

DANCE NOTATION and CHOREOGRAPHY

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What is performance ? A pianist plays the piano according to the music score, but she is not mechanically producing sounds but she has her own "sense" of her playing. Perhaps it shares something with dynamical units formed through visual experience and perhaps it is formed by the understanding of the human body and the universe. It is seemed to me, the same with a dancer.

In other words, music contains in itself a certain structure performing to human nature and human experience. A dancer, who is dancing accompanied with music, shares the same experience directly in her own body. Ideally human body corresponds to the musical world in deeper structure, but usually we are not conscious of that fact and move spontaneously, following current feelings or intuition. Actually what is called feelings and intuitions has many layers, both in abstract and concrete realms of experience.

In this session I would like to show what we, pianists and dancers, share in our performance. Then I would like to try to point out what it is shared and find out certain connection between music score and dance notation. Hopefully somethings in common will gradually emerge in our effort and some suggestion of the structure of appearance.

Our movement seems to pertain to certain assumption or hypothesis, on biological or sociological levels, and this assumption naturally had changed as human knowledge and history developed. Then the question, can we find any universal rule in forming these assumptions ?

Those thought in mind, my presentation consists of following five parts, including performances of piano and dance.

1. Four Elements ; piano Fumiko Takahashi

We human beings are part of Nature. But we try to reflect and represent nature in ourselves. In philosophical words, we try to change our status of "ansich" to "fursich" and then to "an und fur sich" through art, especially in performing arts. It seems that it is a part of our human nature that we try to stand in opposition to Nature and see Nature as object though we are ourselves nature and we are in nature.

2. Tone and Tone maker

There is something special about the relationship between pianist and the piano gives us a direct tactile impact on the surface of our body and make our bone and muscles. Thus for the pianist the sound that she has made from within and travelled through her fingers, "return" from outside as something that affects her hearing.

The pianist playing the piano may be described in two ways: She is to diminish her own body so that the music may live; she plays as if automatically from her deeper spiritual imagination and she feels her own movement in a distance place. Another story goes that her living body enter into the music mainly through her respiration and then during her performance her living body becomes centre. In either case she feels the piano as part of her body which moving through her fingers.

3. Seeing the Tone in Invisible Canvas; What we share in time

We shall deal with the fundamental "units" of music such as legato and staccato, major and minor, interval, and mode, etc.

We shall ask, then, whether there is some "common sense" or kinesthetics, which may connect we can hear and what we can see. That could be, for example related to dynamic element (rhythm, Development, Growth, relaxation, etc.) as S. K. Langer had explained as the main categories of life. Further, we shall ask whether we can find in this structure of appearance certain relationship between man and universe, the relationship may be found in and through nature or some hidden system. When we use the term nature perhaps we have already made some fundamental assumption.

4. Space and Space maker ; dance Harumi Kimura

Next we shall deal with imaginative space and visible space. I shall try to make a space through my own body, using the assumption and the natural rules already operating in our life. The relationship of my body and space may be compared to that of spider and spider's web. However, various bodily forms in the dance history suggest some fundamental rules working in order to make the movement units as well as its choreological mode. It seems to me that the movement has been defined and developed by some specific interpretation of the universe and of the man at specific time. Those interpretation is defined by human body shape with its anatomical restrictions and by the vague but rich cultural meanings given to it. Here we stand at the point can not be called either physical or mental. The situation we arrived may be described as Post modern, and post Faustian as Maxine Sheets-Johnstone.

5. Precondition of the Notation for Performing Art

When we think about the appearance of work of art which is formed by man and event, we realize that the score is, after all, the written record of experience which is individual and very personal. But that is to be found out only while reading, and not something that serves as a precondition of reading.