues both formally and informally.

Considering the expendable nature of the dance musician’s position within the academic setting, it is not surprising to find that there are no existing programs for the education and training of the dance musician. Learning their craft on the job through trial and error, only a fortunate few novices have access to experienced dance musicians to assist them in their efforts to develop the necessary skills. As efforts intensify to gain recognition and respect for the multitude of contributions made by dance musicians in both academia and in the dance world, equally strong efforts are now being made to increase the availability of training for those who wish to enter the profession. Shenandoah Conservatory, in Winchester, VA, is joining in this effort and has recently approved a Master of Music degree in Dance Accompanying. One of four schools within Shenandoah University, The Conservatory already offers a BFA degree in Dance and a BFA degree in Dance Education, as well as both undergraduate and graduate degrees in composition and accompanying within the music field.

This new degree will be the first of its kind in the area, and a positive step forward in the struggle to recognize dance accompaniment as a viable academic and professional endeavor.

The force behind the creation of this degree was Dance Department Chair Elizabeth Weil Bergmann, who states,

I am delighted to finally see a program of this nature established within the academic setting. There are many fine musicians in the profession who have struggled to master the skills demanded of them while under the intense, rapid-fire pressure of on-the-job training. Too often this stressful experience has turned an otherwise talented artist away from the profession, which is a real loss to all of us in the dance world. Shenandoah would like to offer a training ground to bridge that gap between talent and experience, giving a studio intensive preparation to those who are interested in pursuing a dance musician career.

Dr. Charlotte Collins, Dean of the Conservatory, remarks,

I am very pleased that Shenandoah is offering this degree. We have long recognized the mutually supportive relationship between accompanist and performer, and we recognize the role of the dance musician as an art form in its own right. Shenandoah values its dance programs and acknowledges the differences in the training needed for musicians in this specialized area. We regard this new curriculum as a starting point. It will be fluid and responsive to any changes that may be needed as the program matures.

### The Curriculum

The degree will be highly interactive, with much time spent in the studio both observing the process and actively playing for classes. The following summary of the degree and brief descriptions of the courses will give an introduction to the program.

#### Major Area (12 Credits)

APAC 521	Applied Accompanying	2 credits
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APAC 522	Applied Accompanying	2 credits
APCM 511	Applied Composition	1 credit
APCM 512	Applied Composition	1 credit
MUTC 599	Thesis/Project/Recital	2 credits
DA531	Dance Accompanying Seminar	1 credit
DA 531	Dance Accompanying Seminar	1 credit
DA 531	Dance Accompanying Seminar	1 credit
DA 531	Dance Accompanying Seminar	1 credit

### **Support Courses (16 Credits)**

MUEN 530	Accompanying Ensemble	2 credits
MUEN 530	Accompanying Ensemble	2 credits
MUEN 530	Accompanying Ensemble	2 credits
MUEN 530	Accompanying Ensemble	2 credits
DA571	Dance History and Philosophy	3 credits
DA 572	Dance History and Philosophy	3 credits
MUTC 515	Twentieth-Century Styles	2 credits

### **Electives\* (2 Credits)**

Recommended Electives

Dance Composition

Applied Jazz Piano

Electronic Music

Applied Piano

Conducting

Applied Voice

Arts Administration Courses

Applied Percussion

While only two elective credits are required, two years of full-time graduate study affords a total of 36 hours, of which the 6 additional hours above the 30 hour degree requirement can be used for elective study. All candidates will be encouraged to develop a secondary instrument.

### **Accompanying Ensemble/Dance Accompanying Seminar**

Each semester of study, the candidate will be enrolled in this pair of courses designed to provide time both in the studio and in the classroom for training and discussion. While in the studio, the candidate will observe classes being accompanied by an experienced musician. In the classroom, time will be spent on discussion of the studio process, and to discover what is effective, and why. Gradually, as the student becomes more familiar with the exercises and the musical demands, they will be given the experience of playing for exercises, slowly taking over the accompaniment duties until they are the ones under observation. At that point, classroom time will become more focused on feedback of their performance in each class situation. Videotaping of movement will also be used to permit experimentation with the many different possibilities for each exercise.

The seminar will also provide the opportunity to learn many of the technical duties that often become the responsibility of the dance musician. Experience in making recordings for concerts, familiarization with sound equipment in theatres, coordination of music ensembles for performance, etc... will form a substantive base of knowledge to support the presentation of dance to the public.

### **Applied Accompanying/Composition**

Applied Accompanying will be for the private study of improvisation and music preparation for the dance classroom. Emphasis will be given to the development of individual style as well as training in historical styles. Applied Composition provides an opportunity to develop basic skills of music composition or to further refine those skills already obtained.

### **Dance History and Philosophy**

This is a vital class which will acquaint the dance musician with the history of dance as well as the development of music for dance. The course will also provide an important opportunity to present lectures on related research

topics that will develop the necessary presentational skills which are required of dance musicians who also teach academic courses within the Dance or Music curricula.

### **Thesis/Project/Recital**

This component presents considerable freedom for each degree candidate to tailor the program to their own interests and specialties in composition, improvisation or research.

### **In Conclusion**

The curriculum is suited to both the experienced dance musician and applicants with minimum experience who display an aptitude for improvisation and an instinct for translating movement into music. It is hoped that Shenandoah's vision will provide support and encouragement for others who are trying to establish similar programs at their schools.

**Karen Follett** .composer/pianist, is the Coordinator of Music for Dance at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia.

# REVIEWS

## New Music New Dance Festival Dublin, Ireland 23rd -27th, September, 1992

Michael Seaver

The New Music-New Dance Festival is an annual event that features collaborative works between Irish choreographers and composers. It was initiated in 1989 and developed from collaborative partnerships forged on the Dance Council of Ireland's National Choreography Course which brought together choreographers, dancers, composers and musicians to work on projects under the direction of established international practitioners.

Many of the works featured at the New Music-New Dance are by past participants and a common manner of dealing with the collaborations was evident in their works. This year's program opened with City Dance Company's *Lifescape* with composer Donal Hurley, who has written many works for dance in the past four years. From the outset the taped sounds set a pace and dynamic that was rarely matched by the movement, however, the overall work might have benefited by the music contributing a consistent color, mood or atmosphere, in order to contextualize the movement.

Indeed, this process was what made Paul Hayes' score for New Balance Dance Company's *Cry*. The music was a re-working of a song by Nina Simone, which was recorded on piano and multi-layered, producing variations of the original, and it mirrored almost perfectly the emotional and touching choreography of Adrienne Browne. Interestingly, the choreographer had initially choreographed the work to the original song and presented this arrangement at one of the lunchtime performances.

Rubato Ballet, in their work *Monkey Rib*, took an existing set of piano pieces by Raymond Deane (*After Pieces*) and so the working process was not collaborative to the same extent as the other works. Nevertheless, it is always interesting for a composer to see how choreographers interpret their works and how they visualize the phrasing, pulse and other elements of the score. In *Monkey Rib* the movement seemed to be at odds to the driving music, which seemed to merely blanket the dance and the correlation between the two seemed sporadic. One was left with the feeling, especially in the last "monkey dance," that the choreographer, Fiona Quilligan, went for the easiest and most superficial solution to matching music and dance.

Composer John Ryan made an impressive debut with his music for Dance Theatre of Ireland's *Weight the Heart against a Feather*, but again, the soundscape for the opening section did not match the subject matter and dance as successfully as the driving middle section of the work. In this part, scored mainly for percussion, the work did not succeed in building towards its premature climax, as the movement and the music were not paced sufficiently and less was delivered than was promised. These criticisms, however, did not detract too much from a very exciting and slickly produced work, and with more experience, both in composing and in communicating with choreographers, John Ryan's music will be making a significant contribution to music for dance in this country.

Irish Modern Dance Theatre presented *Rhapsody* as the final work in the program with music by me which I can't and won't review. Also, featured in the Festival were lunchtime performances by emerging companies and choreographers of which David Bolger's *Silent Scream*, based on Charlie Chaplin, to Ronan McCormack's *pastiche* silent movie score, was the most impressive.

Overall, a lack of live music was regretful, with only *Monkey Rib* and *Rhapsody* featuring a musician, the very accomplished pianist Reamonn Keary. The short space of time taken to produce and rehearse the work are frequently cited reasons for taped works, in spite of the fact that notation programs for computers can now produce scores and parts almost instantly and perhaps more importantly, can be easily changed and reprinted to facilitate last minute changes, etc. In any case we should be resisting letting the working process dictate something as important as live music.

Seeing different collaborative works in one program such as this, and the differing ways of combining music and movement, can be fascinating and instructive. What was most revealing in this year's festival was a re-affirmation

of the adage that the most successful scores for dance need not be impressive self-sustaining pieces of music but that often the simplest of music or sounds, which, through its soundscape, text or rhythm, can find and bring to the fore aspects of the dance and heighten the overall experience. As a composer for dance this is the most difficult thing to find, yet finding and experiencing this type of synergy through collaboration can be the most rewarding process for any creative artist.

**Michael Seaver** is a freelance composer, musician and class accompanist based in Ireland. His works have been performed by Dance Companies in Ireland, Britain, Mexico and the United States.

# Ohio Ballet

Oscar Mayer Theatre Madison, Wisconsin

9, October, 1992

Joseph Koykkar

The Ohio Ballet opened its concert with *PLANES! CONFIGURATIONS*, which featured the Steve Reich composition, *EIGHT LINES*, and the choreography of Heinz Poll, the Ohio Ballet's artistic director. The choreography reflected the essence of the Reich composition – the static dynamic levels, the uplifting energy, and the objective emotional state.

Poll's choreography, which utilized eight dancers to complement to eight instrumental lines of the music, effectively varied the number of performers on stage to create visual interest and excitement. The arrangements of the dancers ran the gamut from solos to duets to the entire group, with most of the movement's structural changes coinciding with the large-scale divisions in the music's structure. Approximately half of the time the size of the dance ensemble expanded or contracted to reflect the major formal landmarks of *EIGHT LINES*.

In general the rate of change in the choreography, either in the type of movement or the numbers of performers, was quicker than that in the music, as if the choreographer felt the eye would tire sooner than the ear of the constant repetition. The most effective aspect of this performance was the precision of the dancers in relationship to the very fast tempo of the composition in 5/4 meter as they created diagonals, circles and other geometric patterns on stage. The movement canons which evolved into unisons were done with the same intense energy found in the music, which is primarily marked *forte* throughout its seventeen-minute duration. All in all, *PLANES/CONFIGURATIONS* was an intriguing display of ballet movement vocabulary successfully linked to Reich's *EIGHT LINES*, a composition based upon an audible process of slow change via repetition.

The second dance of musical/choreographic interest from this concert was *ELEGIAIC SONG* featuring String Quartet No. 8 (1960) by Dimitri Shostakovich with choreography by Heinz Poll. Here Poll was inspired by the images of German artist Kaethe Kollwitz and from the dedication of Shostakovich's quartet "to the victims of fascism and war" to create a work of somberness and tragedy. It was choreographed for an ensemble of six female dancers, one female dancer in a lead role and one male dancer in a supporting role.

From a musical standpoint, Poll underscored the basic structure of the work by making large-scale changes at the outset of each of the five movements. One example was the appearance of the *ELEGIAIC SONG*'s lone male performer at the 3/4 waltz-like section of the quartet to break the overall dark and intense mood conveyed by the female dancers. At times the choreography's formal divisions were temporally displaced from the music's for a heightened effect and to avoid the obvious mirroring of the movement to the music which would have otherwise resulted.

In addition, the percussive tutti chords found in the second movement were asymmetrically treated in relationship to the movement. For instance, the choreographer would often choose to have the dancers make only three forceful gestures to offset the grouping of five which occurred in the quartet, thereby breaking any obvious symmetry.

Overall, *ELEGIAIC SONG* was an excellent example of a choreographer capturing the multi-level dynamics and deep psychological mood of a master-work, in this case Shostakovich's quartet, without being clichéd and predictable while presenting numerous dance tableaux which effectively portrayed the subject matter that inspired the work.

Joseph Koykkar, composer, is the Music Director for Dance at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.