

**NOTATING SUSAN VAN PELT'S WARMUP SEQUENCE WITH YOGA:
RECORDING THE DANCER'S OUTER SHAPE AND INNER MOVEMENT**

ABSTRACT (FULL PAPER IN THE PROCEEDINGS)

by

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In the Spring of 1997, I notated Susan Van Pelt's Yoga Warmup, comprising a series of Yoga poses alternating with swinging dance movements designed to get the dancer ready to move. At the time, Susan Van Pelt was a visiting faculty member of the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University and her Yoga sequence was very popular.

In Labanotation and Kinetography Laban, we usually notate observable movement. Notated actions can be nuanced through the addition of dynamic indications, phrasing bows, use of breath, and signs that show when a movement is passive, or led by, or includes another body part. These nuances give color and shading to the action. At previous ICKL conferences we have discussed various means to incorporate the intent of a movement, whether through the choice of notation paradigm (Rob Van Haarst, ICKL 1989), or the use of an intention bow (Maria Szentpál, ICKL 1985) to show a teaching instruction, stylistic feature or choreographic image. Many notation scores include word notes about motivation, inner attitude or imagery.

In notating Susan Van Pelt's Yoga Warmup, I faced a different challenge. Although the Yoga poses are essentially held positions, the outer shape of the body is not the heart of the action. Within each pose the dancer is working on a number of dynamic lines of movement that deepen and extend the position throughout the time that it is maintained. I needed to be able to record the dancer's internal work, the essential part of the warmup that came from Van Pelt's instructions but was not readily observable.

My solution was to use Motif Writing alongside the score to show the details and awareness of the dancer through both the moving (dance warmup) and held (yoga) phrases. Through Motif, I was able to incorporate in physical (notated) terms such instructions as "feel the hamstrings pulling back as the tailbone presses forward and the kneecaps lift toward the sitbones" (Van Pelt, OSU 1997).

Van Pelt began each class with a detailed preparation for and examination of the body work in each of the Yoga poses. The accompanying notation of Tadasana ("mountain pose") demonstrates my use of Motif writing to show the preparation and lines of movement within each of the poses. The paper will discuss my choices for translating the dancer's outer shape and inner movement into notation.