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Dear members and readers,

The Editorial Board of Choreologica would like to apologise for the delay with which this issue reaches you. Such a delay does not stem from laziness on our part or from lack of interesting, publishable materials, though. Problems relating to the factual printing of the journal have led to a fairly long series of decision making meetings resulting in us choosing a new printer and looking at a possible new format.

Yet, no member of the editorial board wants these changes to be too abrupt. Gradually, but steadily, Choreologica will thus shed its old image and acquire a new one in the forthcoming issues. New sections will be created to address a number of research related issues, such as publications and events, and, in some instances, some issues will be monographic in terms of content.

For the time being, we are glad to propose a variety of writings that, in line with the aims of the European Association of Dance Historians, relate to diverse dance research issues and topics. For the first time we are glad to "host" the first part of an MA dissertation too. Victoria O'Brien's academic work on the Abbey School in Dublin is indeed worth publishing, for it casts considerable light on what has long been a grey area of dance history, namely ballet in Ireland. A successful student of the MA Dance programme directed by Teresa Leahy at the University of Limerick, Victoria O'Brien has become, since the completion of her MA, an active dance researcher in her country, thus contributing greatly to furthering knowledge on the subject. We are particularly pleased, therefore, to publish her MA work in its original and entire form, for we all believe it makes a splendid addition to dance culture. It is also our intention to start a new trend, namely to give successful postgraduate students the opportunity of having their works published, for we believe strongly they are tomorrow's dance

historians. The other parts of Victoria O'Brien's MA work will be published in the forthcoming issues.

In line with a well-affirmed tradition, outstanding papers presented at conferences and study days organised by or under the EADH umbrella, are normally included in Choreologica. The study day in Leiden, Netherlands, devoted to those dances that happened "in between the acts" of different performative contexts, was certainly enriched by the contributions of our Chairperson, Madeleine Inglehearn, and Council Member Frederic Naerebout, who should also be credited for the brilliant organisation of the event. We are happy to include those two thought provoking papers in this issue, and we are happy to match those with an equally academically intriguing article by Flavia Pappacena, one of Italy's most eminent researchers on ballet. We trust you will enjoy these materials as much as we did.

Dance research suffers frequently from the difficulty scholars experience in getting access to archives and/or to have clear ideas of what is actually held in particular collections. The National Centre for Research in Dance has developed a unique web based catalogue thanks to a substantial award received by the AHRB in England. The final article, by leading archivist Chris Jones, provides readers with a stimulating overview of the project, which will be officially launched in February 2005.

Giannandrea Poesio, Editor
Astrid Bernkopf, Co-Editor
Elena Grillo, Co-Editor

The Abbey School of Ballet
Part 1

Victoria R. O'Brien

Introduction

Ninette de Valois was introduced to William Butler Yeats in 1927 at the Festival Theatre in Cambridge. Yeats had heard reports of de Valois' choreography for his play, *On Baile's Strand,* produced at the Festival Theatre earlier in the same year, and welcomed the chance of meeting the dancer. During this encounter, Yeats invited de Valois to help him establish a dance school attached to the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, and the collaboration would soon be called the Abbey School of Ballet. During the late nineteen-twenties and early thirties, the school trained and produced Irish dancers, choreographers and teachers. It also staged regular dance performances and collaborated in diverse productions with the National Theatre and other theatrical companies in Dublin.

This study shows that while the school was founded in 1927, de Valois' work at the Abbey Theatre possibly began over one year earlier than previously thought and that her directorship in Dublin seems to have ended one year earlier. Other evidence was found to reveal a continuation of the school through the work of two ex-students, Muriel Kelly and Cepta Cullen. The final title, "The Abbey School of Ballet," is therefore not limited by definitive dates. It also reflects the wider participation in the school's activities of the many different personalities involved.

While much has been written independently on the Abbey Theatre, Yeats and de Valois, there is very little published information on the dance school itself. Most references are mentioned in passing and usually in association with Yeats' dance dramas. The objective of this thesis, therefore, is to factually recount the history of the school. Based on a wide range of research material this includes looking at the school's day-to-day activities as part of the professional and collaborative structure of the Abbey Theatre. It also includes charting the school's development and demise through the numerous dance performances staged in Dublin and addresses the discrepancies over the performance dates. Finally, it covers the continuation and the wider legacy of the Abbey School of Ballet through several of its students. This study, however, does not analyse the choreography performed by the school as unfortunately none of the works seem to exist in notated form and there is little record of the technique or style of many of the works choreographed for the Dublin stage. Importantly, this thesis does not attempt to compare the school or its company with others in Ireland, either before or after this period. To do so would be a separate study in and of itself.

In terms of structure, this thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter considers the background of the two main personalities behind the school, Yeats and de Valois. It attempts to understand the artistic factors which brought about the founding of the Abbey School of Ballet and to establish the social and cultural context in which it was founded. The second chapter investigates the premises and facilities of the dance school. It also discusses the influences and teaching styles of de Valois and the other teachers, as well as providing an insight

into a typical student profile. The third chapter analyses the school's dance performances and diverse theatrical activities. It also includes an in-depth account of the school's two previously undocumented performances. The final chapter examines de Valois' resignation and the sequel to the school. This chapter also attempts to address a subtle point: what were the continuing inspirations that the school had on Yeats and de Valois' subsequent work? Included at the end of this study, for reference use in conjunction with chapter three, is a chronological appendix listing the dates and venues for the Abbey School of Ballet dance performances. This appendix is of importance as it includes two previously undocumented performances and because of the discrepancies of dates.

The starting point for much of the research undertaken was at the Abbey Theatre Archives. Although incomplete, the theatre programmes housed there record the dates of the performances, the casts, choreographers, composers and designers, as well as recruitment notices for the school. Of particular importance to this study is a collection of the Abbey School of Ballet theatre programmes lodged at the Dublin City Archives. Included in this programme collection is a previously undocumented performance by the school. The collection also contains information on the school's syllabi and provides vital evidence which establishes the continuation of the school. De Valois' memoirs, *Come Dance with Me*, puts some insight into the Abbey School of Ballet, in particular its genesis, and references to her collaborations with Yeats can also be found in her other work, *Step by Step*. Moreover, Kathrine Sorley Walker discusses the school in her comprehensive biography of de Valois, *Idealist Without*

Illusions. This important work includes an appendix of the ballets de Valois choreographed and staged at the Abbey. Information on the school's facilities and premises, and a slightly different appendix of the performances, are recorded in Lennox Robinson's informative *Ireland's Abbey Theatre 1889-1951.* Reviews from Irish newspapers lodged at the National Library of Ireland were consulted for contemporary opinions on the dance performances. These articles not only help to recapture the choreographic style and spirit of the shows but also help to confirm the dates of certain performances. Other useful material from the National Library of Ireland included items from the Joseph Holloway Collection, which proved instrumental in uncovering later work by an Abbey school student.

Certain valuable details in this study came from an interview with Jill Gregory, initiated with the help of de Valois' biographer, Kathrine Sorley Walker, and Audrey Harman from the Royal Ballet School. Jill Gregory was a student at the Abbey school from 1928 until 1933 and her recollections and descriptions of the personalities, premises and performances were illuminating. Included in a box of memorabilia from the school was a theatre programme from another unrecorded performance, this time held outside the Abbey Theatre itself. Two of the three photographs included in this thesis are from Jill Gregory's private collection.

While Yeats did not have an active role in the day-to-day running of the school, it was his lifelong interest in dance that ultimately helped in its establishment. Again, a variety of different sources were used to weigh up his contribution. References to Yeats' vision for the unity of movement and prose were found in his introduction to Ezra Pound's *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* and in his

dance dramas. Sylvia C. Ellis's *The Plays of W.B. Yeats: Yeats and the Dancer* is an informative reference work on the influence of the dancer and the dance on his dramatic work. Also of note are Liam Miller's *The Noble Drama of W.B. Yeats*, Karen Dorn's *Players and Painted Stage* and James W. Flannery's *W.B. Yeats and the Idea of a Theatre.* Amongst the books consulted on the National Theatre were Philip B. Ryan's *The Lost Theatres of Dublin,* Christopher Fitz-Simon's *Irish Theatre* and Brenna Katz Clarke and Harold Ferrar's *The Dublin Drama League, 1919-1941.*

Other contributions to this study came from the archivists at the Royal Ballet School, who provided information on de Valois' pedagogical influences and methods, and at the Royal Academy of Dancing, who helped confirm the early introduction of their examinations in Ireland through the Abbey School of Ballet. The third photograph used in this study is from *The Dancing Times* archives. With the exception of photographs associated with Yeats' dance dramas, the three photographs discovered and cited in this work are the only images I have come across of the school itself.

Chapter 1

'I am of Ireland,
And the Holy Land of Ireland,
And time runs on', cried she.
'Come out of charity,
Comes dance with me in Ireland.'

W. B. Yeats, 'I am of Ireland'

William Butler Yeats was born the eldest child of the portrait painter John Butler Yeats in Dublin, in 1865. The family first moved to London and when Yeats was fifteen returned to Dublin, where he finished his secondary education and subsequently attended the Metropolitan School of Art. It was during this seven-year stay that Yeats began to write poetry and became interested in the occult. By the time he moved back to England again with his family, Yeats, at only twenty-two, was the author of a highly praised volume of poetry. Yeats became involved with various artistic and occult circles in London and developed his interest in theatre. In 1898 he was introduced to Lady Augusta Gregory and discussions began on the possibility of an Irish theatre. In Dublin, they persuaded a group of amateur actors to join together to form a theatrical company devoted primarily to indigenous Irish drama. With financial assistance from Annie Horniman, a premises was found on Abbey Street, and in December 1904, the National Theatre Society opened its doors for the first time. (The theatre has since become known universally as the Abbey Theatre.) One of the two plays performed that inaugural

evening was Yeats' *On Baile's Strand*, the same play which twenty-three years later would be an influencing factor in the establishment of the Abbey School of Ballet.

In 1913, while Europe was still experiencing a vogue for *Japonaiserie*, Yeats was introduced to the Noh theatre of Japan through Ezra Pound, with whom he was wintering in Sussex. Pound, acting as Yeats' secretary at this time, was preparing Ernest Fenollosa's translations of Noh plays for publication. This aristocratic and ritualistic art form provided Yeats with the framework he had long sought for his dramatic work. Richard Ellmann identifies one of the reasons why Yeats was so compelled towards Noh:

> It was very exciting to Yeats, always on the outlook for new ways of using occult research, to hear that the Japanese plays were full of spirits and masks, and that the crises in the plays usually occurred when a character who had appeared to be an ordinary mortal was suddenly revealed to be a god spirit.
>
> (Ellmann:1979;216)

The story outline for most Noh plays is that of a journey, usually a pilgrimage, on which the hero meets and innocently talks to a god or spirit in disguise. Finally the spirit reveals his true identity, and, as the hero is often a holy man, he prays for the ghost. There is often a moral principle in the plot but the main objective of the play is to "create *yugen*, a perception of beauty which brings about meditation and trance." (Ellis:1999;115) Noh theatre is the combination of poetic texts, dance, acting, music, masks, costumes and stage designs.

Dance in Noh is based upon the movements derived from the text of the play. The audience is expected to have an understanding of the significance of the vocabulary of the various poses and gestures of the players, as each of these can comment upon or extend the text.

Yeats, who had never seen a Noh play, adapted and developed certain elements of Noh for his own purposes. He wrote nine plays based on the Japanese form: *At the Hawk's Well (1917), The Dreaming of the Bones (1919), The Only Jealousy of Emer (1919), Calvary (1920), The Cat and the Moon (1926), The Resurrection (1931), A Full Moon in March (1935), The King of the Great Clock Tower* (1935) and finally, *The Death of Cuchulain (1939).* These works, some written in verse, take approximately forty minutes to perform. Very little scenery and lighting effects were used. Yeats stated he wanted the players to "suggest scenery, light and darkness by their movements and words." (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre Programme, December 6, 1931.) Yeats also substituted the folding and unfolding of a cloth for the curtain to signify the opening and concluding of the play. Yeats' plays are accompanied by the music of a flute, drum and zither. The musicians comment on the narrative and occasionally speak on behalf of the characters. The poet liked to involve himself with every detail of production of his dance dramas; he chose the directors, cast of players, composers, choreographers, mask makers and designers. Interestingly, Yeats wrote: "I have followed Japanese examples and substituted a dance for the actual climax of more naturalistic drama." (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre Programme, December 6, 1931.) This could be interpreted to suggest that movement was introduced when the text or

language became, in Yeats' opinion, ineffectual in the communication of ideas. Yeats discovered that in certain circumstances deep emotions could be best expressed through movement and not language. The dancer was used both as a symbol of communication and as "the living representation of the aesthetic significance with which he was obsessed." (Ellis:1999;79)

In April 1916, Yeats produced the first of his dance dramas, *At the Hawk's Well*, in Lady Cunard's London drawing room. Edmund Dulac, another devotee of Noh, composed the music and designed the costumes. The plot of this play is based on the legendary Irish hero Cuchulain, on a pilgrimage to drink the waters of immortality protected by the Guardian of the Well. Cuchulain sees the Guardian dance and is enticed away from the well by her beauty. When he returns to the well the spring has stopped flowing. Cuchulain has been cheated of eternal life by the dancing of the Guardian and has condemned himself to a life of unhappiness. Michio Ito, introduced to Yeats by Ezra Pound, danced the role of the Guardian of the Well and created the choreography. Although not a Noh artist, Ito had studied Kabuki in Japan before he left for Europe to study singing. He trained at the Emile Jacques-Dalcroze institute in Hellerau, Germany, the same institute attended by dance pioneer Marie Rambert. Ito left London for America in 1916, and while he never danced at the Abbey Theatre his performance of the Guardian of the Well was to have a deep and lasting effect on Yeats. Yeats summed up his early experience with his dance dramas as well as his future vision for these plays:

> I can find the help I need, Mr. Dulac's mastery of design and Mr. Ito's genius of movement; yet it pleases me to think that I am working for my own country. Perhaps someday a play in the form I am adapting for European purposes shall awake once more, whether in Gaelic or in English, under the slope of Slieve-na-mon or Croagh Patrick ancient memories; for this form has no need of scenery that runs away with money nor of a theatre-building. Yet I know that I only amuse myself with a fancy; for though my writings if they be sea-worthy must put to sea, I cannot tell where they may be carried by the wind.
>
> (Pound:XIX;1916)

Although one of the main objectives of the Abbey Theatre was to encourage drama by native writers, Yeats had become aware of how such exclusivity had certain drawbacks. However, in the mid-twenties the Abbey Theatre received the first ever state subsidy for a theatre in the English speaking world and with less financial difficulties at the Abbey, Yeats began to see an opportunity to stage experimental theatre in Dublin. It appears that he also saw the possibility to establish a home for both acting and dancing schools attached to the Abbey Theatre. In particular, the dance school would fill a vacuum for the much-neglected art form in Dublin, but perhaps more importantly, provide Yeats with the choreographers, dancers and musicians needed to produce his dance dramas. Eleven years after writing the introduction to Pound's edition of the Noh manuscripts, Yeats heard of a young Irish-born dancer called Ninette de Valois.

Ninette de Valois was born Edris Stannus in 1898, in Co.Wicklow, where she was to remain for seven formative years in a large country estate called Baltiboys. De Valois' Anglo-Irish lifestyle included the usual privileges of her class and time; but there were two moments that allowed her to catch a glimpse of her future. One of these was her first visit to a theatre. Prophetically, it was a pantomime production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin, a ballet that was later to become the watershed for the Sadler's Wells Ballet. De Valois wrote that the Dublin production " was the key that unlocked the first theatre door for me." (de Valois:1992;166) The other incident shows the early influence of Ireland on de Valois' career. In her forward to the Lilliput Edition of *Come Dance with Me,* de Valois recollects an Irish childhood memory, which was to change her life intrinsically, and the course of dance history:

> The execution of an Irish jig at a children's party really set things going. The performance was a demand on my part as I did not approve of the 'skirt dance' executed by another young guest. I am afraid that I was right. My jig was authentic, the work of an Irish countryman bent on my executing it in an Irish farmhouse kitchen. It started my life of dancing and was definitely my first stage performance.
>
> (de Valois:1992;X1)

Her family moved to England, first to Kent and then to London, where she took her first dancing class. In 1912, de Valois started her dance career in a somewhat

unusual manner, as a child prodigy dancer, attached to the Lila Field Academy. By 1913, she was principal dancer, impersonating Anna Pavlova's *The Dying Swan* in a touring production of Lila Fields' *The Wonder Children*. For the next ten years de Valois was to gain most of her experience in the commercial theatre, although she was conscious not to limit her dance training. In 1914, she began to take classes with Edouard Espinosa, who at the time was the ballet master at the Empire Theatre, London. Later in 1919, de Valois had the opportunity to study under Enrico Cecchetti, the same year she was engaged as premiere danseuse at the Royal Opera House. By 1921, de Valois had formed her own small company of dancers, but one year later she joined the Leonide Massine-Lydia Lopokova Company, an offshoot of the Ballet Russe based in Britain. This small touring company must have presented the challenge that de Valois was waiting for. After ten years of working in pantomime, musicals, opera-ballets and review de Valois now had the opportunity to perform with dancers from the Russian Ballet, and in works by one of the most important choreographers of the period, Leonide Massine.

After a variety of experiences and engagements, de Valois was accepted into Diaghilev's Ballet Russe in 1923, rising to soloist by 1925. Her position with the Russian Ballet must have been envied by thousands of young dancers, nevertheless, less than two years after joining, de Valois resigned, dissatisfied with the direction that one of the greatest of all dance companies was taking. She used her time with the Ballet Russe to absorb new techniques, new methods of teachings and must have learned about the administration and organisation of the company. It was also during her time

with the Ballet Russe that de Valois became interested in dance and its place in theatre. In *Come Dance with Me*, de Valois describes retrospectively something more important than technique or stagecraft that she gained from her experience with Diaghilev's Russian Ballet:

> We experience our own glimpse of 'a world in a grain of sand' and a passage of time may be needed before we are able to express this awareness. Our intelligence guards this patiently, surrounding it with an invisible mesh that preserves it for future use.
>
> (de Valois:1992;57)

Her intention when she left the Ballet Russe was to develop a repertory ballet company. This she "wanted to see achieved with the same passionate feeling of dedication that a little girl once felt about an Irish jig to music." (de Valois:1992;73) De Valois' impulse was not to form a peripatetic company like Diaghilev's, but a company with a school and theatre of its own. In March 1926, de Valois opened a school in Roland Gardens, London. Called the Academy of Choreographic Art, the school reflected her belief in the unity of the arts. During the same period de Valois came into contact with Lilian Baylis, theatre manager of the London Old Vic, and became a member of the Vic-Wells organisation. Initially, de Valois taught movement to the drama students and choreographed the operas at the Old Vic. Baylis appreciated de Valois' work and soon a dance company attached to the opera was established. This humble beginning led ultimately to the establishment of the Vic-Wells Ballet, the Sadler's Wells and finally the Royal Ballet Company, school and organisation.

Parallel to her work at the dance school in London, an opportunity arose which would lead to the founding of de Valois' second school at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. In 1926, Terence Gray, a relative of de Valois, restored and re-opened an old theatre in Cambridge. The playhouse was called the Festival Theatre. Like Yeats, Gray reacted against the theatre of realism and his productions also included the use of movement, dialogue, masks, mime and music. Gray engaged de Valois as choreographer. This controversial, immensely creative and important theatre was an ideal setting for de Valois to start removing the invisible mesh from Diaghilev's "grain of sand." Their first collaboration was a production of *The Oresteia* of Aeschylus in November, 1926. Then in 1927, from January 31 to February 5, Gray presented Yeats's *On Baile's Strand* in Cambridge, with movement by de Valois. (Dorn:1984;83) Yeats heard of de Valois' choreography for his play and later that year after a production of his *Player Queen* at the Festival Theatre the two met for the first time. De Valois describes the occasion:

> It is the year 1927 and I am sitting in the dark vestibule of the Festival Theatre in Cambridge. I am listening to a rich Irish Voice that seems to intone a request that I should come to Dublin and produce for the Abbey Theatre... I would work among those people whose efforts to establish the Irish Theatre were in progress at the time that I struggled with an Irish jig in a farmhouse at the foot of the Wicklow Hills. The mind of Yeats was made up; he would have a small school of Ballet at the Abbey and I would send over a teacher. I would visit Dublin every three months and produce his Plays for Dancers and perform in them myself; thus, he said the poetic drama of Ireland would live again and take its rightful place in the Nation's own Theatre, and the oblivion imposed on it by the popularity of peasant drama would become a thing of the past.
>
> (de Valois:1992;88)

Although not mentioned in de Valois' writings, it is important, however, to record here that de Valois may have previously choreographed one of Yeats' dance-dramas at the Abbey Theatre in May, 1926. Two references to a production of *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, performed by the Dublin Drama League and directed by Lennox Robinson, accredit the choreography to de Valois. (Miller:1977;246 and Katz Clarke and Ferrar:1979;18) The Dublin Drama League, founded by the Artistic Director of the Abbey Theatre, Lennox Robinson, was formed in 1918 and ended its activity in 1928. It was one of the few theatre groups in Dublin staging plays of international repute at this time. Most productions were staged at the Abbey Theatre with Abbey players on Sunday and Monday nights. The Dublin Drama League produced three of Yeats' plays; *At the Hawks Well* was performed in Yeats' home in Merrion Square on March 30 and 31, 1924; *The Only Jealousy of Emer* and *The Cat and the Moon* were both produced at the Abbey in May 1926. While it is generally accepted that de Valois' first piece of choreography for a Yeats play was *On Baile's Strand* at the Festival Theatre in Cambridge, this earlier production would change several important milestones. It would move forward by

three years the date of her first experience with one of Yeats's Noh-inspired dance dramas. It would also mean that de Valois' first involvement with the Abbey Theatre was earlier than previously thought, and not the establishment of the Abbey School of Ballet but the choreography of one of Yeats' dance plays.

In addition to the two main personalities and the artistic factors discussed, it is important to consider the social and cultural context in which the school was established.

Yeats' invitation to de Valois to help him start a dance school at the Abbey Theatre took place against a background of difficult political, economic, social and cultural changes in Ireland. De Valois found herself in a country which had fought two wars in the previous thirteen years: the War of Independence, which ended in 1921, and the Civil War which lasted until 1923. It was during this mercurial period that Ireland began to transition from a domain of the British Empire to a post-colonial country in search of a new national identity. A census taken one year before the Abbey School of Ballet opened showed that Ireland had one of the smallest, worst-housed, and badly-paid populations in Western Europe. This very poor country also had an infant mortality rate that was higher than most European countries. Ireland was still primarily an agricultural country: fifty-one percent of the workforce was engaged in agriculture, while sixty-one percent of the population still lived in a rural setting. (O'Toole:1999;123-124) The majority of the country's children finished school at fourteen, often emigrating later to England or America where their prospects were considerably better than those who remained at home.

Traditional class patterns were changing, however, and through this came the emergence of a new Catholic middle class. Those who made the transition did so by leaving rural Ireland to take up positions in cities and towns as minor civil servants, bankclerks and publicans. Brian Fallon writes a telling description of the sentiments of the people who would make this transition in the post Civil War generation:

> There was a powerful nostalgia for the old country ways and simple, frugal country life, yet while many members of the new middle class may have looked back emotionally on their rural upbringing, they were still glad enough to live in the towns or in new, charmless Dublin suburbs. They might hang on their parlour wall a calendar reproduction of a Paul Henry West of Ireland landscape with the inevitable thatched cottage, turf rick and small blue lake, but they had no intention of going back to such a life, and their chief ambition was to ensure that their children got a good education and climbed the ladder in whatever professions they might choose.
>
> (Fallon:1998;1)

Despite these bleak socio-economic conditions, Dublin had a deep interest in theatre. In 1927, the Abbey Theatre had the distinction of being the only English-speaking state subsidised theatre in the world. Theatregoers went there regularly where the repertory plays would change every Tuesday, unless they were doing well enough to be retained for a longer run. The previous twenty-five years at the Abbey saw the

production of John Millington Synge's *In the Shadow of the Glen* (1903), *Riders to the Sea* (1904), *The Well of the Saints* (1905) and *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907). This Golden Age of Irish Theatre also saw Sean O'Casey's great works, *The Shadow of a Gunman, Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars*, first produced by the National Theatre between 1923 and 1926. Theatre politics, personalities, and gossip were regular topics of conversation. Theatregoers were able to avidly debate who had played the finest Pegeen Mike or the most authentic Joxer Reilly. Leading Abbey players such as F.J. McCormack, Eileen Crowe, Barry Fitzgerald and May Craig were very much public figures, so much so that as Fallon comments: "Sometimes it seemed as if the actors and the personalities counted for more with the theatregoing public than the plays themselves did." (Fallon:1998;137)

Despite the fact that Dublin was a theatre-conscious city, classical or modern dance appears to have been a negligible part of its artistic landscape. While little information exists on dance in Ireland during this period, it is possible that some dance performance might have been part of the visiting opera and variety productions from London. These touring companies would have frequently performed on the stages of The Gaiety, The Queen's, The Theatre Royal and other national venues. It was in this cultural context, where there was little tradition of dance but an acute theatre awareness, that de Valois established the dance school.

Although difficult, Ireland's period of transition would offer opportunities to those who took the initiative. In addition to the Abbey School of Ballet, Micheal MacLiammoir and Hilton Edwards would found the experimental Gate Theatre in the same premises as the

Abbey school one year later. De Valois was a pioneer for dance in Dublin, but there were also several important factors which would have had a positive influence on the establishment of the Abbey school: the school was co-founded by one of the most important and respected poets of his time, it was run out of the internationally famous Abbey Theatre, and the dance school was located in a city with a strong tradition of theatre with a ready-made audience, albeit with little experience of dance. In the following chapter, we will see to what extent the dance school relied upon the Abbey and carried out its activities within the professional structure of the theatre.

Dance Interludes in the 18th century English Theatres

Madeleine Inglehearn

In late 17th century France, ballets formed a part of operas or plays and were intended to develop or comment on the plot. In the early years of Louis XIV's reign the operas were performed at court with courtiers and even the King himself dancing in them. Many of these opera-ballets were composed by Jean Baptiste Lully who was also a keen dancer, but Lully soon tired of his work being seen in the restricted atmosphere of the court. Having plotted and schemed to get the appointment of Director of the Academie Royale de Musique in 1672 with Louis XIV's dancing master Beauchamp as director of the Academie Royale de Danse serving under him, he opened a theatre in the rue Vaugirard where he could present the opera-ballets he composed for the Academie(1). Here he could employ professional singers and dancers and soon choreographers realised that they were able to create dances that were technically more demanding. From this time on we find a distinction being made between Ballets de Cour and Ballets de l'Opera.

With the restoration of King Charles II to the English throne, French musicians and dancers were much in demand in England. In 1698 one of these, Anthony L'Abbé, was invited to London by the impresario Thomas Betterton to dance at Lincoln's Inn Fields(2). L'Abbé was

also invited to dance at Kensington Palace before King William, and he seems to have remained in England and retained his royal patronage, becoming dancing master to the grandchildren of George I, and choreographing a number of dances in honour of members of the royal family. L'Abbé's example was followed by a number of other French dancers, and there are records of M. le Blanche, M. Nivelon and Mlle Roland among others appearing in theatres in the south east of England[3],

In 1716 Luigi Riccoboni received a subsidy to bring his Commedia Dell'Arte troupe to the Théâtre Italien at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, Paris, (know as the Théâtre Italien), under the title of Comedie Italienne. To make it more acceptable to French audiences, Riccoboni introduced French dialogue to his performances, though keeping the Italian spirit and character of Commedia Dell'Arte[4]. There is a record of an Italian group of performers appearing at Windsor and Reading In 1574, but it was not until the early 18th century that there was any detail of Commedia Dell'Arte in London when in 1702 the Allard brothers brought a troupe to Drury Lane Theatre[5]. Writing in 1759, the actor Thomas Wilkes described their performances as follows :

> The Harlequin Entertainment was first set on foot by a French Actor, who gave his name to it. It consisted, according to his plan, of a certain union of incidents, in running through which he and his fellow-performers ... spoke a good deal extempore; and being none of them without wit, their repartees pleased the populace.[6

In 1693 Christopher Rich acquired control of Drury Lane theatre, but in 1695 a group of rebel actors broke away and set up their own company in Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre and from this time onward the two theatres vied with each other, until in 1714 Christopher's son, John Rich, took over Lincoln's Inn theatre and made Harlequin famous in London, where he performed under the stage name of Lun. Rich made Harlequin intelligible to English audiences by using silent but very expressive dumb show performances, and Harlequin soon became a firm favourite with audiences throughout England[7].

The idea of dumb show or mime performances was first introduced to the London stage by the choreographer and dancing master John Weaver, who in his *'Essay towards an History of Dancing'* described in detail ' the Esteem it was in among the Ancients'[8]. He appealed to his more educated and well read readers who in that Enlightened age were very much influenced by Antiquity, saying 'Those who are well vers'd in the Greek and Roman Antiquities are sufficiently acquainted with the Reputation it acquir'd in those two Polite Nations'[9] Weaver refers to the dancers of ancient Greece and Rome as 'Mimes and Pantomimes' who 'tho' Dancers, had their names from Acting, that is, from Imitation ; copying all the force of the Passions meerly by the Motions of the Body'[10]

Writing of Weaver's work, Thomas Wilkes said :

> Weaver the dancing-master whose character is too well known to need illustration, endeavoured to revive the manner of the antient mimes, which expressed, by dumb-

shew and dancing, a variety of actions and passions ; ... The first of his representations was made in 1716 under the title of *The Loves of Mars and Venus,* in which the scenery was very fine, and the dancing just and well executed. There certainly was more pleasure in seeing the characters express the passions in dance, than in running about.[11]

In 1732 John Rich opened a new theatre at Covent Garden and made Harlequin the central character in an entertainment called Pantomime. A description of a Pantomime performed at Drury Lane in 1750 called 'Harlequin Fortunatus' includes the comment that it 'had all the marvellous incidents requisite... a fire, a jig, a battle and a ball'.[12] These pantomimes were often referred to as Afterpieces on the English stage because, whatever play was being presented, it became standard practice to add a Harlequinade, and soon these pantomimes were firm favourites through the country, and every theatre in England had to include one as an afterpiece to the play being performed.

In the mid-18th century an attempt was made to licence the theatres in England, with only the largest being permitted to present plays. Many smaller provincial theatres got round this ban, however, by advertising 'a concert of music and between the two parts a play'. This could mean that a visit to the theatre would last some 4 to 5 hours including as it did the first half of the concert, followed by the play, often a tragedy, for example Macbeth or Hamlet, with dancing between the acts, then a comedy and Harlequinade as an afterpiece and followed by the second half of the concert. There is no

indication of how long the concerts were or what music was played or sung. It is obvious, however, from the way the evenings are advertised that it was the plays which were the main attraction. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* seems to have been a particular favourite with audiences and was usually advertised as being performed 'with the original Musick, Songs, Dances and other Decorations proper to the Play'[13]. Although Shakespeare's plays were popular, audiences evidently did not like coming out of the theatre feeling sad, so the impresario and manager of the Theatre Royal, York, Tate Wilkinson, rewrote some of the tragedies giving them happy endings. Thomas Wilkes tells us that :

> In Tate's alteration of Lear, the old man and his favourite daughter are both kept alive, and made happy, while all the vicious characters of the Play fall the victims of justice. This catastrophe sends away all the spectators exulting with gladness....In some things it were injustice not to own that Tate has changed Shakespeare's plot for the better.[14]

Any English town with a reasonably sized theatre would attract travelling companies of players who often included one or two dancers in their group as well as dances for the whole cast at the end of their performances. Those towns which could not boast a purpose built theatre could often find an inn large enough to accommodate a temporary stage. For example, in 1779 Mr. Whitley's company of comedians announced that they would be entertaining during Huntingdon race week in a temporary theatre near Cambridge, and the following year Mr. Whitley was again

in Huntingdon for the races, opening a theatre in the yard of the George.[15] In 1779 the advertisement for Mr. Whitley's company listed the actors as : Mr. Gardner and Miss Pinto from the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, Mr. Meadows from the Theatre Royal, Richmond, Mr. & Mrs. Beynon from the Theatre Royal, York and Miss Cranfield from the Opera House.[16] This suggests a scratch group of actors, taking a break between their regular contracts to earn a little extra cash out of season. Travelling theatre companies like this appeared in various towns around England. For example Ipswich recorded visits from both Mr. Dymer's Company and The Duke of Grafton's Servants, whilst Salisbury had visits from Mr. Hallam's Company and Newcastle from The Edinburgh Comedians.[17]

The actor and playwright Colley Cibber reported that in the London theatres :

> were reduc'd to have recourse to foreign Novelties ; L'Abbé, Balon, and Mademoiselle Subligny, three of the, then, most famous Dancers of the French Opera, were, at several times, brought over at extraordinary Rates, to revive that sickly appetite which plain sense, and Nature had satiated.[18]

He complained that the high fees paid to these 'exotic performers' were deducted from 'the sinking salaries' of the actors. Cibber also described another exotic performer tried by one London theatre manager. To please the majority of his audiences he tried to get a large Elephant to include in plays or farces :

> To shew the tractable Genius of that vast quiet Creature, in the theatre at Dorset Garden. But from the Jealosy which so formidable a Rival had rais'd in his Dancers, and by his Bricklayers assuring him, that if the Walls were to be opene'd wide enough for its Entrance, it might endanger the fall of the House, he gave up his Project.[19]

It was not only in London that the foreign novelties appeared. Theatre advertisements show that in the 1741 season M. Nivelon and Mlle Roland danced frequently at the Canterbury Playhouse[20] and in 1787 Master and Miss Michel appeared at the Theatre Royal Bath with Miss Michel dancing the famous Prevost solo 'Les Characteres de la Danse'.[21] Most provincial theatres seemed, however, to have preferred English dancers. Perhaps they were not as expensive to hire! In any case, the actors themselves were expected to be able to dance, and many theatres advertised that the play would end with 'a dance by the Characters'. This could be a draw back to an actor who was not built for dancing. One report on the actor Thomas Betterton, said that 'He was incapable of dancing, even in a Country-Dance ; as was Mrs. Barry : But their good Qualities were more than equal to their Deficiencies'.[22] Other actors were more fortunate and the German visitor, Georg Lichtenberg wrote of David Garrick that

> In the dance in Much Ado about Nothing, he excels all the rest by the agility of his springs ; when I saw him in this dance, the audience was so much delighted with it that they had the impudence to cry encore.[23]

Another form of entertainment which English audiences loved was what we would now call circus acts; troupes of acrobats and rope dancers. Sadler's Well Theatre was the home of such entertainments in London, but groups spread out from there to every corner of the British Isles and were in great demand. Many of these acrobatic acts were Italian. Wilkes tells us that in 1732 'a booth was opened in George's Lane, [Dublin] under the direction of Madame Violante an Italian rope dancer where several feats of activity of that kind were performed, but not meeting with the success she expected she changed it into a play house'[24] It would seem that Mme Violante reverted to her original profession, because in 1734 at the Play House in Ipswich, there appeared a Signora Violante the famous Italian rope dancer who, the advertisements tell us, 'dances the Minuet on a rope as neatly as can be danced on the floor'[25]. She is also described as dancing on board not fastened down to the rope and with two boys and two men fastened to her feet. The theatre in Newcastle advertised that 'just arrived from Sadler's Wells, London' was the Venetian Signor Colpi and his children to display stiff rope dancing, lofty tumbling, pantomime, and to conclude with a Hornpipe by Signor Carlino.[26] In Chester's Wool Hall, Mrs. Gorman danced on the slack rope, Mr. Pedro and Mr. Dominique on the stiff rope and Mr. Dominique will also 'fly over fifteen men's heads standing one before the other'.[27]

It is interesting to see that Signor Carlino danced a Hornpipe. This is the only reference I have found so far of a Hornpipe danced by a foreign artist. It was a particularly English dance, and popular with audiences throughout England. In around 1760 the firm of C & S

Thompson published three collections of music. The first two containing *Thirty Favourite Hornpipes,* and the third *120 Favourite Hornpipes,* and all three described *as Performed at the Public Theatres.* Although there are occasional references to the Hornpipe being dance on the London stages '*in the character of a sailor*' or '*in the character of a Jack Tar*'[28] the Hornpipes surviving in Baroque dance notation bear no relation to the dance known nowadays as the *sailor's hornpipe.* As far as other dances are concerned, apart from occasional references to specific dance types such as Loure, Chaconne, Allemande, and Minuet, the dances generally popular with audiences give no indication from their title of the type or rhythm of the dance. For example a 1741 production of The Beggars Opera at Canterbury is described as 'including an entertainment of dancing with, at the end of Act 1, *The Parting Lovers,* end of Act 2 *A Drunken Peasant,* end of Act 3 *Tambolin Dance,* end of Act 4 *A Scotch Dance,* and end of the play *a new great Pantomime Dance call'd The Gardener and his wife.*[29]

It was at Madame Violante's booth in Dublin that the celebrated actress Peg Woffington made her first appearance on stage as Polly in the Beggar's Opera. The Beggar's Opera had been written in 1728 by John Gay and was first presented at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre then managed by John Rich. It became a firm favourite with audiences throughout the British Isles and was reputed to have made 'Gay Rich and Rich Gay'. It was intended to counter the Italian operas which were so popular with London audiences, though not with London actors. Wilkes was one of these and commented that once the English 'had a true relish for the polite arts' but the fashion for foreign travel by 'our

fools of rank and fortune' meant that Italian opera had become fashionable. He thought it ridiculous to have 'an effeminate treble voiced fellow' playing a hero.[30] He preferred the musical entertainments of English composers such as Boyce, Arne or Purcell, though his fellow actor Colley Cibber was not altogether happy even with these and commented that in operas like King Arthur and the Prophetess the actors 'were held cheap, and slightly dress'd while the Singers and Dancers were better paid, and embroider'd ...These measures, of course, created Murmurings, on one side, and Ill-humour and contempt on the other'.[31]

The evidence I have gathered so far, however, seems to indicate that operas, both English and Italian, were reserved for the London theatres. The provinces wanted their entertainment to be more down to earth and were quite satisfied if their actors could double as dancers throwing in a Hornpipe, Jig or Country Dance to liven up the course of a good play.

NOTES

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27. Adam Weekly Courant, Chester 1748.

28. Emmerson, George S. *A Social History of Scottish Dance* pub. McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal and London 1972 p.214.
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31. Cibber, p 109.

Danced afterpieces

and

interludes on the 17th- and 18th-century Dutch stage

Frederick Naerebout

I am afraid that I must squash immediately any high hopes you might be entertaining: I will not come up with anything straight from the archives revolutionizing our insights. Almost everything I discuss here has been published, and discussed, before, often several times during the past one and a half century. But not so often by dance historians. Or rather, dance historians, as opposed to historians of the dramatic arts, or theatre historians, have given a distorted view of things, by looking at the dance in isolation, and not as part of larger theatrical performances which did consist of much more than dance. So interludes and afterpieces have not always been called interludes and afterpieces. My paper, and indeed all of this volume, is dedicated to putting dance back into its context.

Secondly, I think some importance should be attached to the fact that this is an English language publication on a Dutch subject, addressed to an international audience. Most publications about theatre in Holland have been in Dutch – which is quite an effective barrier to most foreigners who would tend to develop an interest in this field. The sources themselves of course have their

additional difficulties of past vocabulary and orthography, and of palaeography. Amongst non-Dutch authors writing on the pre-romantic dance only Marian Hannah Winter has made an effort to take in Dutch material, but in the end her effort was somewhat half-hearted, and her book *The pre-romantic ballet* is fairly unreadable anyhow.[1] Still, the Dutch material is not without its interest, and thus there is some missionary work to be done.

As I just said, I have limited myself largely to material somewhere in print. When I say in print this of course serves to underline that supposedly there is stuff out there that is *not* in print. There is, but it is not always easy to tell what it might be. We are skirting uncharted territories: if we want to go beyond the most obvious, we are left without a map. Every step we take leads on to a host of new questions. Also, the interpretative content of the work that has been done, is fairly low. Who wants comparisons, or explanations, will have to do most of the work himself. In fact there has been so little work done on the dance history of the Dutch Republic, and of the 19th century too, that it is fair to say that we have only scratched the surface.[2]

[1] Winter 1974, dealing mainly with Amsterdam during the 19th century, and this haphazardly.

[2] Naerebout, Van Schaik & Van Geijn 1998. Recent publications on the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries include: Naerebout 1989 (repeated with more detail in Naerebout 1990), 1998, Uitman 1996, 2001 – all with some further references. See also Erenstein et al. (edd) 1996. The pioneer work (but leaning heavily on Worp 1904-1908) is Rebling 1950. Since Rebling's work was published, there is really no excuse for not knowing that there is much work to be done. Oey-de Vita & Geesink 1983 explicitly invited researchers to take up the challenge of studying in more detail the 17th-century theatrical

Why this would be the case, is hard to say. Protestantism plays its part: the condemnation of dance by the church[3] did not eradicate dance, as was intended, but still dance was somehow branded as frivolous and unserious, and thus not worthy of scholarly attention. This allowed a misconception to take root that lives on: the idea that in the Netherlands previous centuries had seen very little dancing at all, certainly very little theatrical dancing of any importance, and that theatrical dancing had in fact arrived in the Netherlands in the interwar years of the 20th century, to blossom greatly after the Second World War.[4] So when scholarship at

dancing. Ten years on, the television program *De danswoede*, of 1993, gave another clarion call. Nobody answered – I cannot count myself because I have worked only incidentally with unpublished sources (mainly in Naerebout 1998, dealing with another period, and another subject), as for me this is only a sideline: my main research interests lie in the Greco-Roman world. I know of some work that is being done, or has been done, 'behind the scenes', but unpublished research is to all purposes nonexistent.

[3] Naerebout 1989, 1990.

[4] Illustrative is Van Schaik 1981, whose chapter 'Roots' deals with the period 1900-1920, with only the slightest indication that anything worthwhile went before. Clarke & Vaughan 1977, s.v. 'Netherlands', state quite bluntly that 'there was virtually no dance tradition there until the 1930s (words that stand in sharp contrast to what is stated about other European countries that got their own entries in this encyclopaedia). They need only have looked in a simple work of reference such as Koegler 1972, who (s.v. 'Amsterdam') provides a lot of information on pre-20th-century ballet. Dutch authors who happened to be aware of the existence of a dance tradition often disparaged it: Boswinkel, Koning & Schultink 1958, p.10, speak of "[a] home-grown … primitive kind of ballet, with spectacular mechanical effects, gaudy scenery more important than the dancers, and cheap slapstick pantomime".

long last occupied itself with the dance, almost all interest went to the recent past.

Now we can agree that Dutch theatrical and social dancing have gone through a heyday in the last century, but certainly this is not the whole story. Theatrical dancing – and I will from now on concentrate on that only – had gone through another, earlier period of exceptional success, even international success. It need hardly surprise my audience that that period was the 17th century, the so-called Golden Age, when the Dutch Republic, which had only just come into being, rapidly developed into the centre of Europe, the country where in the urbanized sea-board provinces the riches of the earth were gathered from a far-flung trade empire, reaching from New Amsterdam to Nagasaki. Where the relative freedom of consciousness led to a flowering of scholarship and all the arts, the town of Leiden and its university playing a part of no small importance. Where wealth created a huge demand for the works of Dutch painters, which are now treasured by museums the world over. A small country in an extraordinary eminent position, by chance: the larger powers of Europe were distracted by warfare and disaster and in this power vacuum Dutch society flourished in almost every possible way.[5] It seems reasonable to suggest that dance and music will have partaken of this upswing. Well, they did! And their success and popularity continued into the 18th century.
But do we know about it? Everybody has heard of Hendrikje Stoffels, because she was portrayed by

[5] The best recent text in English on the Dutch Golden Age and its aftermath is Israel 1998.

Rembrandt and even more so because she shared his bed, and nobody, or hardly anybody, has heard of Ariaantje Nooseman, who must have been a great actress and dancer. Hendrikje may have been an excellent partner, but as far as we know possessed no special artistic talents. Ariaantje, on the other hand, was the first woman on the Amsterdam stage, and managed to capture audiences at the Amsterdam Schouwburg and elsewhere for six years or more (1655-1661).[6] By the way, she may have been painted by Rembrandt too, in a biblical scene that Rembrandt modelled after the play *Joseph in Egypt*, by the famous playwright Vondel, performed in 1655 with Ariaantje in the part of Jempsar, the wife of Potifar.[7] It did not help her: she may have been on a painting, but she was not part of the history of painting. Seventeenth-century Dutch painting has squeezed out of our collective remembrance the other arts, drama, and especially dance and music.[8]

[6] Women were on stage in Amsterdam well before this was the case in Paris, as has often been noted: but noted or not, the fact does not seem to have made much of an impression.
[7] Albach 1996; the Rembrandt painting is illustrated on p.238. Cf. Schwartz 1984, pp.272-278, about Rembrandt and the stage, warmly endorsing Albach's hypothesis, first formulated in 1972.
[8] For music, I can do no better than quote the most recent issue of the *Tijdschrift Oude Muziek* 18.4 (2003) 10, where there is talk of "the boring cliché that the Netherlands produced no composers of importance between Sweelinck and Diepenbrock." A cliché indeed, and thus hard to combat. Many Dutch composers are little played and less recorded – but they were there, and even if they were not at the forefront, they represented a thriving bourgeois musical culture, in the words of Grijp, in: Buijsen, Grijp et al. 1994 (characteristically, that is a book about *paintings* with musical scenes).

Although without lasting fame, Ariana Nooseman and the Dutch dancers, actors and musicians of her time apparently were quite innovative, or at least up-to-date, and skilful enough to be invited abroad, to Germany, Flanders and Scandinavia, and even to have Dutch theatres operating outside of the Netherlands, on a temporary or more permanent basis – such as the one at the Lejonkulan in Stockholm.[9] Their renown lasted for quite some time: one Von Uffenbach, wrote in his *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und Engelland*, about his visit to the Amsterdam Schouwburg in 1710: 'von zwey Manns- und einer Weibs-person (wurde) so wohl getantzet, als ich noch nie gesehen' (two men and a woman danced so excellently as I had never seen before).[10] Exactly what the appeal of these artists was, is difficult to establish, because we have so little information about what they did, and how they did it. But at least we can speak about their performances in a more general way.

Then what immediately becomes clear is that Ariana Nooseman, whom above I have called an actress and a dancer, was no exception. Actors doubled as dancers, and dancers as actors, and even those who restricted themselves to dancing and never spoke any lines, did so in companies of actors. I will state quite bluntly that actually *all* theatrical dancing in the 17th and 18th centuries consisted of interludes or afterpieces. In fact, the only dances that were not interludes, but independent performances might be the *ballets de cour*.

[9] See Albach 1977.
[10] Ulm 1753, vol.2, p.415, quoted after Worp 1904-1908, vol.2, p.217.

we find such ballets at the The Hague court of the Stadtholder, and in The Hague high society.[11] However, there are reasons to doubt the independent nature of those ballets as well, and besides, these were not examples of theatrical dancing as understood in this paper. When we look at music, it appears as overture, incidental music, as entr'acte, and even instead of a dramatic afterpiece, but also, and this is my point, as an independent entity, as a concert. I have a Dutch example of this from the 1660s, and we see the same thing in London.[12] But I have not been able to find any theatrical performance consisting of dance only. Sometimes dance may have been the dominant element in an evening's entertainment, as in a dancers' benefit performance – although this seems more pronounced in the London material than in the Dutch – but still there will always be dramatic elements. It remained like that until well in the 19th century: some time ago I saw through the press a book written by the Dutch historian of 19th-century ballet Hans Uitman, titled *De schouwburg liep vol wanneer het ballet begon*; this title refers to the fact that in Amsterdam in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, when the afterpieces were almost always ballets (and even a big ballet with several acts – the major Romantic ballets eventually all reached Amsterdam – was put on after a play), and many patrons wanted to see only the ballet, many skipped the first part of the evening and only came in

[11] Uitman 1965, Naerebout 1989, 1990, 1998.
[12] All references to London in this paper are based on Van Lennep et al. (edd) 1960-1968, and the excellent introductions to its five parts, especially that by E.L. Avery and A.H. Scouten to part 1 (1965), and that by G.W. Stone, Jr, to part 4 (1962).

when the ballet got going.[13] A time-honoured tradition: in his Diary of about 1650 Joan Huydecooper says he sometimes went to the theatre when the mainpiece was done and the dancing started, and the 18th-century Justus van Effen, in criticizing fops who use too much French in their conversation and who deride Dutch plays and Dutch translations of French plays, makes one of them say: 'Dat is ook de reden dat ik gemeenlyk daar verschyn tegen de laatste Acte, en als de dans beginnen zal' ('That is the reason that I use to make my appearance against the last act, when the dance is about to begin').[14]

Theatrical dancing is found wherever there are theatrical performances: these might be put on by travelling players, in a tent or some covered space such as a stable; or by local amateur companies, who put up some makeshift theatre. Many such performances were linked to some special occasion, such as *kermis* (carnival and year market). Permanent stages were fairly rare: after a first, abortive attempt in 1617, the first Schouwburg (Municipal Theatre) of Amsterdam was opened in 1638. The Hague followed in 1660, and had many fresh starts thereafter, Rotterdam had a Schouwburg from 1630-1638, but really got going only as late as 1774, the Leiden Schouwburg opened in 1705.[15] On all of these stages, whether permanent or not, tragedies, comedies and farces were

[13] Uitman 2001; the title translates as: "the theatre started filling up when the ballet was about to begin".

[14] De Haan 2001, p.13. She does not elaborate on either Huydecooper or Van Effen.

[15] A succinct overview of the vicissitudes of the theatres in Amsterdam, Leiden, The Hague, and Rotterdam can be compiled from a series of chapters in Erenstein et al. (edd) 1996.

performed, with dances or ballets as interludes, or with ballets taking the place of the comedy or farce that was put on as the afterpiece. At least, this is my impression. The repertory outside of the main theatres has never been properly researched. Undoubtedly much can be brought to light: in the Haarlem archive for instance there is a playbill from 1656, in which it is announced that the bailiff of Heemstede will allow plays to be presented at the *kermis*, plays "which will be embellished with the dancing of ballets and masquerades ... and we promise the aficionados after every play a rare and funny farce, together with an uncommon ballet".[16]

If we look at the Amsterdam Schouwburg in the 17th century, we see double bills, with so-called *tusschendansen*, that is, danced interludes, but also with ballets replacing the second piece, both from the 1640s onwards. In the season 1658-1659, about which we are informed in detail, at least 37 out of 105 performances had danced interludes or a ballet, performed by four up to fourteen dancers. As far as we can judge, this was not different in other seasons. Several titles of ballets are known (the most intriguing of which I think is the *Nudists' Ballet* of 1659), but often performances are indicated merely as 'an interlude' or 'a dance' or 'a ballet'.[17] It is very difficult to be very precise about the amount of dancing, because the main publication of the repertory does list only titled dances, and the repertory after 1665

[16] Koster 1970, p.160.

[17] The subject matter of the ballets is not my present concern, but several Amsterdam ballets of the second half of the 17th century seem in their subject matter to prefigure ballets supposedly typical of the second half of the 18th century.

has not been published at all in any detail. So one would have to go back to the sources.[18]

So this list is very incomplete: there should be added many interludes and afterpieces without titles, and for dates between 1665 and 1700 we still have to do a lot of basic work. Dancing there must have been, for we have the names of dancing masters, of dancers, and intriguing items from the accounts, such as the payment in 1695 of fl. 126,– (a lot of money: about a quarter of what an ordinary actor would earn in a year) to an "Engelse Juffrouw" (an English young lady) "voor twe mael danssen en draeijen." (for two performances of dancing and turning).[19] And there was more dancing still: a lot of it was to be found in the plays themselves, as interludes between the acts or as an integral part of the drama. Some of it is mentioned in playbills, but it is obvious that there was more dancing going on than one can see at first hand: when we look at published librettos of mainpieces, both tragedies and comedies, and farces, there appears to be dancing where the playbills did not mention it.[20] Music, song and dance were prevalent in so-called *singende kluchten* (sung farce), in *reien* (imitations of the Greek chorus), and otherwise, in every kind of drama. Indeed, the taste for stage spectacle appeared hard to satisfy. As the century progresses, we get an increasing number of *vertooningen* (tableaux vivants), pantomimes,

[18] Oey-de Vita & Geesink 1983 stops short at 1665. Rebling 1950 covers all of the century, but is incomplete and unreliable.
[19] Worp 1920, p.155.
[20] Naerebout 1989, 1990. But we also find the reverse: the playbill mentions dancing, but it is not mentioned in the libretto. It is only by combining all sources that we can come to a full picture of the dance.

kunst- en vliegwerk, literally artifice and aerial work, that is the use of mechanic effects, what is called machinery in 17th-century England (where developments are remarkably similar, also in date – at least in London).[21] Large scale ballets were included. As the main protagonist of such stage spectaculars, Jan Vos wrote in the preface of his very spectacular play *Medea*, of 1667, contemporaries used to say: "'t sien gaet voor 't zeggen" (seeing is more important than hearing). In the late 70s and 80s of the 17th century there is a real flurry of spectacular plays, operas and allegorical extravaganzas, by authors such as Jan Vos, Dirk Buysero, Govard Bidloo, Thomas Arendsz and Arnoud Peys. Often these were staged in honour of special occasions: Thomas Arendsz, for instance, in 1689 wrote a play at the occasion of the accession of Stadtholder Willem III to the English throne (the Glorious Revolution), a play teeming with allegorical dances by Violence, Murder, Spite, Vindictiveness, Fury, Despair, Thames, Rhine, Danube and Tagus. Even existing plays were not safe, and for instance the tragedies by the national playwright Vondel were staged in remakes with added ballets: for instance Bidloo's remake of Vondel's *Faëton* introduces dances for Daybreak and her companions, Ganymede and two heavenly spirits, Aeolus and the four winds, the Burned People who worship Jupiter, and the Seven Planets.

[21] In London 'machines' are supposed to be operative from the late 1660s, or early 1670s. Dutch libretti mentioning with 'kunst- en vliegwerk' all date between 1667 and 1764. Cf. the discussion in De Haan 1998, and Amir 1996.

There is much more like this: and no systematic study of it.[22]

In the 18th century, things are slightly different: I say slightly, because the dance is as prevalent, or even more so, as it was in the 17th century, and still there are no examples of dance on stage as an independent art: some concerts, yes, ballets, no. What is different, is the programming: it now becomes relatively rare for afterpieces to be replaced by ballets. There are a few examples of ballets, some of them apparently continuing 17th-century traditions also in subject matter, replacing afterpieces, and also some 'modern' pantomimes are performed as afterpieces. But by far the most common thing is for dances (solos, pas de deux, group dances, complete ballets and pantomimes) to be inserted as an interlude between the mainpiece and the afterpiece. Almost all performances – I have looked at the repertory in Amsterdam between 1700 and 1772, and in Rotterdam in 1773-1776 – are three-decker affairs: a tragedy or comedy as mainpiece, an interlude, almost always dance, and a comedy or farce as afterpiece.[23] I say "almost always dance", because in relatively rare instances there is also song, or vaudeville items like "een Fransche Turk, die verwonderlyke kunsten doet, Grimaldi genoemd" (1716) ("a French Turk, named Grimaldi, and who

[22] Naerebout 1989, 1990, lists some of the relevant titles; cf. Worp 1904-1908, 1920, and Rasch 1996.

[23] The repertories studied are available in De Haan 2001, and in Haverkorn van Rijsewijk 1882. The last mentioned study is not reliable in all aspects, but its publication of the Rotterdam playbills serves our purpose.

performs amazing tricks") or a German, one Mr Creta, who could play two horns at the same time.[24]

On rare occasions there might be extra pieces at the beginning and the end: a five-decker program, or benefits or command performances that did not obey to any rule, as when on the 21st of December 1716 a medley 'with song and dance' was put on for "zyn Czaarsche majesteit" (His Majesty The Czar, i.e. Peter the Great).[25] By the way, to introduce a comparative element: in London in the 17th century there are hardly any afterpieces: there is dancing within the single play that is put on, and between its acts, whether related or not to the general atmosphere of the play. In the 18th century, in fact only as established practice from the Garrick period onwards (1740s), we have what has been called "varied 'whole shows'": a mainpiece, some dancing, and an afterpiece.[26] This is the triple bill that we have seen in the Dutch situation. But in the 17th century Holland had had double bills, with interludes, or with the afterpiece replaced by a ballet. And the three-decker program is found from at least the 1720s. This raises questions about the possible influence of the Dutch example (remember the international reputation of Dutch theatre in the 17th century) on the programming in neighbouring countries.

I have looked at two years in more detail: 1760 when out of the 106 days that the Amsterdam Schouwburg had

[24] De Haan 2001, with anonymous manuscript annotations in the copy of Leiden University Library.

[25] De Haan 2001.

[26] Van Lennep et al. (edd) 1960-1968, part 4, vol.1, p.cxlv.

performances, on at least 77 there were interludes with dance, and 1767 when it was 87 out of 103 (for London between 1747-1776 it has been estimated that about 80 percent of performances had entr'acte dances).[27] But according to the Amsterdam playbills there was a lot of other dancing going on as well, and for 1767 I have put this in a chart, which shows the number of performances per month (there were no performances in June and just one in July).[28] Here it is immediately clear what is on the playbills: there is *not one performance without dancing.*[29] Still, the amount of dance is certainly underestimated. Plays that in April were said to contain song and dance, are listed in December without any qualification. One should not suppose, I suggest, that the song and dance had been cut, but that no need was felt to inform an audience of what they already knew: better use the limited space on the playbill to announce that "in between" Miss Voogd will sing, and there will also be a ballet in which Miss Nieri and Mr Godard will dance the most important *entrées* (playbills for the 12th and 14th of December 1767).

Despite the enormous amount of dancing going on, the information we have about that dancing is still not much better than what we have from the 17th century. Imagery

[27] Van Lennep et al. (edd) 1960-1968, part 4, vol.1, p.cxxxv.
[28] Based on a quick count of the material in De Haan 2001. The amount of dancing may be underestimated (cf. below), as I have not studied every individual case. When in real doubt whether a performance consisted of, or contained, dancing, I have left it out.
[29] Counts for Rotterdam (cf. note 22 above) give over 90 percent of performances with danced interludes or dance elsewhere in the performance. It seems likely that this is also 100 percent as it turns out to be for Amsterdam.

is relatively rare[30], but at least we have a few descriptions of the typical pantomime ballets of the 18th century, such as *De Kruidenier* (The Grocer), of the season 1762-1763, discussed in some detail in *De Hollandsche Tooneel-Beschouwer*. "One sees a grocery shop in a street; four shop assistants and their overseer are going about their business; the grocer arrives, gives his orders and goes off again. Four girls come to do their shopping, and four musicians dressed as farmers arrive on the scene. They all dance with the four shop assistants. The grocer is coming back, but the dancers are warned by the overseer. The shop assistants hide the girls and the musicians in a big barrel, and return to their duties. The grocer asks one of his men to give him sugar loaves; when he is handed the wrong loaves, he flies into a rage, and wants to smash his big barrel. The girls and musicians appear from the barrel and dance around the grocer, and shut him in the barrel. The overseer removes his work clothing and turns out to be an Italian farmer; the Italian farmer's wife arrives upon the scene, and the two of them dance. The grocer is freed from the barrel and carried inside upon the shoulders of his four assistants". As a contemporary said: "this seems to be without any ending and utterly senseless altogether, but the public liked it, and that is, in the end, the only thing that counts".[31]

Some conclusions: the Dutch stage of the 17th and 18th centuries was teeming with dance: as afterpieces, as interludes, as entr'actes, and as part of the dramatic performance itself. When we want to understand

[30] Beautifully illustrated in Erenstein et al. (edd) 1996.
[31] Worp 1904-1908, vol.2, p.218.

theatrical dancing of the period, we have to look at the dance as a performance that was to be seen and appreciated within the context of several other performances. Sometimes as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, sometimes as a very lively media mix. We have not, I think, been aware of this in a sufficient manner. We could compare what is now going on in the world of the Ancient Music Movement. This really came into its own over 30 years ago; that is quite some time ago, and by now the rebels who advocated 'authentic performances' have themselves become members of the musical establishment. At this very moment, however, attempts are on foot to put some new life into what was so new and innovative in the 1960s and 1970s. The trailblazers and pioneers of even further back are long dead, the first generation of teachers is retiring, and a new generation is taking over. They bring with them a new concern: after the preoccupation with performance in the sense of the instruments and the sound, and with repertory, now there has arisen an interest in the complete performance in the sense of the contextualizing of the music. Ancient music has been performed, even increasingly so – when it became mainstream – in a concert setting. But this forces on us, say, a concert of English viol music, while at the time such music was performed together with, for instance, Italian harpsichord sonatas: it is *us* who say that these do not belong together. But it is odd to declare the one aspect of 'authenticity' our main concern, and studiously neglect the other. So here we have an other field in which there is concern about the shape that an actual day, afternoon or evening of past entertainment will have had. The ancient music buffs are already branching out into dance, puppeteering, and what not. In the same way, dance scholarship would do well to move

away from an exclusive focus on the dance, and towards a wide-angle view of the dance within context.

In fact, as a historian – not a *dance* historian – I think we should take as broad a view of this context as we can. When in 1738 the allegorical play *Het Eeuwgetyde van den Amsteldamschen Schouwburg* (The Centenary of the Amsterdam Schouwburg), by one Jan de Marre was put on, there was music specially composed by Antonio Vivaldi. Apart from the actors, there was a host of singers, dancers and extras. Having had all that, they moved on to a tragedy, *Julius Caesar and Cato*, by Pieter Langendijk. In the interval there was "Moselle, French wine, red wine, liqueur, coffee, tea, chocolate and conserves".[32] I propose that the wines, the hot chocolate, the jams and jellies and preserves, like nice plumb prunes in brandy, should not be overlooked in our research into theatrical history.

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Leonardo da Vinci's Theory of Equilibrium in the Writings of Carlo Blasis

Flavia Pappacena

Born in Naples, Carlo Blasis (1795-1878) spent his childhood and youth in France, where his father had moved at the end of the century. Although his dance training was decidedly French, his general culture was profoundly influenced by his Italian origins. The Greek and Latin classics were his point of departure, but his broad studies included late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French literature as well as the main products of Italian culture. It was precisely this vast, deep background that allowed the young Blasis to carry out his publishing activities in the specific area of dance and to create high-level literary works in addition to those of a historical and philosophical nature. This activity was most intense during the years in which he directed the Imperial Royal Academy of Ballet at Milan's Teatro alla Scala (1837-1850), inasmuch as *L'uomo fisico, intellettuale e morale* [Man As Physical, Intellectual and Moral Being], first published as a book in 1857 by Guglielmini Typographers, had come out in serial form before the revolutionary uprisings of 1848 – thus not long after the publication of *Studi sulle Arti imitatrici* [Study of the Imitative Arts], which was also published in Milan, but by Giuseppe Chiusi in 1844.

One of the themes that most interested the young Italian and that had been a subject of debate among literati and artists throughout the 18th century was the

analogousness of dance, poetry, painting and music, given their common status as imitative arts. But Blasis meant to dedicate a richer analysis to the affinity between dance and the visual arts of painting and sculpture. This choice had evidently been influenced by the theoretic views that were then dominant at the Opéra, and especially by the principles of which Pierre Gardel, Jean Dauberval, Auguste Vestris and Jean-Etienne Despréaux were the most renowned exponents. It seems plausible, however, that Blasis had been stimulated by the *Encyclopédie méthodique* (revised edition of 1786, organized 'by subject', of Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*), which he had consulted in order to quote excerpts from Noverre's *Lettres*, Pierre Rameau's *Le Maître à danser* (*The Dancing Master*) and Louis de Cahusac's treatise in his *Traité élémentaire théorique et pratique de l'Art de la Danse* (*Elementary Theoretical and Practical Treatise on the Art of the Dance*; 1820). More specifically, it is possible that the *Encyclopédie*'s entry on '*équilibre*', based on writings by de Piles, Du Fresnoy and Leonardo da Vinci, was what pointed the young Blasis in the direction of Leonardo da Vinci's *Trattato della pittura* (*Treatise on Painting*) for a scientific explanation of the principles of the body's equilibrium, as well as making him delve more deeply into Jean-Georges Noverre's theories regarding the '*centre de gravité*', quoted in Chapter III, and to provide documentation for Chapter VI, which deals with the leap.

It is clear that Blasis must have owned or had access to a copy of Leonardo's treatise, which, during his youth, was not considered a rarity. Between the last three decades of the 18th century and the early years of the 19th, it had been reprinted many times in both, France

and Italy. Reprints of du Fresne's edition had been published in Naples in 1773 and in Bologna in 1786; in 1792 the *Trattato della pittura di Leonardo ridotto alla sua vera lezione sopra una copia a penna di mano di Stefano della Bella* [*Leonardo's Treatise on Painting Reduced to Its Essence Based on a Copy in Ink Done by Stefano della Bella*] had appeared in Florence and was reissued in Milan in 1804 and in Perugia in 1805. Finally, in 1817, the version of the *Treatise on Painting* derived from the *Codex Urbinas Latinus* 1270 in the Vatican, was published with a dedication to Louis XVIII. In addition, in 1773 some of the illustrations from the French edition of 1651, entrusted to the celebrated painter Nicolas Poussin, had been inserted into Peter Paul Rubens' *Théorie de la figure humaine*, published by Charles-Antoine Jombert with engravings by Pierre Aveline.

Blasis used Leonardo's theories to explain the general principles of static and dynamic equilibrium for the dancer.

> Apply yourself to achieving perfect equilibrium of the body; and to arrive at this certain point, do not move away from the perpendicular, which must begin at the centre of the two collarbones, and which will lower itself in passing through both ankles.[1]

If the counterbalancing of the various parts of the body – as expressed by Leonardo several times in his *Trattato* – is the basic condition by which every static or

[1] In *Traité élémentaire Théorique et Pratique de l'Art de la Danse*, Milan, chez Joseph Beati et Antoine Tenenti, 1820, p. 65.

dynamic position remains naturally balanced, the distribution of weights (in other words, the well-harmonised organization of the arms, the head and the legs with respect to the centre of the body and to the centre of the performing space) is also the principle on which Blasis bases the figure's formal equilibrium and the harmony of the *attitudes*, in movement and at rest, in accordance with the canons of classical art.

> To achieve confidence, the dancer, while placing himself gracefully, must set out to form the right counterbalance of the other parts of the body, in order to support himself on only one leg, and also to be properly placed on both.[2]

This brings him to confront a new, original interpretation of the 'law of opposition', the significance of which was the object of controversy among dancers and, in his opinion, was surrounded by 'obscurity'. The law of opposition had been codified by the Académie on the basis of the arms' spontaneous oscillation with respect to the legs, in normal walking, and it found expression in a dance style originally conceived as a rhythmic succession of small steps. By interpreting the juxtaposition of the arms in accordance with the aesthetic principles of classical art that had been embraced by the new style in French dance, Blasis brought the concept of opposition onto a more general plane – which is why he wrote:

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

> The opposition of one part of any solid body whatever that moves to another part is a law of equilibrium that separates the gravitational forces. [...] This is what gives the dancer infinitely more grace, because he must always avoid uniformity of line, as painting counsels its pupils.[3]

Although we may be fascinated by the young Italian's openness, this was clearly not the case for the English translator of the *Code of Terpsichore*: instead of referring back to the aesthetic principles of painting, as Blasis' text suggests, the translator wrote: '[*opposition*] avoids that uniformity of lines in his person so unbecoming a true favourite of Terpsichore.[4]

This and other excerpts from the *Trattato* underline the fact that in addition to the concept of variety, that of 'center' (the body's center) – about which Bournonville would theorise with such great lucidity a few years later in *A New Year's Gift for Dance Lovers*, published in Copenhagen in 1829 – was also ripe. In fact, in the very chapter that deals with '*Positions principales et leurs dérivés*', Blasis would return to an excerpt from the Leonardo da Vinci's *Trattato* and would write:

> The weight of a man standing on only one leg will always be divided in equal and opposite parts over the supporting centre of gravity. [...] The centre of gravity of a man in motion

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[4] In *The Code of Terpsichore*, London, James Bulcock, 1828, p. 68.

> will be at the centre of the leg that is on the ground.[5]

The importance that Blasis attributed to Leonardo da Vinci's *Trattato* is confirmed not only by the repetition in *L'Uomo fisico, intellettuale e morale* of some of the paragraphs by Leonardo that Blasis had used in his own *Treatise*, but above all by the resemblance of some of the latter's illustrations to those by Leonardo. In the first place, the resemblance has to do with the passage that indicates the line of gravity, which, as in Leonardo's text, is full and dark, unlike the one in Blasis' *Treatise*, which is dotted. Secondly, it has to do with the positioning and subject of some of the drawings, such as 'Of the man carrying a weight on his shoulders'.

[5] In *Traité*, pp. 65-66. *Cf.* in *Code of Terpsichore*, p. 73, "The weight of a man standing upon one leg is divided in an equal manner on the point that sustains the whole […] and as he moves, the central line of gravity passes exactly through the middle of the leg that rests wholly on the ground".

The Dance Data On-line Project at the National Resource Centre for Dance

Chris Jones

In 2005, the National Resource Centre for Dance (NRCD) will mark the culmination of a three-year cataloguing project by launching its catalogue on the web. The Dance Data On-line Project has involved substantial work on the existing catalogue records and creation of new ones through the cataloguing of several archive collections. The project, funded by a resource enhancement grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Board, marks a major stage in the development of the NRCD's computer catalogue, as this article explains.

An Overview of the Archive Collections

Founded in 1982, the NRCD is based in the library of the University of Surrey in Guildford, England. Its archive collections fall into two distinct groups: the special collections and the 'core' collections. Special collections are named archives that cover the life and work of a person, company, or organisation. The core collections consist of materials that the NRCD gathers itself, as well as small batches of donated materials that are not substantial or significant enough to be considered special collections. While most of the special collections are defined in time, having been donated when the company folded or the individual died, some are 'living'

archives because the donors continue to deposit materials of their recent activities. The core collections attempt to be both historical and up-to-the-minute because student researchers often request information on the latest companies, choreographers, or trends.

Special Collections

The NRCD's most famous special collection is the archive of Rudolf Laban, the leading movement theorist of the 20th century. It contains his personal papers, drawings, and photographs, as bequeathed to Lisa Ullmann, his partner during the last 20 years of his life. Dating predominantly, but not exclusively, from his English period (1938-1958), the archive contains over 4,500 files of papers, many of them unpublished, handwritten documents in which Laban develops his theories further than his published writings demonstrate. The papers also cover in detail his work in industry, known as Laban-Lawrence Industrial Rhythm, which fed into his theories of 'effort'. Equally important are the numerous drawings depicting figures within geometric or knotted shapes, or simply the shapes themselves. They are visual evidence of Laban thinking through his movement theories.

Around the Rudolf Laban Archive, the NRCD has gathered the collections of colleagues and students who carried on his work in various areas: Lisa Ullmann and Joan Russell in education; Audrey Wethered and Betty Meredith-Jones in therapy; and Warren Lamb, who joined Laban in industry and went on to work with senior management teams in all areas of business.

(Consequently, the NRCD is perhaps the only dance archive with files on the managers of Hewlett-Packard, Saatchi & Saatchi, and Spud-U-Like.) The archives of two Laban-related organisations are also housed at the centre: the Laban Guild for Movement and Dance, a British association of teachers and others using Laban-based movement, and the International Council of Kinetography Laban/Labanotation (ICKL), which oversees the development of his notation system.

The NRCD is home to a number of dance company archives, covering modern dance, postmodern dance, and ballet. Among the modern/postmodern companies active in the 1980s are Extemporary Dance Theatre and Janet Smith and Dancers, and from the 1990s, V-TOL Dance Company and Kokuma Dance Theatre. 'Living' archives come from Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company, Rosemary Butcher Dance Company, Yolande Snaith Theatredance, and Green Candle Dance Company. The ballet companies include London City Ballet, Harlequin Ballet, and Dance Advance.

The archives of individuals range across a broad spectrum of dance activity: dancers, critics, educators, arts administrators, and visual artists. Two important archives document the life and work of English women, who, inspired by Isadora Duncan, created their own forms of 'barefoot dance' in the early years of the 20th century. Madge Atkinson established her School of Natural Movement in Manchester, before going on to found London College of Dance. The Bice Bellairs Collection consists of the scrapbooks and photograph albums of Rudy Ginner, whose Revived Greek Dance was influenced by paintings on Ancient Greek pottery.

Recently, a small cluster of archives of dancers who trained Central European dance styles has formed: Bettina Vernon danced with Gertrud Bodenweiser's company on its tour of Australia during WWII; Leslie Burrowes was the first English woman to study with Mary Wigman in Dresden in the late 1920s; and the English dancer Ludmila Mlada (later Ludi Horenstein) studied at Sigurd Leeder's London studio.

The NRCD also houses the archives of several dance organisations, including Dance and the Child International (daCi), the UK Dalcroze Society, and the Ballet Independents' Group.

Core Collections

As dance is a multimedia art form, the core collections cover all manner of media. Members of staff record programmes from the television and radio, clip newspaper articles, request copies of recent reports, and gather publicity materials of current dance activity in Britain and abroad. Frequently, people donate materials for the core collections: a bundle of magazines to fill in a run, a deceased aunt's shelf of books on a beloved dancer, a horde of theatre programmes. There are also core collections of periodicals, photographs, posters, and computer-based materials such as CD-ROMs. The core collection of Laban-related materials ensures that the NRCD has the latest books and Ph.D. theses drawing on Laban's work.

The Development of the Computer Catalogue

In order to provide researchers access to all these materials, they need to be catalogued. An archive catalogue has two primary parts: the catalogue records, that is, individual records describing a physical item held in the archive (a file of papers, a poster, a film), and the authority records, which contain biographical information about the people and companies who have created or are the subjects of the physical items. In terms of database design, these two parts require 'many-to-many' relationships because one catalogue record may link to many authority records and visa versa.

Authority records are useful because they avoid repetition of information: biographical details about a person are given only in the authority record, rather than each time s/he is mentioned in a catalogue record. They are also useful for distinguishing between two people with the same name, and for pulling together on one record all the various different names of a single individual or company. For example, Rudolf Laban was frequently known as Rudolf von Laban, and in some papers in his archive also appears as Rudolph. His authority record lists all the variants of his name so that researchers searching under 'Rudolph von Laban' will still find all the materials created by the man the NRCD calls Rudolf Laban (the name he signed on his will).

Performing-arts archives also need a specialised, rather complicated set of authority records – those about artistic works (dances, plays, operas, etc.). In terms of database design, this is a difficult proposition because while the record of the artistic work acts as an authority

when linked to catalogue records, it also draws on the authority records of people, companies, and places. For example, the authority record for Frederick Ashton's *Symphonic Variations* (1946) is linked to the theatre programmes in which the dance appears, but also to the authorities for the creative team (Ashton, César Franck, and Sophie Fedorovitch), the ballet company (Sadler's Wells Ballet), and the venue where it premiered (Royal Opera House, London). Depending on the work, it may be necessary to specify a production (for example, Anthony Dowell's 1994 production of *The Sleeping Beauty* for the Royal Ballet), which could be done as a separate authority record, or as a sub-section of the original record (in this case, Petipa's 1890 ballet). Some company-based archives require that each production of a season or of a tour has an authority record; some need a record for each performance of a particular work, enabling the accurate listing of cast, start time, and venue. These increasingly more detailed gradations – from information about a work to the specifics of a single performance – require a complex series of links within or between works authority records, further complicating the design of the database.

When the NRCD began to catalogue on computer in 1995, it started with a 'homemade' database designed in Microsoft Access 2. As a software package, MS Access 2 was particularly good at creating databases with 'one-to-many' relationships, where an entry in one table was linked to several items in another (say, an author linked to a number of book titles). The software could handle a certain amount of 'many-to-many' relationships, but it was stretched to its limits to cope with the actual 'many-to-many' needs of a dance archive. The bigger the

catalogue grew, the slower the system ran. In addition, the overly complex design of the NRCD's database made searching very difficult, and in 1999/2000, when searchable catalogues began to appear on the web, research revealed that putting the NRCD's MS Access catalogue on its website would be impossible.

Therefore, in 2001, with the assistance of the Pilgrim Trust, the NRCD purchased DS Ltd's CALM 2000, a widely-used professional archive catalogue software that allows on-line searching. At that time, two other performing arts archives, the National Theatre Archive and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, were working with DS Ltd to design a 'performance module' to address their need for authorities about artistic works. The NRCD became the third member of the performance-module users group. Developing the module proved difficult. Prototypes were tested over 14 months before a workable version was in place, and the module has continued to undergo redesign in the ensuing years.

The Dance Data On-line Project

In 2002, the NRCD's MS Access records were 'migrated' into CALM, but because of the significant differences between the two systems, it was found that data could not be migrated perfectly to produce a polished record. Data verification and the enhancement of existing records would need to be undertaken. The Dance Data On-line Project has provided a rare opportunity to look in detail at all the records created since 1995 and to correct, formalise, add detail, and make links across the entire database.

Because of the limitations of the MS Access database, many catalogue records had no authority links at all; these have been made. Links have also been made to a subject thesaurus, a function offered in CALM. Furthermore, the fields in MS Access had a limit of 250 characters, while CALM's fields allow for significantly more information; this new capability was used on some sparsely-worded records. For the special collections, the advent of the Data Protection Act necessitated reading through each collection's records to determine which files contained sensitive documents and closing them. (The records of closed files will appear on the web catalogue because they must be acknowledged under the Freedom of Information Act, but care is taken in the record not to provide clues to the nature of the sensitive material.)

For the most part, the 'migrated' catalogue records were in line with the international cataloguing style known as the General International Standard Archival Description, or ISAD(G). The person and company authority records, however, contained only two or three fields, too few to meet the demands of the International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families, or ISAAR(CPF). The Dance Data On-line Project has given archive staff the time to add the necessary detail to these authorities. The 'migrated' dance authorities were equally sparse, and with the new performance module could be expanded to include information on the creative team, the performers, details of the premiere, etc. As yet there are no international standards for constructing authority records of artistic works; so, the CALM performance-module user group

showed its template to colleagues in drama, dance, and opera archives to ensure that no vital fields were missing.

In addition to enhancing existing records to provide researchers with more detail, archive staff have tried to give them various ways to search the records. For example, researchers can first search the authority records for the person, company, or dance they are interested in, and from the specific authority record call up all the catalogue records linked to it. As noted above, this is particularly useful in instances of name changes: from the authority for Yolande Snaith Theatredance, the researcher will link across to materials generated by Dance Quorum, as Snaith's company was first called, without having to know the company's earlier name. While a free-text search is the simplest form of searching, it is often useful to be able to narrow searches to avoid excessive 'hits'. To this end, the physical items in the NRCD's archive have been divided into various formats (artwork, audio, theatre programme, video, etc.), enabling the researcher to search for only the photographs, or, in combination with other search fields, only photographs in a certain special collection or only those of a person or dance. In addition, certain categories of materials span formats: notation scores may be loose papers or bound books, as may be theses and dissertations; examination materials for the UK's GCSE and A Level qualifications include the syllabus on paper or CD-ROM, the video of the set solo, and the tape of its music. These can be found using the 'category' field, and, again, narrowed in combination with a collection, format, or keyword.

In addition to the extensive work on the 'migrated' catalogue, the Dance Data On-line Project involves two other important strands: retro-conversion and original cataloguing. Retro-conversion – transferring information on card catalogues to the computer database – has been undertaken on four collections: the Lisa Ullmann Archive, the periodicals (13,000+ issues), the core newspaper cuttings (2,000+ files), and the core publicity materials (1,000+ files). Eight special collections that had no card catalogue have been catalogued directly into CALM: the Laban Guild Archive, Bettina Vernon Archive, Harlequin Ballet Archive, ADMA Archive, Cycles Dance Company Archive, Freda Steel Collection of Northern Dance Theatre, David Henshaw Collection, and the Kinetogram Collection of Nonington College of Physical Education.

The Dance Data On-line Project has also involved several smaller tasks. Specialist conservation work has been carried out on the Bettina Vernon Archive. A computer index to the *Laban Guild Magazine* (1948-1991) has been compiled, and a number of Laban-related books and Ph.D. theses have been purchased to round out the centre's Laban holdings. At the end of the project a selection of Laban's original drawings will be scanned, and the digital image embedded in the appropriate catalogue record for viewing on the website.