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DNBulletin

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Gala to Honor Reinharts

The Dance Notation Bureau is pleased to present Stephanie and Charles Reinhart with the DNB's 1999 Service Award. The performance and award presentation will be on April 26, 1999 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clark Theater at Lincoln Center's Samuel B. and David Rose Building, with a reception following upstairs in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse. The performance will include *Ostrich Dance*, choreographed by Asadata Dafora and performed by G.D. Harris of Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, and a duet from *Shizen*, a Pilobolus work by Alison Chase and Moses Pendleton, performed by Rebecca Jung and Kent Lindemer. Paul Taylor will present the award.

The Reinharts have built the American Dance Festival to a position of international leadership in their 31 years at its helm. Stephanie, a writer and former DNB Professional Advisory Committee member, held a 1993 Fulbright. Charles, once manager of six distinguished modern dance companies and a former DNB Board member, founded NEA programs for dance touring and Artists-in-Schools and has been honored by Dance/USA, the Capezio Award and the government of France. The Reinharts have made a place for notation in the Festival curriculum, most recently through the Margot Lehman Project courses planned for this summer.

We hope you will join us in recognizing and celebrating this unique couple. For ticket information please contact the DNB office.

Helen Priest Rogers

We learned with great sadness of the death of our co-founder Helen Priest Rogers in Brattleboro VT. Rogers had served the DNB tirelessly from 1940, maintaining contact despite her residence in Vermont. She notated three scores, pioneered in filming and notating dances from film, and most recently was a volunteer in the Library. A mark of her careful sense of history is the collection she placed in our files, of letters written to her between 1942 and 1955 by notators and artists, illuminating the establishment of Labanotation in the US.

Ann Hutchinson Guest remembered Rogers for her confident, balancing influence on the three founders of the organization, and the wise personal guidance she offered.

The DNB thanks the family for their gracious request that contributions in lieu of flowers be sent to the DNB. Rogers organized a book of reminiscences for the DNB's 50th anniversary; we are thinking of her as we plan our 60th, which she did so much to make possible.

Spotlight:

First Forsythe

Sandra Aberkalns is notating our first William Forsythe piece, *Artifact II*, as mounted on Dance Galaxy.

Forsythe is known for working with a personal elaboration of Laban's Space

Harmony concepts, and his dancers use Labanotation symbols in their rehearsal work and notes. Aberkalns herself approached the company director, Medhi Bahiri, to initiate the project, and is supervising notator trainee Valarie Williams on part of it.

She observes that the principal challenge is not recording the off-balances so central to Forsythe, but dealing with the options given to the dancers in their partnering. A woman may choose to do her material to the right or the left, and the man is given latitude in choosing wide stances that must always permit him to counterbalance her. The notator may need a combination of motif writing and detailed notation to cover the assignments fully. The actions off vertical are required to be as large as feasible, approaching impossible positions, so continuity of the handgrasp becomes unusually crucial. Aberkalns plans a liberal use of spot holds, for hand contacts, and of enlarged boxes for alternate versions provided by the restager. She considers using inverted torso hinges to convey the unusual Forsythe use of the pelvis. The notation must also record Forsythe's very precise timings for repeated interruptions of the piece, in which a curtain descends at a specified speed and remains down for a specified time while the music continues and the dancers execute assignments out of sight.

Opening the House

Friends of the DNB were welcomed to the new offices at an evening reception on March 4. The DNB has gone in for color this round, with a brilliant blue hall to set off the notation posters and, in the offices, a scheme of warm gray walls and medium-toned wood bookcases and

furniture. Guests toured the Library and archives, Ilene Fox demonstrated the Interface project to date, and Robin Hoffman showed her new CD-ROM which links Labanotation and video for quick access by dancers learning roles.

We are grateful, above all, to our expert and committed contractor, Ken Foo, who completed construction and painting in a record 22 days (and nights, be it said).

Runup to the 60th: Profile

As we approach the DNB's 60th anniversary in May 2000, we would like to introduce a series of articles on DNB staff whom you may know only by phone and e-mail and not in person

It's a distinctive voice that greets most callers to the DNB and often sets the tone in clients' relationship with the Bureau. Beverly Jensen, who is not an notator but an actress, came by in May of 1986, to fill in for six weeks part-time. She was to examine bookstore accounts and fill back orders for the Educational Performance Collection.

That was a time of major reorganization, and soon Beverly found herself mistress of fully five empty desks as she moved on from one assignment to another. One particular success she enjoyed was excavating records of a years-old international shipment of books for which bills had never gone out, and actually securing payment. Beverly relished the variety of the work—she had a hand in most of the DNB's former programs, such as the bookstore and school, and now handles restaging contracts, certification records and the DNB databases. In 1998 she was acting Librarian from May to August.

Jensen has extended those planned six weeks indefinitely, adjusting her schedule to fit in the births of two children and her skills to unpredictable demands (the re-upholstery of the office armchairs is her work). Over her 12 years so far, clients have been received with singular elegance and patience, and no little wit.

The Library

Matthew Sheehy has added a bibliography of books about notation to the DNB Web site, listing sources that are reasonably accessible. He plans similar listings on learning Labanotation and other related topics. If you have bibliographies that might be suitable for addition to the web page, he would like to receive them for consideration.

Odette Blum's revised version of *Water Study* has arrived and been placed in the Maria Grandy Circulating Collection. Two new Paul Taylor dance scores have been added to the archives: Siân Ferguson's score of *Piazzolla Caldera* and Sandra Aberkalns' score of *Roses*.

Volunteers interested in film and video are welcome to work on a comprehensive survey of the DNB film/video collection and its preservation needs.

Dancing in the Millennium

The Dance Notation Bureau is participating in *Dancing in the Millennium*, a conference that promotes collaboration among organizations concerned with dance, dance studies and related professions and pursuits. Eighteen organizations are participating.

DNB Board member Dawn Lille Horwitz is co-chairing the conference and DNB Executive Director Ilene Fox serves on the program committee.

The conference will be held July 19–23, 2000 in Washington DC. The program envisions papers, round-tables, workshops, performances and award presentations. One of the goals of the event is to promote the visibility of dance in our times.

Extension News

William Smith and Vera Maletic presented a paper on "The OSU Comprehensive Documentation Shell: Dance Codes" at the International Dance and Technology conference in Tempe AZ on February 25. Smith also joined Sheila Marion to present "LabanReader: New Software for Technology/ Learning, Research and History".

Stacy Reischman restaged part of Senta Driver's *Resettings* for a studio performance with the assistance of dance faculty member Susan Hadley, who had danced the work with Driver and taught parts of it to the Pennsylvania Ballet. Reischman will prepare score notes for the still unchecked score.

At the Conferences

Ilene Fox presented "From Dance Notation to Animation and Back" at International Dance and Technology. She shared the platform with Tom Calvert and Scott Sutherland, discussing the progress of the LabanWriter/Life Forms Interface project funded by National Initiative to Preserve American Dance and the National Endowment for the Arts.

She will also give a paper at the International Council of Kinetography Laban conference July 25 – 30, 1999 in Barcelona. Her paper, entitled "A Fundamental Difference Between Kinetography Laban and Labanotation", is the first undertaken under the DNB's new Ann Hutchinson Guest Research Fellowship, created in 1998 by the Board of Directors to support LN research by DNB staff notators. This flexible Fellowship is intended to encourage theoretical advances and to reflect the commitment that Guest exemplifies.

Mason's Guest

The Winter 98 issue of *Ballet Review* (just out) contains an interview with Ann Hutchinson Guest by editor Francis Mason. High points of the article include Guest's analysis of missed signals with Balanchine, whose SAB students she would have trained in sightreading had he revealed that was his real goal for her three year teaching engagement, and an intriguing hint at the roots of Graham's attitude to notation. There is a glimpse as well of the ethical limits Guest placed on herself; she refrained from making even personal notes on Michael Kidd's *Finian's Rainbow* because she lacked advance permission.

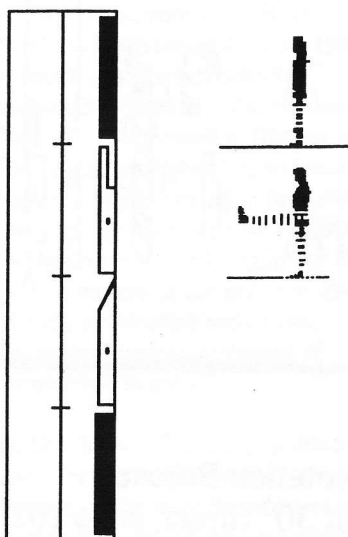
Motif Video

Odette Blum, working with videographer Kathryn DiGiacinto Morris, has completed a VHS video demonstrating Motif Description as an approach useful for teaching improvisation, composition, dance for children and Labanotation. She taped material during a graduate course in the OSU Department of Dance and edited this 40 minute presentation, which users may also find valuable as a tool in evaluating

dance.

The tape is entitled *Motif Description—Introducing the Elements of Dance* and is available from Odette Blum, 180 W. Kenworth Road, Columbus OH 43214. For further information telephone 614/262-1541.

Life Forms/ LabanWriter Update

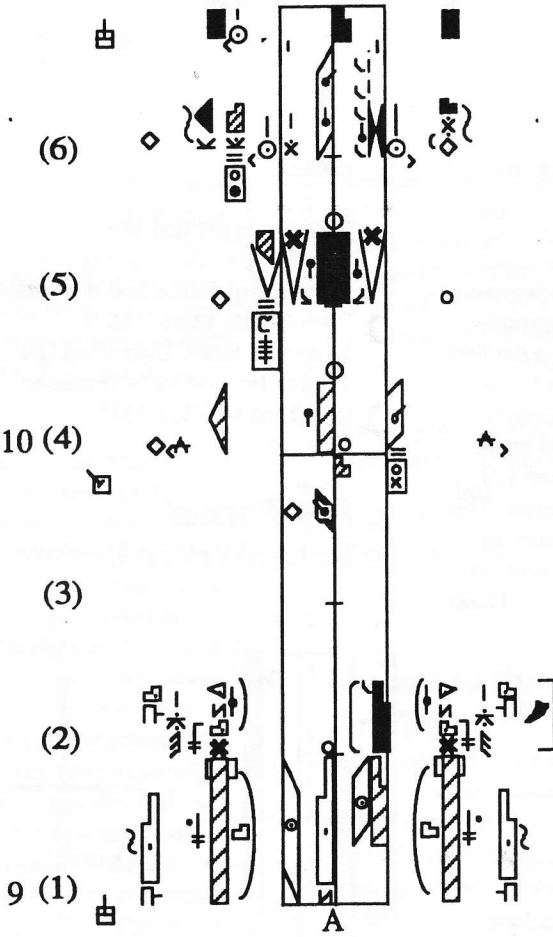


The project to create a translation interface between LabanWriter and Life Forms is moving forward. A first stage translator has been created that can take simple arm and leg gestures notated with LabanWriter and convert them to Life Forms animation.

Above is one measure from a LabanWriter file created to test the prototype. Next to it are two of the keyframes from the animation translated from the notation. Of course, when viewed in Life Forms, you can also see the figure move from one action to the next. Team members are now looking at the animation to check accuracy of translation and to identify assumptions that may differ between notation theory and Life Forms.

"Body makes same notes with Milstein, with his bow"

"Defian t"



from the rehearsal draft of
the score of
ARTIFACT II
by William Forsythe

notated by Sandra Aberkals with Valarie
Williams

See *Spotlight* story inside

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