

## **MOTIF NOTATION SESSION**

**led by**

**Ann Kipling Brown, Ph.D.**

The session began with a panel presentation that provided an overview of various activities in Motif Notation. The presenters were Ann Hutchinson Guest who provided a brief history of the development of Motif Notation, followed by three practitioners in the Language of Dance, Valerie Farrant, Patty Harrington Delaney and Tina Curran, who described examples of the work in both the UK and USA. Odette Blum and Lucy Venable outlined the courses and workshops offered at The Ohio State University and Ann Kipling Brown summarized activities at the University of Regina, Canada. A practical session followed led by Tina Curran and Lucy Venable. The panel then responded to questions from the participants.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTIF WRITING

by

**Ann Hutchinson Guest**

My first use of what later became called Motif Writing, Motif Notation, or Motif Description, was in 1959 when I was teaching 6 year old children at the 92nd Street Y.M.H.A. in New York. Before I introduced them to my first children's book "Primer for Dance, Book I", published in 1958, I explored the basic directions, putting the symbols on the board. I explored turning, again writing up the symbols after they had the movement experience. And so on for the first three weeks. When each child was given her own copy of the book, much was already familiar to them. I was told that the children read the book on the way home and also when they went to bed. The fathers were interested in the notation and pleased to see that dancing was not just airy-fairy. When I came to write "Primer for Dance Book III, I realized the structured notation was not appropriate to children this age, they wanted to move fully and explore movement, what they could read in notation was too confining. A new approach was needed.

At the 1961 ICKL conference I mentioned my need to use the symbols out of context, separate from the Labanotation staff. Out of context? What could that possibly mean? I did not find a way to explain what I wanted to my colleagues who were all deeply grounded in the structured notation. The need for such use of the symbols arose of Valerie Preston when teaching Laban's Educational Dance to physical education teachers who found the symbols of immediate value. It was one of these teachers who suggested the very appropriate name, Motif Writing. This success led to Valerie's development of the usage, and to the subsequent publication in 1967 of her books on the subject entitled "Readers in Kinetography Laban, Series B, Motif Writing for Dance.

When these books became available, this simpler way of writing movement types and concepts was welcomed by Labanotation teachers in the USA. At first there seemed little need for any specific rules regarding usage. Later differences were encountered which led to meetings to share ideas and understandings. The most recent development in codifying Motif Writing is the forthcoming book by Charlotte Wile, a notator living in New York. She uses Motif with children and has been gathering as much information as possible from various sources to provide a complete reference for the future.

During the 60s I developed the idea of the Language of Dance™ Alphabet, the result of considerable research into the most logical list of basic, root actions. How did this come about? During my Cecchetti ballet studies I had met the list of *Seven Basic Movements in Dancing*. Only seven? In this list I found duplications and omissions. Where was the

definitive list? Laban's list of basic actions was incomplete and questionable. I researched other authorities, other sources. I also made a card for each of the Labanotation symbols, separating them by colour into nouns, verbs and adverbs. From all this emerged the Language of Dance Alphabet and the Language of Dance Family Tree.

In 1971 I was invited to teach movement analysis at the Teacher Training College of the Royal Academy of Dancing. After the basic movement exploration, I introduced the Motif symbols and used them as a tool in creative use of the material being explored. As no suitable textbook existed, for two years I prepared sheets each week to hand to the students. At this time I contacted Valerie Preston-Dunlop to see if she was interested in the further development of Motif Writing. Her interests and activities had gone into a different direction and she declined being involved in any way. The textbook entitled "YOUR MOVE - A New Approach to the Study of Movement and Dance", which grew out of the masses of sheets, was published in 1983. Since then there has continued to be developments and refinements in Motif description, several of these stemming from the need for generic signs, the 'any' signs, for example 'any form of flexion' and 'any degree of flexion', 'any form' or 'any degree of extension', and so on. These needs were a direct departure from the familiar structured forms of our notation for which specific statements had always been required.

Using Motif as a way to introduce students to labanotation, the structured form, has been developed in different centres, most notably at The Ohio State University by Lucy Venable and Odette Blum, as well as Ann Kipling Brown now at the University of Regina in Canada. Other teachers have used Motif symbols in an educational approach in teaching Language of Dance™ to young children as well as to older students for whom the movement exploration and the creative use of material provide a heightened awareness of movement and a valuable introduction to movement composition.

## **THE WORK OF THE LANGUAGE OF DANCE CENTRE, UK**

**by**

**Valerie Farrant**

Language of Dance specialists work across the education sector from nursery through to university level. We give workshops, lecture demonstrations, school residencies and in-service training for teachers. My two colleagues, Inez Morse and Jane Dulieu, have been targeting schools in East Sussex and London. Inez has, so far, taught two thousand children and it is her aim to visit every school in East Sussex, to raise awareness of the existence of the Language of Dance approach and how simply motif notation can be used on teaching. As well as her extensive work in schools, in the London area, Jane Dulieu set up, with Heidi Wiess, a distance learning programme called "Dance Across the Pond". This project has united children, from the UK and the USA, who have been endeavouring to broaden their dance-making experiences and skills from teacher-led and student-led choreography.

To support the work in schools we have developed and integrated teaching and learning materials including the Starbies Books, flashcards and teaching packs, such as "A Flash in the Dark", "Animal Magic" and "Time Zone". We also offer our own training programme. This is open to anyone over sixteen, with an interest in dance and this year we are running our first Summer School which is being hosted by Roehampton Institute.

At Brockenhurst College, I teach Dance 'A' Level students aged between 16 and 19 years. Their course includes technique, choreography, dance history, anatomy and Labanotation. Three years ago I introduced the Language of Dance certification course as I felt it would help to improve the students' choreographic and analytical skills. You will have gathered that the students are learning structured notation at the same time as motif description. The course runs for an hour a week over two years and covers the Language of Dance movement alphabet. Lessons include movement exploration, reading studies and the opportunity for students to notate their own choreography. (overhead - study notated by a student who recently completed the course).

In September, Performing Arts students will also be offered the Language of Dance Course. The majority of these students are likely to be non-dancers so will benefit from an approach which suits all ages and abilities. We are expecting sixty-five students to be studying Language of Dance in the coming year.

Over the past three years, I have discovered that working creatively with the symbols seems to give the students a better understanding of structural notation. The framework established by the language of Dance approach allows students to explore movement ideas with confidences and also to produce some good choreography. It can be very interesting to watch two students performing the same study simultaneously. The general flow of the movement will be the same but their individual interpretations allow for subtle differences which can create some exciting moments.

If you have not already used this approach as part of your teaching. I would urge you do so, in order that your students may fully benefit from their study of notation.

# **MOTIF DESCRIPTION AS A TOOL FOR THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION AND LABANOTATION**

by

**Patty Harrington Delaney**

In the dance division at Southern Methodist University (SMU), we teach notation and composition together, giving the students more tools to develop their acumen in composition. Notation, specifically Motif Description provides the beginning composition students with the ability to explore movement concepts and empirical examples simultaneously. Through this correlation of composition and notation, we have established three distinct ways in which Motif Description aids in the development of skills not only in composition, but also in Labanotation. First, Motif serves as a guide in the establishment of a movement vocabulary that can be used to conduct effective movement experimentation. Secondly, it establishes a basic understanding of both symbol vocabulary and theoretical knowledge used in Labanotation. And, thirdly, Motif Description provides a means for the students to structure and express their interpretation of other art forms.

In the spring semester of their first year, undergraduate dance majors are introduced to Motif Description in the musical concepts class, a course that includes instruction in basic music theory. Movement and Motif Description are used to aid the students in developing an understanding of time signatures and the value of rests and notes. Let me explain how this is achieved.

Once the music instructor has introduced the students to the concept of the time signature and corresponding note values, they are instructed in the use of Motif Description as a tool for rhythmic analysis. We begin the Motif instruction with a lesson in action and stillness. These movement concepts are explored through improvisation, introduction to the symbols and the staff and, finally, a Motif reading.

Next, the students are presented with several measures of music notation and are instructed to create movement that exactly reflects the notation. The students accomplish this by choreographing one action that reflects the timing of each note, and one pause that reflects the timing of each rest. Once the movement has been developed, we notate the action strokes and pauses on a Motif staff that has measure lines and tick marks. Action strokes are carefully written, alternating sides of the staff, in order to keep the time demarcations on the staff clearly visible. The exercise is repeated using different time signatures and rhythms, which become progressively more intricate.

The following semester when the students from the musical concepts class study elementary Labanotation, the previously described exercise is revisited using structured notation. The dancers choreograph and notate supports that correspond to given measures of music.

This method of relating dance and music notation has proven very effective, particularly in the understanding of dotted rhythms. The following example is an illustration of a 4/4 rhythm expressed in Motif Description.

As this group of dance majors moves into their sophomore year, they are enrolled simultaneously in elementary Labanotation and composition. I am the instructor for both of these classes. This arrangement enables us to develop curriculum that creates an immediate relationship between the study of composition and the study of notation. We begin the semester by focussing on the development of a movement vocabulary that can be effectively used for movement experimentation. This vocabulary is based in the basic movement families of flexion and extension, rotation, jumping, travelling and falling. In the composition class, each movement family is explored through improvisation, discussion and creative assignments. Then, in Labanotation class, the students learn the theory necessary to capture the movement using Motif Description. I will use lessons based on flexion and extension to demonstrate this method.

In composition class, the students explore the concept of getting larger and smaller with the whole body and its individual parts through improvisation. The distinct forms of flexion and extension, contraction and extension, folding and unfolding and three-dimensional contraction and extension, are introduced during the improvisation. The discussion following the improvisation includes the introduction to the symbols for these forms; however, no theoretical instruction in their use is given. The students are then asked to create a duet study based on four shapes that incorporate forms of flexion and extension. The studies are presented in groups, and the students are instructed to remember the m

The following day in the Labanotation class, the symbols of flexion and extension are reviewed and the theory of their use is taught. A reading dictation are given to reinforce the theory. The final component of this process is for the students to notate their composition study from the previous day. They will continue to refine the choreography and the notation of this study for the next two classes.

The process that I have just described is repeated in a similar fashion for each movement family.

By the fourth week of the semester, the Labanotation class progresses to structured notation. The Motif work has provided them with a symbol vocabulary as well as basic theoretical information, both of which help them to make the transition from Motif to structured notation smoothly. In the composition class, we continue to use notation symbols and Motif Description to further develop skills in movement experimentation. One example of this would be the introduction of relationship bows as a method for clarifying the possibilities of relating to people, objects and even points in space.

The final assignment in the composition class is to develop a movement study based on a work of modern art. In preparation for this assignment, the class visits the Dallas Museum of Art with the chair of SMU Art Division, Jay Sullivan. Jay discusses several works of modern art with the students including sculpture, painting and installation art. In his discussions, which utilize concepts of visual art such as color, texture and design, he and I collaborate on incorporating Motif terminology into the discussion. Our goal is for the students to develop confidence in their ability as movement artists to engage in creative dialogue with another art form.

Following the session with Jay, the students research sources such as museums, art books and the Internet in order to find a work of art that will form the basis for their movement study. The exposure to Motif Description has given them a vocabulary of movement ideas that they can readily access both kinetically and intellectually. This vocabulary enables them to form a basis for structuring their perception of a work of art and also to bring that perception to life through informed movement experimentation.

Motif Description has become an integral component of our curriculum at SMU. Faculty members continually collaborate on further integrating notation into courses on both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Note: The two year degree plan for the graduate students includes four semesters of notation, one of which is devoted to Motif description. Notation is incorporated into all areas of their description.

# LANGUAGE OF DANCE IN USA

by

**Tina Curran**

As a student in dance at the Julliard School in New York City, the value of movement literacy was instilled as an active and creative component of the dance performance experience. A special project to reconstruct Vaslav Nijinsky's *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* from the Labanotation score, placed the students in the role of co-reconstructors, each dancer reading their own part from the score to learn the choreography, with the guidance of the dance director to monitor and steer the process. The spirit of Nijinsky's work emerged through the unfolding of his choreography, the choreography recorded from his own hand and translated into Labanotation by Dr. Ann Hutchinson Guest. As a newly literate dancer, it was a revelatory process to learn that a world of written dance masterworks was accessible for both study and performance.

As a result of this experience, it became apparent that the potential impact of widespread literacy in the dance field could measurable impact the way dancers learn, think, create, rehearse and perform. The question was how to incorporate dance literacy as a creative and integrative component of dance from an earlier stage of training, before a student reached the college level. My inquiry eventually broadened to include the query, how could any student be provided with a creative and meaningful dance experience incorporating movement literacy and empowering students to create, read and write dances? I found the accessibility of Motif Notation within the framework of the Language of Dance to be the solution.

The activities of the Language of Dance Center in the United States are currently focused on education and advocacy. The areas impacted include primary education, professional dance training, post-secondary education and professional development. Three areas of activity will be presented from three different regions of the United States.

What is Language of Dance?

Created by Ann Hutchinson Guest, the Language of Dance is an approach to dance-making and movement education that explores the universal elements of dance through creative movement exploration supported by a written language of symbols - Motif Notation. This framework provides a progression of learning from the most basic elements of the Movement Alphabet to the more subtle complexities of dance, leading one to the threshold of Labanotation in theory and symbology.

The activities of the Language of Dance Centre in the United States have to date primarily focused on education and advocacy for dance literacy as an integral component of dance education and practice. This has included primary education, professional dance training, post-secondary education and professional certification in Language of Dance (LOD). Four specific applications will be highlighted to demonstrate LOD activities in each of these areas.

#### Connecticut

Certified LOD specialist, Heidi Weiss, has taught LOD in primary schools in the state of Connecticut where the National Standards in Arts Education are mirrored in the Connecticut Arts Curriculum Frameworks. Weiss has created LOD units of study for elementary school children, which are sequential, developmentally appropriate and support the primary education curriculum of Connecticut school districts. Weiss has used dance and motif notation to tie academic and artistic study, integrating language arts, math and science. The sequential, long-term residencies have taken place during the past three academic school years. Students from ages six to nine have demonstrated their accumulated knowledge of dance-making, which includes reading, writing, dance-making, analyzing and interpreting dance concepts. Weiss states, "While educational goals vary from country to country, the natural tendencies of children remain constant. They come to us with their own dance. Language of Dance is an accessible tool, which empowers children to create and appreciate dance while connecting skills to make dance a meaningful part of their lives".

#### Dallas

In Dallas, Texas, Tina Curran has experimented with integrating motif notation as a component of the modern dance technique class for non-dance majors at Southern Methodist University. The approach for this class was based on the premise that it would offer a point of entry to learn about dance both kinaesthetically and intellectually with each student beginning at their own level of ability. The class of students ranged between the ages of 19-22 with a wide variety of dance experience and training. The course framework was organized to present themes in three class units. Two classes presented modern dance technique planned around a key concept or focus. A Language of Dance class followed these where students were guided to explore more freely the movement concepts through creative movement and improvisation. Students learned the appropriate motif symbols representing the ideas explored and used these to create and write their own dances.

It was demonstrated at the end of the semester that the dancers were able to demonstrate and talk about dance at an informed and knowledgeable level higher than they began the semester. Andrew, a major theatre major and beginning dance student shared his personal insight at the end of the course, "I can now look at dance in a more concrete way. Since dance is so abstract, there isn't very much you can directly put a finger on. But the

Language of Dance gives me the base vocabulary to describe what I see performed. I can react in an intellectual way, not just an emotional way. And since we explored these movements first-hand in class, I know that what they feel like, as well as what they look like”.

#### California

Research is being done in California by Edward Warburton who is working on his dissertation studying the effects of notation-use on thinking and cognitive development in dance. His study uses the symbol systems approach developed by his doctoral adviser, Howard Gardner to Harvard Project Zero.

In this study, Warburton is interested in the role of symbols in thought formation. Does notation use affect dance cognition in children eight to nine years of age and how does this in turn affect the development of young children’s understanding in dance? The general hypothesis of Warburton’s research program is that access to a notational system facilitates the development of knowledge of dance. If the students’ understanding in dance improve with the aid of movement notation, then traditional dance educators may have to reconsider the importance of notation-use in dance pedagogy. Warburton’s study also has the potential to contribute to the larger discussion of what constitutes literacy. This knowledge may be useful to teachers, administrators and policymakers interested in the development of different ways of knowing.

These are three distinct areas investigating the impact of movement literacy on learning and the process of cultivating literate dancers and dance audiences. Professional development and certification in the Language of Dance is offered on a on-going basis to also impact teaching and to expand the community of practitioners utilizing motif notation as a tool to explore, discover, understand, create, record and read dance. Language of Dance is only one approach to cultivate and nurture evolutionary change in how dance is perceived and practised. The benefit is multi-dimensional for both the dance field and in the environment of general education.

# NOTATION AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

by

**Odette Blum**

The Laban Studies area in the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University consists of courses at all levels of labanotation, Effort, Space, Directing from Score, a Graduate Seminar in Choreographic Studies (offered when there is a demand) and the Labanotation Teacher Certificate Course, an intensive three week course offered in June every year. In addition there has been an annual Summer Workshop in Motif Notation taught by Lucy Venable. In recent years this workshop has been co-taught by Ann Kipling Brown, Lucy Venable and Loren Bucek. Loren has been a dance specialist in the Columbus Public Schools where Motif is included in the dance curriculum.

The required one year notation sequence for undergraduate students consists of two one and one half hour classes per week. In the third quarter they have a choice between continuing the Labanotation or taking Effort or Space. The graduate students have three classes per week and are required to take one quarter (ten weeks classes and an additional week for exams).

Starting in 1979 Motif Notation has been used as an introduction to Labanotation. The undergraduates have it for one quarter while the graduates have five to six weeks of Motif Notation and four to five weeks of Labanotation. The form of the Motif Notation lass is similar to that of the Labanotation class:

1. Movement exploration of the concept being introduced in order to gain a clear understanding of the concept and its possibilities.
2. Introduction to the symbols representing the idea through brief Motif readings to which the students create their own movement solutions.
3. As homework (or perhaps in class) creating a study combining the newly learned element with perhaps two to three previously learned. Then to notate it and perform it for the class. The class provides feedback as to the accuracy of the performance in relation to the score.

Motif as a preparation for Labanotation provides as overview of the elements of Body, Space, Time/Rhythm, Dynamics and Relationships with their corresponding symbols.

The students come to he structured notation with an understanding of the basic concepts of the system and then can move quickly and easily into reading simple dances having the kind of detail that cannot be given when teaching a standard Elementary course without Motif preparation. As an example, the Berk/Venable "Ten Folk Dances" provides verbal

explanations for contacts, grasps, arm positions such as Varsoviennne, etc. I add these in notation since they are familiar with those symbols. This provides greater interest especially for the more advance dancer. In the course of creating many studies students discover their movement preferences and can be encouraged to broaden their range by trying other solutions. In the study of scores it is necessary to be able to identify the main “idea” or Motif of a choreographic phrase or sections. The student who has studies Motif is able to put this knowledge to use when scanning dances as preparation for reading/performing.

Most of the graduate students do not continue with the study of Labanotation, they have other goals in mind. However, almost without exception, I have found that the students’ evaluations of the Motif courses to be very positive even from those who had encountered negative experiences in their previous study of notation and who had been very reluctant to take the course. They find that Motif Notation has provided them with a useful tool for all their dance studies because they have learned an organizational framework, including a vocabulary, that enables them to think concretely about movement and can therefore articulate their thinking with clarity. A crucial factor in this positive response is that the “core” notation studies is always “dancing”. A notation class, whether in Motif Notation or Labanotation, is always a dance class.

## **MOTIF NOTATION SUMMER WORKSHOP**

**by**

**Lucy Venable**

In New York City in the summer of 1993 a Labanotation and Motif Notation Day was sponsored by Teachers College at Columbia University and the Dance Notation Bureau. At dinner that night, sparked by the presentation given, Loren Bucek, Ann Kipling Brown, and I began planning a Motif Notation workshop for the following summer. It developed into a five day plan and was hosted by Loren Bucek at Teachers College. In 1995, '97, '98 and '99 it was offered at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio and in 1996 we were hosted by the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada, where Ann teaches. I gave a one person version of this workshop last summer in Taiwan assisted by RaYuan Tsang who had arranged it.

Each year we have learned as much as the students. We have experienced real team teaching. Loren brings her background of eight years teaching dance in a public school (Kindergarten through 5th grade) experience in curriculum development for dance education, and training teachers at Teachers College. She has notation in her background and a strong interest in embedding Motif Notation in dance education. Both have worked extensively with children. My role has been slanted more toward the notation, how it can be useful in teaching dance and the use of the LabanWriter as an aid for teachers and students.

This past year articles which each of us had written about the use of Motif Notation were published in the American Journal of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (August & September, 1998). A fourth article by Ann Dils, professor of dance the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, introduced the whole idea of capturing dance on paper. She described various notations used by contemporary choreographers illustrating that the need to record dance is very present today. Ann is particularly interested in cultural/social/historical perspectives in dance. She joined our workshop this summer for two and a half days and added a new dimension to our "team". With her we viewed tapes of Croatian group dance, a Korean solo and Maoris performing during a recent opening ceremony in New Zealand. First we noted the main movement elements, which we could later move through as an aid to kinaesthetically experiencing the dances. Then Ann gave us information that one cannot see on the tape -- who the people performing are, the situation in which the dance was recorded, the meaning of dance in that particular culture, and the history of the dances. The additional information added more meaning to our movement observations and broadened our discussion. This experience pointed out the benefits of and need for more on-the-scene collaboration

between people specializing in the different areas of dance. For example, to teach effectively the meaning of multiculturalism in dance, we as teachers are going to have to broaden our knowledge of dance. We agreed that adding more experience in the cultural, social and historical area was a good and new development for our workshop.

Recently, in the United States, national Standards for Dance, as well as the other arts, have been adopted for the first time. In trying to fulfil these standards, the usefulness of Motif Notation in experiencing, viewing, discussing and assessing dance COULD emerge for a wider public to see. Many of us here today understand how exciting and beneficial to dance that would be. May we continue to introduce more and more children, parents and dance educators to written dance and all that it can and does mean.

## **MOTIF NOTATION IN POST-SECONDARY EXPERIENCES**

**by**

**Ann Kipling Brown**

My experiences with Motif Writing began in 1970 at the Art of Movement Studio in Surrey, England. In the supplementary certificate course that I was following one class was designated to the study of the symbology and principles of Motif Writing. We read and reconstructed the studies and dances that are to be found in Valerie Preston-Dunlop's texts. Additionally, students were encouraged to use the Motif Writing to record the ideas and movement selections of their own studies and dances. I found myself applying the system in many other contexts, particularly in remembering material from other classes and jotting down ideas for my own teaching. This influence was to stay with me in future studies and teaching.

# **MOTIF NOTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF REGINA, CANADA**

**by**

**Ann Kipling Brown**

I work in the Arts Education Program in a Faculty of Education where the focus is on the professional development and training of emerging teachers. Motif Notation has a significant place in the dance curriculum. Even though I was convinced that Motif Notation should be included in any dance curriculum for any age group and in different contexts the implementation of the system in the program was not straightforward. When I joined the faculty in 1989 my role was twofold: firstly, to construct a series of dance education courses that all Arts Education students would experience; and, secondly to develop specific courses that dance majors and minors would follow.

In the first instance it seemed relatively easy to develop a curriculum where the Arts Education students would have experiences where they developed their understanding of movement concepts, the principles of dance-making and the role of dance in education. A little about these students may help to set the context for my further comments. The Arts Education Program involves students following a five year program at the end of which they may earn two degrees, a B.Ed. and B.A., and also students who are following an after-degree. The students pursue general courses, a series of aesthetic education courses, practicum experiences and courses in teaching and pedagogy. All students take courses in the five arts areas: dance, drama, literature, music and visual art, and then select to major and minor in two of these arts areas.

I encountered several problems as I designed the introductory dance courses, and specifically those that would include Motif Notation, that all Arts Education students would take. Firstly, there would be only three courses in dance that all students would take. Thus there would be very little time to prepare these students for teaching dance in the various contexts they may find themselves. Secondly, the Arts Education students had varied experiences in dance. A group often contains students who have trained for many years in a particular dance genre together with students who have not had any training whatsoever. Also there is a range of attitudes to dance that may or may not be overcome in this short time. Thirdly, the most appropriate dance content for these students needed to be carefully considered. What areas of dance would best prepare the Arts Educator who does not specialise in dance. Would it be possible to provide a comprehensive and sound basis for these students? Fourthly, the consideration of where the Motif Notation could be most effectively embedded in the three dance courses needed to be made.

After many experiments in each of the three courses we have found that Motif Notation can be used in several instances: in the exploration of movement concepts leading to improvisation and dance tasks; in the creation of dance tasks and dances; and in the conception and implementation of experiences for children.

In the development of courses for the dance majors and minors it became evident that it was important to provide time and course credit for the study and application of the notation system. They have already had the introduction to Motif Notation that is part of the first three courses in the degree program. It was decided that a separate course in Motif Notation, its role and applications would be needed. Thus the designed course considers the role of symbology in expressing ideas and thoughts and in particular how young students create their own symbologies and come to know those of the culture in which they live. The particular role of movement notation systems, specifically in dance, is highlighted. Also the different ways that a movement notation is applied in the dance profession are considered. The majority of the time in the course is given to the study of the significance of the system in dance education. The faculty and dance students design and execute projects that include the use of Motif Notation in dance experiences for young children .

The specific function of Motif Notation is regarded in relation to the various areas considered important in dance education, such as the exploration of movement concepts, the appreciation of dance genres and forms, the compositional process and the choreographies of different artists are regarded. At all times there is consideration of the application of the dance areas and the related Motif Notation experiences to the various teaching contexts that an Arts Education student may work.

The identification of the role of notation in both the general courses for Arts Education students and the specific courses for the dance major and minor dance students has provided some credibility for both dance and notation in the university community. The students recognize the value in notation for themselves both as students and as teachers and the university administration have conceded that there is at least one way to identify the body of knowledge that is dance. There is always a long way to go. I continue to experiment with the best way to include Motif Notation in the dance experiences for both the university and school students. And, of course, I continue to explain the role of dance in our children's lives and the specific function of Motif Notation in that dance experience.

## **PRACTICAL SESSION**

A practical session, led by Tina Curran and Lucy Venable, followed involving the participants in movement exploration and dance-making.

Introduction and Warm-up through the Movement Alphabet.

Participants guided through a creative movement warm-up exploring the various concepts in the Movement Alphabet.

Movement Exploration.

Movement exploration of the concepts of travelling, flexion, extension and rotation was guided through the imagery of the various qualities and states of 'water'.

Introduction of symbols.

Symbols for each of the above concepts were introduced.

(Resource for images of water and use for curricular tie-in: water Dance by Thomas Loker. Harcourt Brace and Company, 1997. ISBN: 0-15-201284-2)

Dance: The participants read and danced the Movement Study #6, adapted from Your Move by Ann Hutchinson Guest, United Kingdom: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1995