

LODA News

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UK & USA News



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Editorial

Eve Knights

Welcome to the Winter 2012 edition of LODA News, your biannual publication for all that is related to Language of Dance.

Since our last edition of LODA the Language of Dance Centre has been busy with our community projects. This year saw the expansion of our Dance Play programme to a second venue and the expansion of our Dance Moves project into the Special Education Needs sector.

LOD continues its growth outside the UK with great work from the LODC USA team delivering their newly configured two part LOD Fundamentals course.

They also presented several sessions at the National Dance Education Organisation Conference using LOD.

Val Farrant took a trip across to Mexico to observe Alejandra Ferreiro teaching the LOD Fundamentals course at the National School of Dance

Nellie y Gloria Campobello.

Our Director, Ann Hutchinson Guest also updates us on developments on her Leeder Project.

If you are currently working on an LOD project and would like to be considered for inclusion in our next LODA News then please contact us at info@lodc.org. We would love to hear about LOD at work.

Congratulations to Lisa Marucci, the LODC UK's office manager, and her husband Nic on the arrival of baby Isabella Violet Marucci, born 28th June 2012, weighing 7.1 lb.

I would like to wish our friends all over the world, a safe and peaceful festive season and a prosperous New Year on behalf of the Language of Dance Centre UK.



Dance Moves into the Spotlight

Eve Knights

On 4th July 2012, the Language of Dance Trust hosted its second Dance Moves Festival at Oxford House in Bethnal Green.

The Dance Moves Festival provided an opportunity for almost 200 primary school pupils from two neighbouring boroughs, Hackney and Tower Hamlets, who have participated in our Dance Moves School's project from September 2011 – July 2012, to perform in a professional theatre and showcase their work. Dance Moves is a project created to inspire creativity, learning and self-belief. Its main aim is to provide dance for all. It fosters a healthy attitude towards working with others and offers a fun opportunity for children to express themselves while learning key life skills.



All dance works performed at the festival were choreographed by the children on the theme of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, and were created using the Language of Dance Approach. As the use of Language of Dance symbols is open to individual interpretation we were treated to performances in a wide variety of styles and genres.

The festival is a fun finale and celebration of all the hard work the children have put in over the past year. It has provided an opportunity for children to feel that they have been part of something special, that their work is of importance and has real value.

Schools that took part were Gainsborough Primary School, St John's Primary School, Christ Church Primary School, Lawdale Primary school, Osmani Nursery School and Hague Primary School.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our funders who have kindly supported this project and the festival, without whose continued support none of this would be possible. It is also with the dedication of those who work with me that it was awarded the highly acclaimed "Inspire Mark" for being an outstanding and innovative

project that nurtures and inspires young people.

Big Dance at Oxford House

Lauren Turner

Big Dance week is a biannual UK festival that has been slowly growing since its inception in 2006. It aims to give anyone and everyone the chance to be involved with and be inspired by dance with the added highlight this year of being part of the cultural build up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In order to encourage and support organisations getting involved this year Big Dance offered micro grants to small organisations, so the Language of Dance Centre teamed up with Oxford House (the building where the LOD is housed) and Green Candle Dance Company (another dance company at Oxford House) to put in a bid, which was successful. With the Big Dance objectives in mind and a range of established dance practitioners at our disposal we pulled together a week of varied dance activities catering for any age or ability, completely free of charge to the local communities.

The first part of our Big Dance week was an exhibition by photographer Tracey Fahy entitled 'Irreversible Materiality'. This is a project that Fahy worked on with the Green Candle Senior Dance Company (60+ years) and documents dance among people in their third age. The exhibition was opened as part of East London's 'First Thursdays' gallery night and had a very good turnout. It was a joy to meet many of the dancers from the photos and learn about their experiences of dancing and performing as an older person. We also set up a smaller exhibition documenting the history of the LODC in the Oxford House café. This covered lots of the work that has taken place across London and then right up through to the present LOD projects including the Dance Play sessions that currently take place on the premises.

The practical dance classes started off on Wednesday 11th July with Family Day which included the popular aforementioned Dance Play sessions taking place in the morning and afternoon. With the studio full to capacity Eve Knights led this parent/carer and toddler class through fun nursery rhymes, storytelling and movement exploration with her usual vigour and enthusiasm, much to the

enjoyment of those taking part.

Thursday was a chance for two established local projects to come together and share their skills at Oxford House. From the LOD Dance Moves project the local Lawdale school classes were invited to come and experience Green Candles youth dance group BanglaHop! The students watched a performance by the BanglaHop! girls and then split up into groups to go and learn a short part of the routine which they then came back and performed together. Both groups thoroughly enjoyed the experience, for the Lawdale students a new dance style and for the BanglaHop! girls a chance to try their hand at teaching, which they did very well.

Friday was SagaCity! devoted entirely to participants aged 50+ years. During the afternoon they were given the chance to take part in a variety of

dance workshops including street dance and Bollywood. In the evening we had performances from many local older peoples dance companies which took place in the theatre. It was a wonderful evening of creativity and entertainment and I hope that I will be capable of putting on a performance of that standard in my later years!

We rounded the week off on the Saturday with a Taster Day for all including Zumba, Creative Dance (using LOD), Street Dance and Bollywood. We had a lovely mix of ages and abilities across all the classes with my favourite comment being 'I learnt more in 20 minutes than I have in 5 years clubbing!'. This is exactly what Big Dance is all about, trying something different and learning something new. I would like to thank Green Candle and Oxford House for collaborating on this project. It was a great learning opportunity for all



Children learn part of BanglaHop! routine

of us and we hope to be able to do it again in the future.

Stage I Course in Mexico City

Valerie Farrant

July 30th - August 11th 2012

A Language of Dance Fundamentals (Stage I) course was held at the National School of Dance Nellie y Gloria Campobello for its teachers and students.

More details in the next issue of LODA News.

Leeder Project Report

Ann Hutchinson Guest

Picking up the Leeder Project after the summer away, the focus has been on organizing the music for the chosen studies. Ideally we need the recording and the sheet music of the pieces being published in the book, however, it may not be practical to include the sheet music. The Swiss Archives converted the old cassette tapes into CDs but without identifying each piece. Separately they sent a list of the contents of each disk but this did not immediately tally. On request they also sent the sheet music of pieces by pianists who had worked at the Jooss-Leeder Dance School at Dartington Hall. My thanks go to the Swiss Archives for all their generous help.

I encountered problems in sorting out this music

material. Into the picture comes Jonathan Still (Music Department, the Royal Academy of Dance) who has already been helpful on the music front, and Dr. Suzanne Knosp (Director of Music for the School of Dance/University of Arizona) who assisted me during several Leeder presentations at the NDEO conferences in the States. Fortunately Suzanne decided to come to London in September on her Sabbatical. Both of them are amazed at the wide range of music choices that Leeder used in creating the classroom studies. Often the movement quality to be studied dictated the choice. In particular cases the music and movement were created in tandem. This project provides important examples of how movement and music are linked. What is fascinating is to experience the view provided by musicians experienced in playing for dance classes.

Jonathan states: "The value in my view is that musicians in dance usually feel as if there is no history to what we do, because it is impossible to recreate classes. This project brings together not only notation of the music, but recordings of it, and the ability to see the exercises that were created with it. The past of music for dance is usually a notional 'they' that we can only imagine by projecting



Participants taking part in Stage 1 Course in Mexico

our own experience backwards, whereas this makes the past tangible, audible, visible and offers, as it were, a critical eye on the present. It's a wonderful example of sensory history."

Suzanne puts forward the point that, through this project, we will provide new information to be added to the historical archives of the International Guild of Musicians in Dance as well as the field of dance education. An examination of Leeder's musical choices for these studies may provide further insights into the teaching process of this important 20th century dance pedagogue and artist. It may also contribute to the study of the relationships between music and dance. These two experienced musicians are providing a fascinating additional dimension to the development of the Leeder Project. Both of them had composed accompaniment for studies, following my 'singing' from memory the music into a tape recorder. With the original music now found, comparison will prove interesting. Both see deeper significance in the project and have divided the material for further investigation.

Valuable preliminary material for the book already contributed by June Kemp are: Sigurd Leeder, A History; Sigurd Leeder, The Teacher; and The Sigurd

Leeder School of Dance, Curriculum (a brief outline).

Word notes pointing out the highlights of each piece, what to focus on and the changes in quality underlying the different phrases, are already written for four of the ten contrasting pieces to be included in the book. The notation scores need careful checking to be sure the movements and transitions are clear. Thus there is still much work ahead.

Another important development has been the October visit from Switzerland by former Leeder student Evelyn Rigotti, who brought with her Romana Frasson, also a former Leeder student. Evelyn brought with her some important notated studies found at the former Leeder School by Christine von Metlin, a welcome addition especially as they included "Rain" which everyone remembered with special affection. Discussion centered on how to expand interest in the project, the Folkwang Hochschule in Essen-Werden should be contacted, also the Palucca School and others.

Apart from the production of the music CDs, work still to be done includes completion of the word notes for each study, checking these with other knowledgeable people, and checking the Labanotation for possible improvement. Further down the line is the

production of DVDs of the studies in performance. For this we will be in touch with Joan Turner Bunster and her daughter Manuela at the University in Santiago, Chile, who are keen to undertake this part of the project as they have dancers trained in the style and the facilities for filming.

An Adventure of Olympic Proportions

Eve Knights

I embarked on a journey, back in September 2011, which would lead to one of the most amazing moments in my life



Eve and son Leon outside the Olympic stadium

Standing among thousands of other hopefuls, I waited in line to be called in to audition to become one of the cast members for the London 2012 Olympic ceremonies. We were put through our paces in a four hour audition, and after successfully surviving the first; I then proceeded to continue through a series of auditions which

narrowed the 85,000 applicants down to 10,000. I landed a drumming role despite never having drummed before, but this was because I showed natural rhythm, because of being a dancer. They wanted individuals who could move, positioned throughout the group of 1,000 to encourage others in the group to move more once the choreography was taught. Our group were thrilled when we were also told that we would be marshalling the athletes out onto the track and entertaining the crowd as part of our role.

We were taught by some of the best drummers in the business, such as Ralph Simms, Mike Dolbear and Paul Clarvis, as well as working under the musical direction of Rick Smith from Underworld. Danny Boyle, artistic director of the opening ceremony, was so friendly and he made himself accessible. Throughout the whole process, he was present during all rehearsals whether day or night, rain or shine.

To get 10,000 people in the right place and position during the ceremonies while coordinating their choreography and routines is a mammoth task. Countless weekly rehearsals, which often took place in the evenings



Part of the Industrial Revolution scene

following a full day's work, culminated in a total of more than 200 hours of rehearsals.

Many opportunities were provided during this process, including recording on the soundtrack for the Official Olympic Opening Ceremony CD. A landmark moment was when rehearsals moved from Dagenham to Stratford, when I found myself standing centre stage in the middle of the Olympic stadium.

Although I have performed professionally countless times, nothing could have prepared me for the magic and incredible atmosphere of performing in front of a live audience of 80,000 people. The sense of anticipation and the sudden realisation that billions of people around the world would be watching was one of great panic and huge responsibility. I performed as a drummer in the industrial revolution scene that opened the spectacular opening ceremony, which

provided the iconic image of the Olympic rings forged from molten steel, then danced and marshalled during the athletes' parade. The most amazing experience ever!!! After the opening ceremony, rehearsals resumed 2 days later and continued in the rain back at Dagenham for the Olympic closing ceremony. We were treated to a private concert during a technical rehearsal and got to meet music royalty such as George Michael, Annie Lennox, Brian May (Queen) and The Who, as well as some more contemporary artists such as Emeli Sande, Jessie J and the Spice Girls. For the Closing ceremony, I was part of the blue bowler hat brigade who partied with the Olympic athletes while we were all entertained by a concert celebrating a symphony of British music.

Our group were later offered the opportunity to take part in both the Paralympics opening and closing ceremonies. Although this would have



Eve on far right in costume for the closing ceremony

been equally amazing, it required another huge commitment of time and with a young family to think about, who'd already been extremely supportive and sacrificed time spent with them to invest in rehearsals for the Olympic ceremonies, I politely declined the offer.

After such an epic journey that spanned the best part of a year, we were warned by the Olympic organising team that when the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games were over "we would be left with an emptiness that you'll have to fill with some other part of our lives", and they were right. As Kenneth Branagh declared at the Olympic opening ceremony, in what provided our cue to burst into the stadium: "When I wake, I cried to dream again".

I have since received a personalised letter from the Prime Minister thanking me for my part in making the London 2012 Games a huge success, which was unexpected and rather heart warming.

I originally auditioned as I work as the Outreach Project coordinator for the Language of Dance Trust and wanted to inspire the hundreds of children that we work with each year in the UK as part of our 'Dance Moves' project, which predominately runs in East London, home to the London 2012 Olympic Games. I feel truly blessed and proud to have been a part of such a wonderful legacy that I hope will inspire future generations. I have made some good friends for life, and have a wealth of wonderful memories, photos and souvenirs to share with my family and treasure forever.

Upcoming Course UK

LOD for Special Educational Needs 3 Day Course

The LODC is offering a three-day intensive course for teachers of students with physical disabilities and/or special educational needs who work within schools and colleges.

For those teaching in colleges already offering BTEC courses there is the opportunity to deliver the accredited course Level 1 BTEC in Language of Dance Motif Notation to your students. For more information please contact us at info@lodc.org.

Course Leader: Valerie Farrant

Venue: Oxford House, London

Dates: 2nd – 4th April 2013

LOD Fundamentals Course Parts 1 and 2 in 2012

Susan Gingrasso

In Issue 37, (March 2012) of LODA News, I reported the LODC USA would be offering Parts 1 and 2 of its newly configured Fundamentals courses in 2012. With assistance from LOD Specialist Karen Buchheim, Tina Curran and I taught Part 1 at the University of Texas at Austin, June 4-8th. Michael Richter, LOD Specialist Candidate helped Tina Curran and me develop and teach Part 2 at the Dance Education Laboratory at the 92nd Street Y in New York City, July 16-20th. Each course provided us with opportunities to further develop and implement new pedagogical approaches to teaching LODs foundational principles and the essential characteristics of the Movement Alphabet through Dance Education contexts: creative movement, technique, composition and choreography, and dance history. Four large themes that threaded through each course: kinesthetic, cognitive and expressive fluency with the Movement Alphabet concepts; dance literacy in ones artistic and

pedagogical practice; creating meaning and relevancy through metaphors for each Movement Alphabet concept; and developing a collaborative and supportive community.

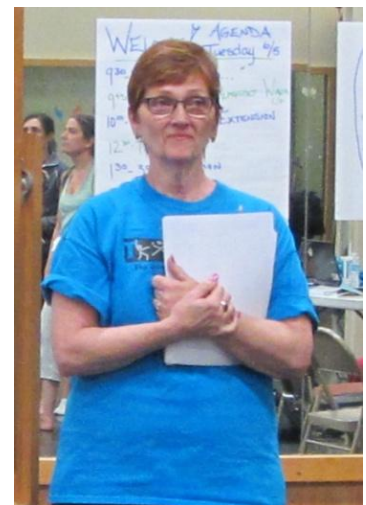
The six K-16 dance educators in Part 1 and the 19 in Part 2 came to immerse themselves in the LOD experience. During the last day of each course, participants presented their dances they had Motif Notated. They also led fellow course participants through applications they had created during the week. The dances and the applications were among the most developed we have experienced. We look forward to the continued evolution of these courses.



Dr. Stephanie Milling, Assistant Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina, took Parts 1 and 2. She is sight-reading a modified version of the Dimensional Studies from Reading Study

D in the 2nd edition of Your Move. Stephanie offered this reflection on her Part 1 experiences:

“I think the biggest thing that I took away from this experience is the multisensory integration of the experience. Learning the concepts kinesthetically and visually at the same time was seamless. Both ways of exploring the movement reinforced each other and prevented the learning process from becoming fragmented into writing the movement and performing the movement.”



Karen Buchheim, LOD Specialist and retired K-12 dance educator from Virginia Beach, Virginia took the Part 1 participants through a multi modality experience of the Movement Alphabet. During their movement exploration, Karen had them find metaphors. After moving, they drew, wrote and discussed their ideas to help them connect the

kinesthetic to the cognitive to create meaning.

In Part 2, Dana Luebke, co-director of Sun Ergos, A company of theatre and dance based in Alberta, Canada and Shoshana Moyer, recent University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate work together on the Motif scores they created on Day 1. Using action, stillness, duration, accents and shape, participants created and performed their first “scored” dances.

Dana offered this reflection on dance literacy:

“Dance literacy includes awareness and understanding of the body’s organisation and how movement uses time, space and energy. Fluency in notation aids in refining performance of movement, in expanding creative choices, clarifying choreographic and performance intentions and can expand our dance experience beyond our personal experience to include dance from other times and places.”



Michael Richter, LOD Specialist Candidate and



teacher, mentor, researcher in La Paz, Mexico, taught an amazing lesson on springing for the Part 2 participants. He taught almost the entire lesson without words using only physical demonstrations and the Movement Alphabet cards for the various forms of springing. Michael reflected that, “I got to realize more of my vision for the LODC (dance education and education, in general), which is about nurturing and supporting the core of the organization – the teachers on the Board who are disseminating LOD. I have believed and tried to advocate for this, with the faith that if we can nourish and support us, then LOD will organically grow and spread in a wonderful way. I saw this happen. I experienced fluidity and a kind of ease of teaching in

the course – we still worked hard, yet the teaching appeared to just unfold with mastery.

Language of Dance Foundations Courses in 2013

The LODC USA will offer Parts 1 and 2 of the Language of Dance Foundations courses in 2013. The courses offered under the Fundamentals title will change to Foundations in 2013 as the content is designed to provide participants with a foundation in using LOD principles and the essential components of the Movement Alphabet in their artistic and pedagogical practices. Part 1, sponsored by BalletMet Columbus, June 10-14th will provide instructors Karen Buchheim and Susan Gingrasso with the opportunity to further develop teaching materials for applying basic Movement Alphabet concepts to specific dance education applications. Ambre Emory-Maier, Director of Education at BalletMet Columbus is our wonderful liaison and very involved in reaching out to the dance educators in Ohio with whom she and BalletMet work to assure our success. The LODC USA will offer Part 2, hosted at the

University of Texas at Austin later in June. Tina Curran's and my focus for Part 2 will incorporate how to use LOD as a foundational tool in arts integration curricula. The Kennedy Center (http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/ceta/arts_integration_definition.pdf) defines arts integration as "an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both." Those interested will find registration and housing information for each course on the LODCUSA.org website.

LOD at the NDEO in Los Angeles, CA

Ann Hutchinson Guest and Tina Curran

Language of Dance (LOD) and Motif Notation were featured in several presentations at the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) conference held October 24th to 27th in Los Angeles, USA. A valuable introduction was the six-hour session entitled



"Explore the Heritage of Jazz and its Many Styles Through Movement & Language of Dance Motif Notation", presented by LOD Specialists Tina Curran, Susan Gingrasso, Teresa Heiland, and Beth Megill, together with four jazz music and dance specialists Norman Beedle, Rebecca Diab, Paige Porter and Laura Ann Smythe. The workshop leaders pooled their experiences and expertise in exploring jazz styles in the commercial, social and concert sectors and identifying specific characteristics of each style. From research of jazz, film and music literature, a vocabulary of core Africanist aesthetic principles were identified and represented by Motif notation.

Another session "Exploring Cultural Dance Traditions Using LOD and LMA (Laban Movement Analysis)" was presented by Tina Curran and Frederick Curry who

have over the past year been working together to find a mutually appropriate intergration of these two approaches to movement understanding.

Focus was on how Alvin Ailey and Erick Hawkins drew on their own cultural experiences to create concert dance works, Revelations and Plains Daybreak respectively.

In the session "Exploring



Dance Traditions: Pedagogical Opportunities for Functional Dance Literacy" presenters Tina, Susan, Beth and Teresa shared four ways that the tools of dance literacy underpin approaches to making dance traditions relevant to today's educational context. They demonstrated the use of written dance language using LOD, LMA and Labanotation to observe, describe, analyse, interpret, create and perform. Each of the

presenters then related her particular approach and experiences in using LOD and Motif notation in their teaching.



At designated times poster presentations were given. Michael Richter's display entitled "Rejuvenation through Creative Process & Language of Dance" gave him the opportunity to share with visitors his experience of how LOD acts as a holding structure for the creative process and allows a balance of exploratory freedom with organization in time.

In a different vein, a special event was planned by the LOD Family and Friends for "Celebrating Our Dance Heritage with Ann Hutchinson Guest". Tina also organized a display of the artistic Ballet Family Tree that Judith Judson had designed for Ann. This tree traced the classical lineage from Vestris leading to the French School, the Russian School, the Italian, the Bournonville School and her more recent teachers. To balance the Ballet Chart, Tina created a Modern Dance Tree showing Ann's European and American dance roots. To this latter chart, people added their own dance education links to connect to Ann's 'Family Tree'. For this special event, Jessica Coxe had created a photo slideshow that featured Ann from her early days at the Dance Notation Bureau to more recent times at Jacob's Pillow. Shots included Ann teaching Labanotation to young children in Holland, at the Performing Arts High School and at the Juilliard School in New York City, as well as teaching Motif Notation at the Royal Academy of Dance in London, England. A photo of Ann in a different role presented her standing next to Balanchine with the score of Orpheus in her hand at a New York City Ballet rehearsal. This gathering of LOD friends provided the opportunity for Ann to award the Language of Dance Stage III Certificates to Michael Richter and Beth Megill. Congratulations Beth and Michael on becoming Language of Dance Specialists!

