

COMPUTER LAB SESSION FOR LABANREADER

by

Sheila Marion

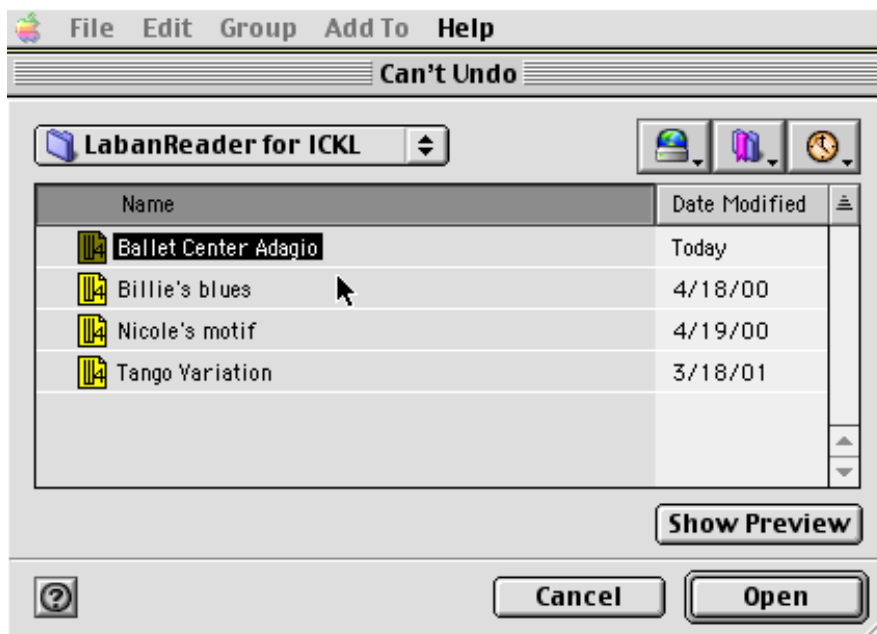
The 2001 ICKL conference featured a series of hands-on sessions, in the Department of Dance's computer lab, for participants to try out various computer applications related to notation and documentation. Thirty participants registered for the Sunday evening session on LabanReader, an educational software tool developed at OSU's Dance Notation Bureau Extension for highlighting patterns in a Labanotation/Kinetography score.

LabanReader is helpful in assisting readers—especially beginners—sort out groups of symbols for easier score reading. Download LabanReader from the OSU dance web page, <http://www.dance.ohio-state.edu/labanner/LR/>.

The free software is designed to be used with LabanWriter 4 for the Macintosh. To use LabanReader, open your score from within the application. First double-click on the LabanReader software icon (not your score).

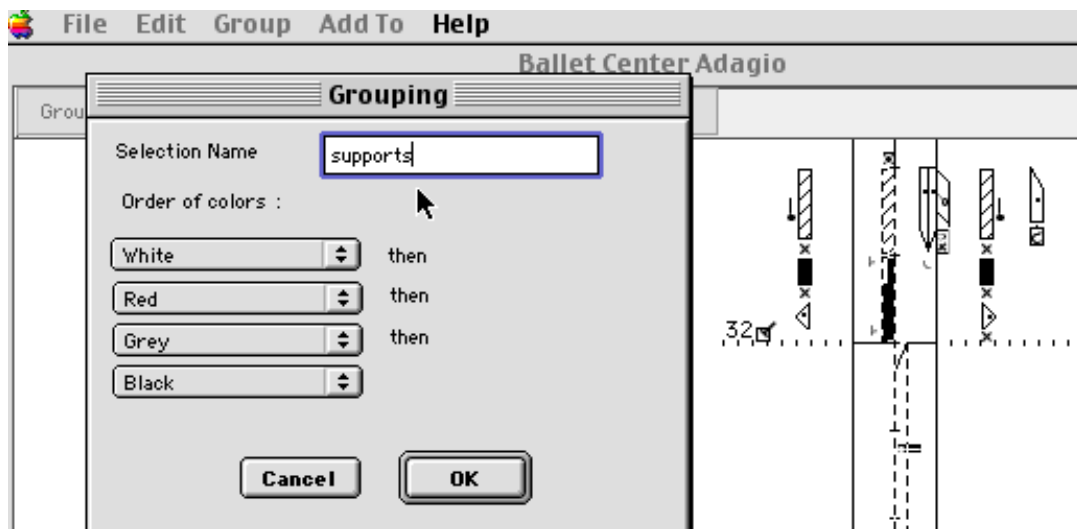


Then, navigate to your score from within the program: close the blank window, pull down the “file” menu and release on “open.” Then, in the box that comes up, find your score. Highlight it by clicking on it, and then click the “open” button.

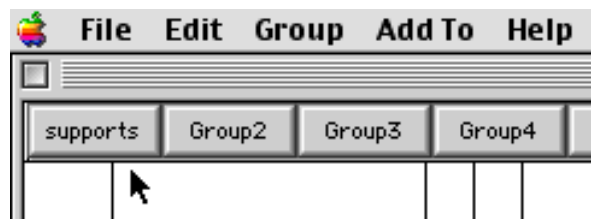


Once your score is open in LabanReader, decide how you would like to group symbols in order to highlight aspects of the notation. Possibilities include separating a primary theme from secondary actions in a Motif score, highlighting rhythmic patterns, or grouping columns to show separately movements of supports and gestures (which helps beginners transition to reading full scores).

When you are ready to begin grouping symbols, highlight them by dragging your cursor over them or by clicking on individual symbols as you hold down the shift key. With the symbols highlighted, click on “group” at the very top (in line with the apple symbol, not “group 1” or group 2” etc.). Here you can name the group (“theme,” “phrase 1,” “supports,” and so forth) and adjust the colors.

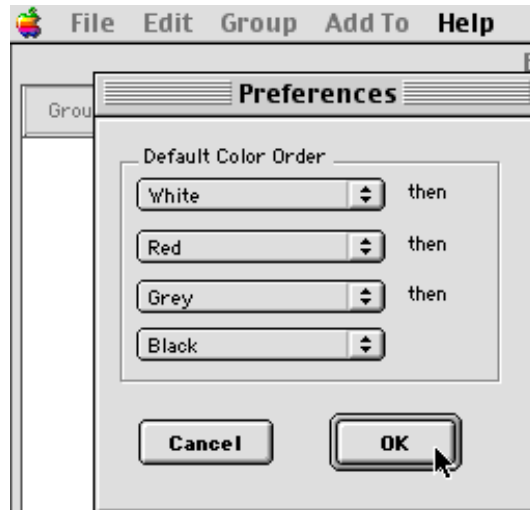


After you have clicked “OK,” check the group by clicking on the newly named button to cycle through the colors.



Did you miss any symbols that you wanted in a group? If so, highlight them, pull down the “add to” menu at the top, and release on the group you want them to go into. Do you need to take out any symbols you included in a group? Select the symbol or symbols, pull down the “edit” menu, and release on “delete from group.”

For symbols to cycle through a pre-set order of colors, go to “preferences,” under the “edit” menu at the very top of your screen (in line with the apple symbol). My preference is for one of the four colors to be white, in order to temporarily “disappear” the group of symbols; another to be a bright color, to highlight the symbol group; one to be black, as in a regular score; and the last of the four colors to be grey, so that the symbols may be present in the score, but slightly faded out.



By making choices in “preferences,” you won’t have to change each of the colors when you create a group. Also, all the groups will cycle through their colors in the same order, which is easier when you are using LabanReader in the classroom. You can change colors at any point along the way, so experiment with how it works best for you.

Continue until you have created as many groups as you like. Then save the LabanReader document with a name that distinguishes it from your original LabanWriter score. Each time you use LabanReader, you will need to remember to open your document from within the program (if you just double-click on the score icon it will revert to a LabanWriter document).

To use LabanReader in the classroom, you’ll need a portable computer and projector. LabanReader allows you to quickly and easily change what your students see. You (or they) can bring up and “disappear” groups of symbols as needed to help understand and learn the combinations.

LabanReader was created by Sheila Marion, content director, and David Ralley, software programmer. This project has been supported by the Dance Preservation Fund at The Ohio State University.

Previously, demonstration examples were created using LabanWriter 3, Adobe Photoshop and Director software, with technical director A. William Smith and graduate associates Gina Jacobs and Joukje Kolff. These examples were collected in a demonstration CD-ROM for the Macintosh by Roberta Shaw, and will be posted soon on the DBN Extension web page, <http://www.dance.ohio-state.edu/dnbext/>