

A FEW WELCOMING WORDS

by

Agustí Ros, On-site Organizer

Dear Colleagues and friends, it's a great honour for me to be able to welcome you here. The XXIst edition of the International Congress on Kinetography Laban/Labanotation starts today, under the patronage of UNESCO and of Mr. Daniel Tarschys (General Secretary of the European Council), in this building which belongs to the *Institut del Teatre de la Diputació de Barcelona*, thanks to the good disposition of its director, Mr. Pau Monterde, who I thank for his collaboration.

I would like to express the great satisfaction I feel at having managed to gather a group of people like you, who coming from such different places and with so many rich and different experiences, are able to speak a common language through movement notation. For this reason all contributions to the Congress will be highly appreciated, not only by the ICKL but also by the Institut del Teatre and all those who approach our notation system for the first time.

Welcome to Barcelona. I am sure you will be seduced by the city and this will add a new ingredient to your journey.

Finally, I would like to thank the dedication of two key elements that have made it possible to organise this Congress. On one hand the ICKL Secretariat for its work and determination which have brought such a great number of people together. On the other hand, the Institut del Teatre's Documentation and Communication Centre for being sensitive to the organisation needs at all times.

I would also like to thank all those people who have dedicated their efforts to organising the program of activities, the spokesmen and all the participants. Thank you.

WELCOMING ADDRESS TO THE ICKL CONFERENCE IN BARCELONA

by

Pau Monterde, Director of the Institut del Teatre

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you and to have the chance to co-organize, together with the International Council of Kinetography Laban / Labanotation (ICKL), the 21st Biennial Conference of Kinetography Laban / Labanotation, under the patronage of UNESCO and Mr. Daniel Tarschys, General Secretary of the European Council.

The Institut del Teatre de la Diputació de Barcelona (Barcelona Provincial Council) is an advanced training, research and information centre for the performing arts that has over 80 years' experience in the field. The teaching staff at the Institut are the best professionals currently working in the country. In addition, each year leading figures from the theatre world at home and abroad are invited to give seminars and courses or to direct repertory or new works with the students. As well as being the only education centre in Catalonia with an international and local presence in the field of theatre and dance studies, the Institut does considerable work to raise awareness of the dramatic arts by putting on introductory courses to the theatre, congresses, symposiums and seminars, and also organises the International Puppet Festival. In addition, the Institut has set up a series of collaborative projects through accords with a number of national and international institutions.

It is planned that the new Institut del Teatre premises in the Ciutat del Teatre (City of the Theatre) will be opened during the academic year 1999-2000. These new premises, covering 15,700 m² of usable space, will bring together under the same roof the Escola Superior d'Art Dramàtic (Higher School of Dramatic Art), the Escola de Dansa i Coreografia (Higher School of Dance and Choreography), the Conservatori de Grau Mitjà (Intermediate Conservatory), the Museu de les Arts de l'Espectacle (Performing Arts Museum) and the Centre d'Investigació, Documentació i Difusió (Documentation Centre), two theatres and the entire range of administrative and management services that make up one of the performing arts institutions with the greatest potential and dynamism in Europe here at the threshold of the 21st century.

At a time when the Institut del Teatre is considering a project for the future in which the relationship with other communities in the performing world is essential, the presence of the patrons and participants from the five continents, is a guarantee of this dialogue. For all these reasons I wish you a hearty welcome, in the hope that this will produce the necessary enrichment and interchange of ideas through reflection, study and debate.

OPENING COMMENTS, 21ST ICKL CONFERENCE, BARCELONA

by

Muriel Topaz, Chair of ICKL

As Chair of the International Council of Kinetography Laban, it is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to our twenty-first biennial conference. It is particularly gratifying to see the faces of participants from all over the world, from Europe, the United States, and from Asia, as well as all of the local participants. We are nearly one hundred people in attendance and represent Canada, China, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Okinawa, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States.

As you know the focus of this conference will be somewhat different from those of the past. The main thrust of our technical sessions will be towards non-judgmental understanding of just how the slightly different dialects of Laban's Notation System view and write movement. It will study these small differences with an aim to make available to each of us full access and accurate comprehension of the material of all colleagues.

The conference will also concern itself with the many differing applications of the system being used throughout the world. We will look at these many fascinating and varied applications, study their principles and read and perform the scores produced. We will also explore the technological advances that have impacted on our work, as well as the System's least complex application, Motif Writing, with its use in training children.

I wish particularly to thank Agusti Ros, our on-site coordinator, his staff and colleagues here at the Institut del Teatre de la Diputació de Barcelona, and Marion Bastien, the secretary of ICKL, for their dedication and work beyond the call of duty to make this conference a reality. And I wish also to gratefully acknowledge our kind host here at the Institut, Director Pau Monterde for his warm welcome.

Thank you all for coming and my good wishes for a useful, illuminating and highly successful conference.

ICKL 1999

by

Ann Hutchinson Guest, President of ICKL

We are all indebted to Lisa Ullmann who, after Laban's death in 1958, realised the need for leading practitioners of the notation system he initiated to come together. After its initial success in the early 1930's, Laban generously "gave the system to the world". At that time there did not seem to be a need for a central organisation. In Germany Albrecht Knust headed his Tanzschrift Stube, Sigurd Leeder had been the leading exponent of England at the Jooss-Leeder School, and in the USA the Dance Notation Bureau provided the centre for the use and development of the system. The first meeting in 1959 was by invitation. In 1961 ICKL was officially formed by the four core members to whom Laban had entrusted the responsibility of guarding the system and overseeing its further development. These were Albrecht Knust, Sigurd Leeder, Lisa Ullmann and Ann Hutchinson. Jacqueline Challet was at that first meeting and has been present at almost all of the subsequent biennial conferences. Irmgard Bartenieff represented the New York Bureau, Maria Szentpal and Emma Lugossy came from Hungary, also present amongst European participants were Albrecht Knust and Ingeborg Baier from Germany, Diana Baddeley and June Kemp from England, Minerva Jonsdottir from Iceland and Vera Maletic from Yugoslavia. Valerie Preston was already a leading figure in use of the system in England.

Membership was by invitation only. The group was small and the focus was on working through the differences that had developed in the system, largely because of the isolation caused by the war. Thus focus was on technical matters and this remained so for the early conferences, papers being presented, the content discussed and the voting for or against the proposal being established. At the conference in Herisau, Ray Cook, well known for his practical use of notation, presented a session on how to interpret a score. This was the first such sharing of the process of interpreting the notation. Gradually as membership grew and a transition was made from the smaller circle of invited people to ICKL being open to all who were interested, the desire for different kinds of practical sessions grew.

I remember the session in which we read Knust's notation of handling conical-shaped '*Chinese*' hats. Another where complex hand and finger movements were written on the blackboard and everyone set to working it out, everyone except Maria Szentpal, she just sat looking a bit bored. "Aren't you going to have a try?" I asked. "I've done it already", she said and, raising her hands, quickly demonstrated the whole thing. She was in many ways the most expert of us all. When visiting me in London, she would take down a volume of a notated score and use that as her bedtime reading. Knust in turn always

amazed us for, when a problem appeared, he would show how it could be viewed differently and solved in a particular way.

The number of differences in usage at the beginning, large and small, were nearly 80. It is a credit to everyone that this number was greatly reduced by the time new textbooks were being written between 1969 and 1979. For Knust, who had produced that incredible eight-volume encyclopaedia on the system, in which rules dovetailed and all followed a basic logic, it must have been a difficult transition to make in recognising that different forms of dance demanded different solutions and that his work needed to expand to take in new developments. It is a measure of the man that he was open to this. In his 1956 books he included examples of the Labanotation way.

Looking back at the many ICKL conferences that have taken place, one remembers each one very much where it was held as well as the people who attended. The first three conferences were held in England, but that of 1965 was held in Essen-Werden and in 1969 we met in Holland. The location depended largely on where there were facilities and where there was a dedicated member who would undertake the responsibilities of organising such an event. After eleven conferences had been held in Europe, our USA members requested the location in the States. To 'even things up' the next two conferences were in the States, to be followed by a change of venue across the Atlantic each time.

And now, after the big departure of having had the last conference in Hong Kong to provide the opportunity for our Asian colleagues, we are here in Barcelona, a particularly interesting venue, thanks to the Institut del Teatre, and beginning a Conference with many interesting sessions planned. When Knust opened an ICKL conference he always said, "We are here to give, to learn from each other. Changes in the system and its use will come through persuasion, through mutual understanding. We welcome this opportunity to make new friends and to meet again our many colleagues."