

Proceedings

Society of Dance History Scholars

---

Border Crossings:

Dance and Boundaries in

Society, Politics, Gender, Education

and Technology

---

Joint Conference with The Association for Dance in  
Universities and Colleges in Canada

Ryerson Polytechnic University

Toronto, Ontario

Canada

10-14 May 1995

**This collection of papers has been compiled from camera-ready copies provided by individual authors who wished to contribute their papers as a record of the 1995 Society of Dance History Scholars–Association for Dance in Universities and Colleges in Canada joint conference. In order to achieve a volume speedily available to the group, no editing, a time consuming process, has been done.**

**University of California, Riverside  
1995  
Published by Society of Dance History Scholars**

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

Joint Conference  
Society of Dance History Scholars (Eighteenth Annual Conference) and  
The Association for Dance in Universities and Colleges in Canada

Ryerson Polytechnic University  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
10-14 May 1995

Linda J. Tomko, Compiler

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Murray, Nancy R. <i>Who is the Person in the Teacher of Dance?</i> .....	1
2. McFadden, Susan. <i>Dance in the Liberal Arts College: Fostering Standards in Non-Professional Settings</i> .....	13
3. Nevile, Jennifer. <i>From the Garden to the Ball-Room: Principles of Design in Renaissance Italy</i> <sup>1</sup> .....	21
4. Bruner, Jody. <i>Canadian Nationalism and Dance: Three National Film Board of Canada Dance Films</i> .....	29
5. Tembeck, Iro. <i>Crossing the Rubicon waters</i> <sup>1</sup> ; <i>Myth and Identity in Montreal's New Dance</i> .....	35
6. Krasnow, Donna and Steven Chatfield. <i>Dance Science: Advancing Dance Training</i> .....	45
7. Douglas, William. <i>DANCE, SPACE, ARCHITECTURE; The Making of The Golden Zone</i> .....	49
8. Curran, Tina M. <i>Building Bridges with the Language of Dance</i> .....	55
9. Clark, Maribeth. <i>The Contredanse, That Musical Plague</i> .....	61
10. Abu-Lughod, Mekhala. <i>Natural and Supernatural Boundaries: Transcendence Through Dance in North India</i> .....	71
11. Lester, Garry. <i>When Cultures Collide: Interculturalism in the Work of Kai Tai Chan</i> .....	75



12.	Garlick, Fiona. <i>The Ceremonial Danse à Deux: Crossing Class Boundaries in 16th- and 17th-Century France</i> .....	83
13.	Marsh, Carol G. <i>French Theatrical Dance in the Late Eighteenth Century: Gypsies, Cloggers, and Drunken Soldiers</i> .....	91
14.	Woods, Karen. <i>A Chaste Seduction: Women and Social Dance in Eighteenth-Century England</i> .....	99
15.	Adshead-Lansdale, Janet. <i>Patrolling the Borders: The Dance Text as Exclusion Zone</i> .....	109
16.	Erdman, Joan L. <i>Blurred Boundaries: Androgyny and Gender in the Dance of Uday Shankar</i> .....	117
17.	Prickett, Stacey. <i>Humor and Gender-Bending in the Joe Goode Performance Group</i> .....	125
18.	Peck, Jane. <i>Crossing Boundaries, or Tracing French Roots of Métis Dance in the Upper Midwest</i> .....	133
19.	Liota, Bettle. <i>Liminality in Contra Dance</i> .....	139
20.	Wollaston, Ginnie. <i>Blurred Boundaries: Blood/Spirit: Whose Multiculturalism? The South Asian Context</i> .....	151
	Francis Sparshott's Philosophy of Dance.....	157
21.	Maynard, Patrick. <i>Sparshott's Dance Perspective</i> .....	161
22.	Cohen, Selma Jeanne. <i>Comment on "How Can I Know What Dancing is?"</i> .....	165
23.	Scott, Gregory. <i>Empires, Egalitarianism, and the International Dance Academy</i> .....	169
24.	Sparshott, Francis. <i>Response to Commentators</i> .....	173
25.	Fortin, Sylvie and Susi Lovell. <i>Contemporary Dance Performance: Students as Audience</i> .....	179
26.	Lau, Holly. <i>The Child as Work of Art: Blending Art and Academics in the Curriculum through the Arts/Bruce Connection</i> .....	187
27.	Hammond, Sandra Noll. <i>A Workshop on the Mécanisme and Esthétique of Nineteenth-Century Ballet Technique from the Manuscripts of Adice</i> .....	197



28.	Or, Eileen. <i>Body and Mind: The Yoga Roots of Martha Graham's "Contraction" and "Release"</i> .....	203
29.	Hausler, Barbara. <i>Dancing across the Border: Nona Schurman's Search for Modern Dance</i> .....	215
30.	Chazin-Bennahum, Judith. <i>Tudor in Canada: The Wizard in a New Land</i> .....	227
31.	Stokvis, Onno F. <i>Establishing Contacts Between East and West Europe Through Modern Dance</i> .....	239
	Russian Soul and Spanish Blood: Nationalism as a Construct in the Historiography of Dance in Spain.....	249
32.	Colomé, Delfin. <i>Gone with the Wall</i> .....	251
33.	Casero, Estrella. <i>Gender, Motherland and Dance</i> .....	255
34.	Carrasco, Marta. <i>Dance in the Spanish Press. The Ghost of Edgar Neville</i> .....	259
35.	Monés, Nèlida. <i>Dalcrozism in Catalonia as a Bridge between the Past and Present of Contemporary Dance History</i> .....	265
36.	Ablanedo, Enrique. <i>The Tale of the Tin Soldier</i> .....	271
37.	Carreira, Xoán M. " <i>...And Spain</i> " .....	277
38.	Vissicaro, Pegge. <i>Cross-Cultural Dance Education: Diminishing Boundaries</i> .....	287
39.	Kreemer, Connie. <i>Whose Gaze Is It Anyway?</i> .....	291
40.	Program.....	301





## WHO IS THE PERSON IN THE TEACHER OF DANCE?

Nancy R. Murray

The university dance teacher deals with much more than the intellectual fabric of the traditional university class. Practical dance classes are designed to educate students in dance theory, choreography, aesthetics and movement analysis, while concurrently aiming for technically proficient dancing. The extent and quality of students' dancing experience, their previous exposure to the arts, and accompanying appreciation for dance is tremendously diversified and necessitates sensitive teaching.

The unrestricted environment of the barren dancing space exemplifies the primordial nature of dance, unbounded by the requirements of specific paraphernalia through which most practical disciplines are grounded. Indeed, there are very few 'musts' to study. Thus, the dance class emerges from the play of interdependence between the students, the dance material and the teacher.

As this research project was being formulated, I found it helpful to situate myself in dance, as a university dance teacher. Thus, I wrote in my journal;

*Part of the tremendous power that dance holds is that it grips all our Selves. Dance requires the body; its knowing, intuition, control. Dance requires the mind--intelligence, organization, movement memory, intent. Dance demands emotional involvement and connections with others whether we perform with others or for others because of the necessity of purpose; of being, of self for expression. The dialectic is evidenced in the necessity of shift from Self to Other; from the progressive notion of restrictions of Self to freedom of Self, and of restrictions of Other, to freedom of Other, to liberation from, and for Other. (Personal Journal, April 11,)*

Teaching is complicated through the bifurcation of dance as both physical activity and art form. This creates numerous dialectics for the teacher to grapple with: process and product, theory and practice, body and mind, creativity and technique, intellect and intuition, creator and spectator. Dance teaching involves the interplay of promotion of new ideas, resonance of understanding the known and valuing the diversity of others. Indeed, there are a multiplicity of considerations of which the successful dance teacher must be aware.

## The Method

This research was designed through the lens of phenomenology, intended to illuminate two university dance teachers' experienced knowledge as revealed through their teaching praxis. Observing the teachers' knowledge in action and questioning their implicit theories about their learning and teaching served as the foundation for exploration in the study. Each teacher was observed teaching one, 80 minute, intermediate modern dance class per week, followed by a one hour long audiotaped interview. Since the teachers team taught this class, the same students were observed twice a week for one university term of 12 weeks.

The professional practice of Lorna and Terry (pseudonyms) served as the focus for the study. As two female university dance teachers in Northern New York State, eager to participate in the study, I felt that their differing approaches to the same class would be an exciting endeavor. The paramount research assumption was of Lorna and Terry's teaching excellence. Thus, the study was non-evaluative in all aspects. Other governing principles included qualities of respect, trust, openness, optimism, and a willingness for surprise on my part. (Hunt, 1992)

All interviews were transcribed and returned to the participants for comments or clarification shortly after each interview. Relevant information was highlighted for analysis with further questions addressed during subsequent interviews. Thus, information was gathered through ongoing, interpretive conversation and observation. Thematic analysis was continuous and emergent in order to facilitate a progressive focussing of themes to capture the essence of the phenomenon. However, after information was collected, the context and content of findings (Quinn Patton, 1990) were the primary means through which the salient features of the teachers' experienced knowledge was made explicit. Triangulation was achieved through discussion with a university dance student of both teachers', as well as a variety of the teachers' curricular materials.

## Lorna

Allow me to introduce you to Lorna, a petite, confident, French looking woman of about 50 years. Upon meeting her, she is friendly and focused upon whatever the task at hand may be.

*Why do I dance? It's very simple! Nietzsche said; "Let that day be lost in which we have not danced once." That's it. It's because physically I have*

*become so accustomed to dancing as a way of life. It's probably the foundation of everything, whether it's an emotional foundation, or whatever....It's because it's something I enjoy and I think it's really neat if you can take something you can enjoy that really is like food--a necessity in a sense that food is and have it be fun and have it be a way of making a living. What more can you ask for? (Lorna, 2.2)*

*One of the questions that I most hate when I'm interviewed is "What kind of a dancer are you? I'm a dancer. Not a ballet dancer or a modern dancer. I have had great ballet training, I have had great tap training and stuff like that but I hate snobbism in dance. (Lorna, 1.14)*

Perhaps due to her extensive dance studio background, Lorna's teaching focus is on the **technical** skills she strives to develop in her students. These technical skills are not only comprised of established dance techniques, but skills required for artistic performance--commanding presence, memorizing, sequencing, relaxing and adapting. Lorna often spoke of the significance of good dance technique.

*We have to work very hard on performance because the stakes are so high for the students technically. You have to be God damn good technically, and yet, if that's only what it's about, you lose it all. (Lorna, 2.5)*  
*You may be a wonderful choreographer or dancer, but if you can't to a tendu correctly, then what's the point? (Lorna, 3.1)*  
*Students say to me: "You want us to be everything technically, but you want us to be this, too!" And I say; "Yes, I want you to be it all." (Lorna, 2.5)*

The impetus grounding Lorna's teaching praxis is **discipline**, a term she used repeatedly throughout our conversations. Lorna uses the term discipline with two connotations. The first is the adverb, to 'be disciplined', and the second is the noun, as in 'the discipline' of dance.

*I tell the students that I'm extremely easy to get along with as long as they are disciplined. (Lorna 1.4)*  
*What we're trying to do in this program is to develop independent people who understand when it's important to be disciplined and how important discipline is in setting you free. (Lorna 1.12)*  
*You don't necessarily damage your creativity by being disciplined. (Lorna, 1.13)*

When she attended the School of the American Ballet, this discipline was paramount, as she remarks; "At SAB there was such discipline" (Lorna, 1.11)

Lorna firmly believes that in order to become a competent dancer in the professional world of theater and performance, she must assist her students to become disciplined. With great pride she stated;

*The teachers of the beginning acting classes say they can always tell the dancers in my classes because they're more disciplined. (Lorna, 7.10)  
I think that's the kind of discipline that you have to have as a professional. (Lorna, 7.1)*

### Terry

Meet Terry, an energetic, candid, athletic woman in her late 30's. Her green eyes sparkle with delight, regardless of the topic of conversation. She says about herself;

*I like to play....There's a lot of freedom in play. And that's a very distinctive part of the personality. And I don't hide it in class. The experimenting comes in. I like to play a lot. (Terry, 5.11)*

Upon being asked; "What is dance to you?" she replies;

*Dance is a very integral thing...it's a very complicated little animal, but if you know the mechanics it's pretty easy to teach if you know how to break it down. Because there are so many different ways of people communicating on such a private level, because the body's moving and the emotions and you know, some people notice and some people, just gang busters! And there's real difference of personality in people. I really enjoy seeing the way different people communicate. There's so many different ways of doing that. (Terry, 1.9)*

*I have a very different perspective of what dance should be. In my opinion is that dance is not the end all and the be all. And I know that and the people who teach straight up know that. I hope the kids see all the perspective. (Terry, 2.13)*

Terry's focus is centered around a very **personal** teaching and learning environment which she strives to create. This is most obviously conveyed in her extroverted personality; characterized by energy, enthusiasm, empathy, humor and warmth towards all students. As a student remarked;

*Terry is easy to universally like. She always sees the dancer in people. (Jos. 1.7)*

Terry asks questions of students in class, addressing the students' personal reactions.

*How many of you enjoy this stuff? (Terry, 8/23)*

*What feels awkward? What are you worried about? (Terry, 8/9)*

*My sense is that you're not happy! (Terry, 8/30)*

Student Josephine says;

*She pushes you too! And she's not afraid to say; "You know, you can get your leg up higher," or; "Let me put your leg up higher for you." And then students expect more from themselves. 'Cause if you don't do it, then Terry will come and make you do it! But in a good way. (Jos., 1,7)*

Terry is very open and relaxed, conveyed through her appealing sense of humor which includes making fun of herself with her students.

*She's very funny; she's comy and you know you're going to have fun with Terry. (Josephine, 1.7)*

*I'm having bad hair day. Do you ever have a day when everything falls off the hangers? (Terry, 8/30)*

The term I chose to capture Terry's impetus for her teaching is **organic**. This implies that she is very physical, sensory, and natural. Terry's kinesthetic sense and her students' feelings about movement is significant to her teaching. Thus, the class atmosphere she creates is highly sensory. Terry's orientation to dance is one of energy and feeling; it is internal rather than external. Her comments are revealing in this regard;

*I'm a very hands on person. I've always been. I touch students; I have them touch each other. I try to touch students because that tactile sense is reinforcing--as many sensories as you can compact in; you have a better memory of it. (Terry, 8.13)*

*I teach from a real physical level. (Terry, 7.2)*

*With that music, that kind of movement just naturally comes out of me. (Terry, 8.1)*

*I think that swings are pretty groovy! Especially for warming up because everyone can do them. (Terry, 7.4)*

Student Josephine adds;

*Terry is more instinctive as a teacher; feeling rather than technical. The technical is expected, but the feeling of the movement is important. (Jos., 1.13)*

*Her whole body's moving with it and she's really high energy and she comes in and she gets you right into the movement! (Jos., 1.11)*

Terry often asks students how they are reacting to the movements. She is particularly aware of students' injuries and is always mindful of their comfort and safety, as Josephine reinforces;  
*She always asks how we feel and what body parts we need to stretch and how our injuries are. (Jos., 1.6-1.7)*

### Lorna and Terry

The three themes used to characterize the similarities of Lorna and Terry's dance teaching are: **responsivity, analysis, and holism**. These concepts are not to be viewed as discrete, but rather as loosely interweaving with one another and with the themes which characterize Lorna and Terry's teaching.

### **Responsivity**

Lorna and Terry's teaching practice was consistently responsive, denoting affirmation of others' needs through their actions. Both teachers viewed the students' needs as paramount in their work. Their responsiveness was in accordance with both the students' immediate personal needs, as well as the students' professional development within the theoretical and practical context of the university dance program. Support and empathy for students' immediate needs were numerous in the classes which I observed. For example, Terry asked such questions as;

*How do you feel about what we did today? (Terry, 9.5)*

*Has it been a tough week? You don't have your usual sense of humor today! (Terry, 8/2)*

Responsivity in teaching also requires flexibility and openness. For example, when the students were encouraged to attend a professional dance performance, Lorna changed the time of the class in order to accommodate all of the students' schedules. Lorna stated that when she choreographs for students, 'recipe dances' would be easier to teach, but

that she prefers to 'pull' movement from the students to engage them more fully in the choreographic process.

The evaluation process in which Lorna and Terry engage is highly individual and continuous, characteristic of responsiveness. They are concerned with the students' technical development in dance, creativity, attitude, and effort put forth. Lorna states;

*On a daily basis I pay a lot of attention to their development. (Lorna 6.10)  
There's no way to make a blanket statement about how I would behave when someone hands in a late paper because it depends very much on the individual's history. You need to go on a case by case basis. (Lorna, 6.5)*

Responsivity to students and the dance program is directly linked to the strong sense of professional integrity which Lorna and Terry possess. When discussing their perceptions of the teacher's role, both teachers made the following statements with tremendous conviction. These statements articulate Lorna and Terry's implicit theories.

*If you put yourself on the stage then you have a serious obligation to be everything to your audience. If you put yourself in front of a class, you have that same obligation. (Lorna 6.6)*

*Every student deserves equal attention and instruction. The teacher has a responsibility to teach. (Terry, 9/20)*

## Analysis

Another strong characteristic of Lorna and Terry's teaching is their continuous breadth and depth of analysis. As teachers within the university environment, it is not surprising that analysis is paramount in their teaching. This analysis relates to breaking down potential movements from the whole into parts for inclusion in the dance program, musical and rhythmic analysis, and analysis of students' technical skills. Because the students are being prepared to dance in a variety of dance forms, and may be teaching dance when they graduate, students are expected to gain analytical skills as well as technical skills. Thus, analysis of students' movement is often verbalized to the students, for both their immediate understanding and future reference.

Both Lorna and Terry explain;

*I don't think you can separate the students' understanding and their dance performance. I tell people not to come here if they want to work on their bodies and not have a brain. (Lorna, 6.9)*

*I believe very strongly that dancers should have a cognizant view of what they're doing instead of just imitating (my movement). (Terry, 7.11)*

Analytical skills are required in students' assignments, exams, and class discussions. With reference to the purpose of written work, Lorna states;

*We need to be thought provoking. (Lorna, 6.12)*

*Our kids are all required to be articulate about what they do. (Lorna, 6.9)*

In class work, students are constantly required to learn new movements, analyze previously acquired movements and transfer skills from one dance technique or style to another. Both Lorna and Terry engage students in problem solving processes which require practical application of knowledge. Lorna explains;

*I set problems for the kids. It might be something as simple as; "Can you sustain movement on a straight line from point A to point B for 35 minutes without ever repeating yourself?" (Lor, 2.4)*

Students are expected to read dance literature and discuss it intelligently. Lorna views theoretical analysis as the paramount area which separates the university from the private dance studio. She states emphatically;

*I have no interest in learning which is not contextual, where I can't spend time discussing things. (Lorna, 6.8)*

Effective teaching within every subject area requires the ability to see the whole and logically break it into manageable parts. In the teaching process, these parts must be sequenced from general to specific, and from simple to complex. Lorna and Terry are both experts at this process.

As Josephine states; *It's progressive. It's taught to you so that you're not overwhelmed by a whole pattern all at once, so maybe she'll show you the whole thing and then teach you the parts of it. Sometimes in the warm up she will do something that we'll put into a combination later. She usually starts out with something relatively simple and then makes it more complicated. (Josephine, 1.6)*

Because the body is the focus for expression, dancers' understanding of their craft is heightened through understanding of the principles which govern movement. Thus, the teacher's ability to analyze through the



application of biomechanics and anatomy fosters responsiveness. Both Lorna and Terry share their knowledge of the body, and the physical principles which affect movement with the students. They encourage the application of scientific knowledge to the art of dance. For example;

*Find a partner; hold her hips to ensure that she lifts in the tendu. (Terry 8/23)*

*What makes the cobra stretch work? The abs and spine. (Lorna, 8/2)*

## **Holism**

The final component of similarity in Lorna and Terry's teaching is their holistic approach to the dance teaching venture. Lorna and Terry are most significantly, holistic educators. Both teachers view the students as primary. As Lorna states;

*The person is as important as the technique. (Lorna, 1.6)*

Lorna and Terry are equally aware of the impact they have as professionals upon their students. As Lorna states;  
*I can teach the subject matter without even giving it a second thought. I can virtually teach it in any way I need to. However, I think the responsibility for the human side of it, what you say and what you do and how it impacts on people becomes more difficult, the more aware you become of the impact you have. (Lorna, 3.10)*

Lorna and Terry are cognizant of teaching life skills;

*What was the purpose of what we just did, which was organized chaos? Adapting! (Terry, 8/16)*

*We teach manners at the university level! (Lorna, 3.11)*

*We need to keep the students questioning and growing. (Terry, 9.3)*

Lorna and Terry are highly conscious of the ways the students care for themselves physically. Both teachers stressed the need for adequate sleep and nutritious food. As Terry states;

*Did you all eat before class? You must, at least yogurt or toast! (Terry, 8/23)*

On numerous occasions in and out of class, Lorna and Terry engage in discussions with students about their personal lives. They encourage students to learn about themselves, and the world around them to enhance

their personal and professional development. In class, Terry commented--with some 'tongue in cheek--to one particularly conforming student:

*Kristen, do you ever take risks, or are you always a good little girl?*  
(Terry, 8/16)

Holism is also evident in Lorna and Terry's approach to dance as an art form. During Lorna's first dance class of the year, she probed the students;

*Why do you dance? What moves you?* (Lorna, 9/16)

### **Conclusion**

As in all phenomenological research, this piece is intended to illuminate the area and encourage the reader to reflect upon his or her own related experience. One of the values of this type of collaborative research is that the process encourages a linking of theory and practice, and the rethinking of assumptions in the articulation of assumed premises. Such articulation is valuable as in essence, we re-enter our professional practice as a neophyte, struggling to find poignant language for common experience and accepted theory. The feeling is perhaps similar to the struggle we find when asked a profoundly simple question by a child. We are required to stop, take a breath and explore our way through familiar territory. It may be a transforming experience which attunes us to our knowledge; it transforms the mundane to the significant.

References

Hunt, D. (1987). Beginning with ourselves. Cambridge/Toronto: OISE Press.

Hunt, D. (1992). The renewal of personal energy. Toronto: OISE Press.

Quinn Patton, M. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods. Newbury Park: Sage Publishing Company.



DANCE IN THE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE: FOSTERING STANDARDS IN  
NON-PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS

SUSAN MCFADDEN, WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

Session Description:

The presentation will consider how dance in a liberal arts setting can utilize strategies for dealing with "scant resources". Focus will be on transforming potential constraints in a liberal arts dance program into opportunities to extend traditional conceptions of dance's place in the liberal arts structure. Dance's contribution to general education and to interdisciplinary performing arts studies will be considered.

Outline

Dance programs in liberal arts institutions may sometimes be characterized by "scant resources". "Scant resources" may include

1. lack of homogeneity in students dance technique or experience. Some student may have had little previous training. Some may have had extensive training prior to college but, having elected to forego a dance career, have elected a small liberal arts college instead of a university offering degrees with dance majors and/or minors available.
2. basic or restricted curricular offerings in dance. Since dance is not structured as an area of concentration, courses offered may cluster at beginning levels of technique styles.
3. dance faculty who are non-tenured and/or part time. The program in dance may be impacted by the faculty member's ability to access institutional funds to support travel or research, or to participate in policy making.
4. limited access to traditional stage settings. Access to proscenium or other settings may be restricted due to competing and/or traditional campus events that utilize the performance site. Additional personnel for technical support may be unavailable. The capacity of the space may be restricted by unsuitable floor surface, or lack of fly space, etc.
5. difficulties in the administration of the dance component within variously allied disciplines. The dance component may be variously perceived by the college population dependent on where it is housed. Dance is often part and parcel of theatre or music or physical education departments.

The focus of the discussion will be on the possible and creative solutions for persisting difficulties such as those outlined above and on how alternative strategies can benefit the entire performing arts spectrum in the liberal arts arena. Developing from a basis of standards of excellence historically advocated by such dance editors as Lippincott (1948), and extending to a consideration of the National Association of Schools of Dance procedures outlined for accredited membership (1982), strategies will be advanced for encouraging non-majors to experience high calibre dance experiences which develop their appreciation and knowledge of dance as it relates to a larger arts context. Potential models for successful dance programs in liberal arts may be selected for examination.

CMS Publication's 1994-1995 Directory of Dance Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada and DanceMagazine 1992-1993 Directory of Dance in North American Colleges and Universities list over 300 colleges and universities with both degree and non-degree programs. In many non-degree granting program the mandate is not to train professional dancers. It is not a goal to be accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance. Programs operate, to borrow a sports analogy, in a variety of leagues. Nonetheless, some students well grounded and trained in dance during youth and adolescence decide to attend college with limited dance offerings yet hope to continue some participation in dance study.

As noted previously, students come to college with dance technique levels that are disparate. The range in experience could be no dance background to several years in the private sector. Performance experience is equally varied. Nonetheless, the choreography for those individuals must achieve, as Lippincott (1948) has suggested, standards of "accuracy, precision, projection, taste and effectiveness" if it culminates in a public performance. Lipponcott's article provides a thoughtful analysis of the role of the dance teacher in the liberal arts setting with content as timely now as it was when the article was first published.

#### Distinguishing the small liberal arts setting:

Programs of dance in North American higher education institutions vary widely. Those administered in the liberal arts colleges share certain features as a function of the educational setting in which they operate. Liberal arts colleges enhance a commitment to general education and dance programs within these colleges will reflect that commitment.

Liberal arts colleges stress that broad liberal learning is essential to analytical thinking, critical judgment, and decision making. The institutions tend not to grant degrees for professional purposes but seek to grant degrees for knowledge itself, for the stimulation of learning. There is a commitment to develop understanding and appreciation of the humanities, social sciences and fine arts. "The reason that the humanities are also called the 'liberal arts' is that they are liberating." (Hornby, 1993) In the 1979 publication The Dance Catalogue, the section entitled "Dance and the Liberal Arts" notes "a college or university dance program in a liberal arts setting will offer not only technique courses but a strong liberal arts foundation of work in music, theater, languages, philosophy, history, mathematics, science, and fine arts."

In many liberal arts colleges, the dance programs are modest and it is not the institution's intention to train individuals for a professional performing career. Again, these programs may have restricted or limited course offerings and potentially constricting dance facilities both for technique classes and for performing opportunities. The Association for Dance in Universities and Colleges in Canada (ADUCC) Fall '92 newsletter profiled three Canadian university dance companies and the descriptions somewhat reflected the status quo of the disparities that exist between the nature and scope of the different dance programs in North American higher education in general. The dance educator's challenge is to seek opportunities to extend conceptions of how dance vitalizes the academic setting.

#### The encounter with "scant resources"

Conversations between Oregon dance colleagues rendered it apparent that individuals working in small programs encountered similar variables which posed extenuating circumstances to their effectiveness as dance educators. Many, if not most, dance faculty in liberal arts institutions hold post graduate degrees in dance, degrees earned at institutions that offer comprehensive study and training in the dance field. Typically, those established programs are provided in appropriate and adequately equipped facilities. Resourcefulness is required of new faculty in effecting the transition from being a graduate student in a program with many "givens" to administering a program with a lot of "missings". These "missings" were both short term, in day to day operations, and long term, in the yearly cycle.

Existing institutional variables which have the potential to pose mitigating circumstances to a given dance program may be termed “scant resources”. However, “scant resources” stimulate the imagination rather than daunt expectations. The status quo may be viewed as a challenging opportunity, a circumstance to be worked from rather than resigned to. To borrow the Red Cross phrase, one can “survey the scene” and proceed, in many cases, to do more with less.

In recognizing and working within given limitations, one’s scope need not be compromised. Rather, the task at hand becomes to establish an expansive and inclusive vision for a dance program which is then implemented imaginatively within the bounds of reality. Just as in composing a dance, the choreographer constantly works to distill a concept to its essence, so too do dance educators in small colleges identify the salient features of their vision and marshal materials to fashion and form a product.

In the liberal arts context there is a built in climate to foster dance’s contribution to general education and to interdisciplinary performing arts studies. There is a recognition of the interrelatedness between subject areas and a concern with values, reflection and efforts to discover meaning, “wholeness”, and interdependency. Eclecticism is valued.

Coordination of dance with any other area requires energy and creativity from the initiator to ensure that the dance experience remains substantive. The dance discipline should not become diluted by efforts to forge alliances and connections with other disciplines. Dance, like all art, is amplified by diversity but diversity is not mediocrity. Diversity is a means by which a range of impressions are brought to bear, a means by which an artist’s values and perceptions are centered rather than dispersed.

While a liberal arts institution may not be geared to providing in depth and/or sustained study in dance, it is still possible to foster standards of excellence which reflect the integrity of the discipline. As observed previously, standards of excellence for performance of college dance are historically advocated by such dance educators as Lippincott (1948).

#### Blurring the lines between disciplines:

It is fundamental to recognize that most higher education faculty are still specialists and that “professors themselves are somewhat naive about the canons of research and learning and the professional expectations of disci-



plines other than their own" (O' Callaghan, 1988). Acknowledging this reality guards against dilettantism. Moving forward from this reality expands individuals' opportunities to grow professionally and to be intrigued by the potential for unique opportunities and challenges.

In "Spanning Boundaries" (Ellis, 1992) a conviction is expressed that the less specialized organizational structure of a smaller liberal arts college provides a research opportunity versus a research liability. Ellis maintains that such a structure aided him in perceiving ways in which two academic fields sometimes carry on as if one or the other did not exist. He stresses the wisdom of spanning boundaries rather than of remaining within bounds, rather than of compartmentalizing discrete subject areas.

Spanning boundaries is an ambitious task. It is a task worth the initiative but a task which must be embarked upon with an awareness of the need for an accompanying transition in perception. The point has been made that "when we enter the realm of 'interdisciplinary' research we must choose between two options: the naive reading of primary material outside our area of expertise or the surrendering to key secondary materials which clarify what, for us are foreign or exotic primary materials." If the first opinion is eliminated, the notion becomes one of layering, of enrichment.

#### Fostering standards in dance productions:

Reflection needs to occur on what dance educators consider minimum standards in the presentation of college dance in public performance. It may be useful to consider the concept of "leagues" as used in athletic programs. While a small liberal arts college will not be a member of, for example, the NCAA/Pac 10, it still aligns with school whose membership possess a similar profile in terms of size and resources. Within the given "league" certain minimum performance standards are maintained. Likewise, in the performing arts arena, and specifically, in dance, educators will likely agree on certain minimum requirements for public performance. The concern here is not with miracles, with turning water into wine, but rather with doing what needs to be done to keep that water clear, fresh, and pure. "An audience has the right to ask for a high standard of theatrical production when dances are given on a public stage." (Lippincott, 1948).

Discussion Format:

Lively and provocative exchanges occurred during panels which occurred at the Association for Dance in Universities and Colleges in Canada (ADUCC) conference in May, 1992 and at the Oregon Dance Association (ODA) conference in October, 1992. Practical and implementable ideas for strengthening programs were shared. Connections were made, questions were posed and insights were gained. It is productive to exchange information on innovative endeavors for dealing with "scant resources" and to utilize one another's action strategies for departure points in various programs.

Suggestion systems need to challenge us to find good solutions as well as recognize good ideas. While we may be comfortable owning the suggestions we also must be willing to own the solutions even when the solutions mean a shift in perceptions, a move to new ways of thinking and new paradigms. This move is at the heart of liberal arts, a system that welcomes dialogue, innovation and that fosters excellence and dignity in work. "This is what the innovative artist does as well...he or she opens up new ways of perceiving reality...When people open themselves to new experience, they open themselves to new ways of thriving." (Carlsson, 1993)

One dimension of this inquiry will encompass the interfacing of dance with theatre. Ideas that bridge or blur the boundaries of these two disciplines, ideas that intimately connect the two will be germane. The intention is to look at means to foster flexibility, imagination, and continuous change. As we move toward the close of a century which ushered in the emergence of dance in higher education programs, it seems appropriate to pause to consider how the journey is faring.

The anticipated benefit of the discussion is to foster an understanding of how dance in the liberal arts context interfaces with the theatre experience to serve the goals of general education. Acknowledging, turning to and activating fundamental and initial connections between the disciplines of dance and drama is one means for proceeding and collaborating effectively.

## References

Association for Dance in Universities and Colleges in Canada Newsletter (1992, Fall).

Carlsson, Jae. (1993). The Future of Dance in Oregon. Happenings, Spring/Summer. Portland: Dance Coalition of Oregon, p.4.

CMS Publications . 1994-1995 Directory of Dance Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada.

Covey, Stephen R. (1989). The Seven Habits of highly Effective People. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Dance Magazine College Guide 1992-93

Ellis, Richard. (1992, Summer). Spanning Boundaries. Willamette Scene, pp. 8-9.

Fichter, Nancy Smith, editor. (1985). Dance administration: themes and directions. Columbus, Ohio: College of Arts, Ohio State University.

Hayes, Elizabeth. (1980) Dance Educators in Higher Education. Journal of Physical Education and Recreation, October, 59-62.

Hornby, Richard. (1993). The End of Acting: A Radical View. Applause Theatre Books.

Hornby, Richard. (1993). Humanistic Acting. Theatre Week, February 8, 21-23.

Oakley, Francis. (1992). Community of Learning: The American College and the Liberal Arts Tradition. New York: Oxford University Press.

O'Callaghan, Phyllis, editor. (1988). A Clashing of Symbols: method and meaning in Liberal studies. Georgetown: Georgetown University Press.

Oliver, Wendy, editor. (1992). Focus on Dance XII: Dance in Higher Education. Reston, VA: AAHPERD.

Reynolds, Nancy, editor. (1979). The Dance Catalog. New York: Harmony Books.

Solomon, Robert C and Jon. (1993) Up the University: re-creating higher education in America. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education. (1988, September). The Arts, Liberal Education, and the Undergraduate Curriculum. Reston, VA: AAHPRED.

## FROM THE GARDEN TO THE BALL-ROOM: PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN IN RENAISSANCE ITALY<sup>1</sup>

Jennifer Nevile

In his book, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, the renowned scholar Sir Roy Strong describes those gardens as a "profound expression of the Renaissance mind."<sup>2</sup> He continues:

For those who saw and described them they were objects of wonder and admiration. They were tangible representations of Renaissance man's conquest of the physical universe by harnessing the magic powers of nature ... Not only are these gardens important in the history of art and architecture but they also provide abundant material in relation to the history of literature, theatre, science and ideas. To walk in a Renaissance garden is in fact to walk through the avenues of the Renaissance mind.<sup>3</sup>

I would like to add one other art to the list given by Strong in the previous quote: court dance. It is the aim of this paper to explore the parallels which I see between court dance in Renaissance Italy and the gardens which were built in the same period. I would like to emphasize at this point that the common characteristics I discuss may, or may not, have been recognized at the time. The authors of the dance treatises do not mention the outdoor spaces in which dancing occurred. While some of those spaces were certainly the *piazze* in front of the city houses of the nobility, equally others must have been in gardens of their country villas. Also, as far as I am aware, none of the modern scholars of the Renaissance garden have discussed the relationship between the kinetic and horticultural arts. However, this silence does not invalidate Strong's point, and my own contention, that the principles which governed the conduct of the art of dance in the Renaissance were the same as those which determined other creative endeavours, including that of the planting and design of gardens.

One way of viewing dance is to see it as the creation of patterns in space: patterns which form and reform, and trace out shapes in the air and on the ground. Formal gardens can also be viewed as the creation of patterns on the ground: their shapes are static, but they still present changing images as viewers stroll from section to section, and new shapes open up before them. Thus, I feel that the courtly dance and the grand gardens of Renaissance Italy are not as disparate as one might first think.

Order and measure (which must be visible from above), symmetry, geometrical forms, straight lines, the construction of the whole out of small compartments, the expression of magnificence, and the creation of enclosed spaces with clear boundaries, these were all fundamental principles of both court dance and the grand gardens.

### Order and Measure

Above all, the Renaissance garden was ordered and measured. Through it was expressed the interaction of the artificial culture created by human beings with the natural 'culture' created by God. Nature as a reflection of the cosmic order was seen as inherently ordered, and so in the garden the art of mankind had to "imitate not only nature's outward appearance, but also its underlying order".<sup>4</sup> [See Lazzaro; Plate 168 p. 168] This underlying order was understood to be rendered more perfect by the cultivation of the trees and plants in the garden, and in the addition of sculpture, ornaments, water features, mounds, grottoes etc. In the topiary work, labyrinths and in trellis constructions, natural materials - plants, vines and trees - were cultivated into geometric figures like spheres or pyramids, or into shapes reminiscent of sculpture like ships or human figures, or into natural shapes like animals.

The overwhelming importance of order in fifteenth and sixteenth-century gardens was the characteristic which distinguished them from the gardens of earlier centuries. It is also the characteristic which binds them to other artistic endeavours of the Renaissance, such as cartography and theatre design.<sup>5</sup>

In the prologue to his treatise, one of the fifteenth-century dance masters, Guglielmo da Ebreo, spent a great deal of time explaining how the art of dancing proceeds from the art of music, and how the essential nature of music was the study of proportion and relation. For the educated of the fifteenth century (as for those of the Middle Ages) the perfect art was one in which rational form and proportion were expressed simultaneously in sound and movement; that is, poetry which was sung and danced. Thus the art of dance in the Renaissance was also created on principles of order and proportion: a proportioning of the dance space: a proportioning of the movements of the body, and a proportioning of the music. The resultant choreographies reflected this order in their use of geometric shapes (squares, straight lines), their use of symmetry, and in their use of space. [See Lazzaro; Plate 74 p. 85]

In the gardens order was expressed through the geometric forms of the ornaments, as we have seen, but also through the use of symmetry, the central paths which bisected each other at right angles, the trees planted in straight lines, and the

geometry of the compartments which formed the basic building block of garden design, and into which the three divisions of plant-life were put. [See Lazzaro; Plate 34 p. 43]

In every Renaissance garden nature was divided into three categories.

- (1) Large trees in the wood or *bosco*
- (2) Fruit trees in an orchard
- (3) Herbs and flowers in beds in a small area

But even the large trees in the *boschi* were cultivated, ordered, regularized. The large trees were still enclosed in their own square compartment, in their own separate, enclosed section of the garden, and planted in straight lines. From Giusto Utens' view of the Medici villa *L'ambrogiana* we can clearly see the wide central avenue with symmetrical units on either side of it. We can see that not only does each compartment have its own geometrical space, but that each section is divided into four quarters. [See Lazzaro; Plate 63 p. 71] [See Lazzaro; Plate 24 p. 35]

While symmetry was not of over-riding importance in fifteenth-century choreographies, it became increasingly so as the sixteenth century drew to a close. This increasing concern for symmetry on the part of the dance masters can be seen by comparing the first version of Caroso's dance treatise, *Il Ballarino*, published in 1581, with the second version, *Nobiltà di Dame*, published in 1600. In *Nobiltà* Caroso revises choreographies which appeared in *Il Ballarino*, however, he is at pains to point out to his readers that the revised choreographies are more perfect as they are now truly symmetrical. Thus a series of steps begun on the left foot would be repeated beginning on the right, and floor patterns made to the left would also have to be made to the right.

In the garden also the concern for straight lines and regular geometric shapes extended from the largest design units down to the smallest components, as we can see in this detail of the garden at *L'ambrogiana*. [See Lazzaro; Plate 25 p. 36] The beds, which were filled with flowering plants of different colours and shapes, were divided again into squares, circles, triangles, all delineated by paths. These paths not only helped to reveal the design through the contrast between their level ground and the slightly raised bed of plants, but they also allowed the compartment to be entered.<sup>6</sup> This difference in height can be clearly seen in this detail of two of the compartments from the villa *Petraia*. [See Lazzaro; Plate 29 p. 40] One should note here how the square shapes of the compartments are emphasized by the planting of larger trees in each corner (as is shown here). The figure of a square delineated by a dancer at each corner was also a common formation in Renaissance dance. Often the choreography emphasized the pattern of the 'squared circle'; for example, the fifteenth-century *ballo*, *Anello*, begins with the two couples facing one another in a square. The