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PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES OF CHOREOGRAPHY: A STUDY OF FIVE  
CHOREOGRAPHIES FROM 1983

*City University of New York*

PH.D. 1985

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**PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES OF CHOREOGRAPHY:**

**A STUDY OF FIVE CHOREOGRAPHIES FROM 1983**

**by**

**JILL BECK**

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate  
Faculty in Theatre in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City  
University of New York**

**1985**

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This manuscript has been read and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in Theatre in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Introduction

The study of choreography is a new field of inquiry. Historically, study in this area has been impeded by the difficulty in separating choreography from the performance of choreography, and by the ephemeral nature of dance performance which has made detailed, repeatable analysis of the structure of dances difficult. Two relatively new forms of dance documentation, Labanotation (movement recording) and video, make the field of choreographic analysis feasible.

The new forms of documentation alter the focus of the dance analyst, which has historically centered on fleeting impressions of performances of choreography. Labanotation scores allow the analyst to look at choreography directly. By eliminating the individual interpretations of artists who perform the dances, the scores preserve the choreographers' ideal dances, unembellished and undiminished. By capturing choreography on the written page, they enable analysts to study movement design apart from its normal temporal flow, to compare sections of a work, to conceptualize both the general framework and the subtle nuances of a dance.

Videotapes, audiotapes, interviews and written materials on the creation and the rehearsals of dances allow the analyst to examine the process of constructing choreography. Video documentation of different choreographers' approaches to the composing process records the motivation for and the intent of their work as well as the results achieved by performers.

The study of choreography through Labanotation scores and through the composition process preserved on videotape adds a new research tool with which to study dance criticism and history. The aim of choreographic analysis is the understanding of **principles** and **techniques** of choreography. Principles of choreography are the choreographers' basic ideas and viewpoints on the art. Techniques of choreography are the choreographers' applications of these ideas. For example, one of Anna Sokolow's principles is that choreographers must make instructive social comment. One of her techniques for accomplishing this is to use a great deal of gestural movement, which is highly communicative. Because the new media make it possible to isolate these two aspects of the choreographer's contribution to performance art from those of the performing artists, there can now be distinct areas of study in choreography and dance performance. Performance review is the traditional domain of the dance critic. This dissertation establishes a precedent for research in choreography, centering on the discovery of principles and techniques in the field.

In other performance arts, the distinction between performance review and study of the actual work in performance is well established. In the field of music, among other things, critics review performances by musicians and conductors, and scholars and theoreticians analyze the achievements of composers from music scores. In theatre, critics review performances by actors and approaches to plays by directors, and scholars analyze the dramatic structure,

the points of view and technical devices of playwrights from scripts. It is because records of dance are skimpy that historical and critical research have been limited.

In Part I of this dissertation, five choreographies created in 1983 will be presented and analyzed. Both Labananotation and video documentation, in addition to interviews and audiotaped materials, will be incorporated into this study, which will be in effect a demonstration of the new verifiable research into choreography. The five analyses will illustrate ways and the extent to which Labanotation score reading can reveal techniques of choreography, and the nature of the insights into principles of choreography afforded by videotaped records of the creative process of a dance work.

The five choreographers and their works in this study are: Anna Sokolow, Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives; Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?; Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch; Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill; Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone. Several factors dictated the choice of these choreographers, foremost being the range of dance styles and approaches to choreography they represent.

Anna Sokolow is a first-generation modern dance choreographer with a profound belief in dance as social comment and in the responsibility of the choreographer to illuminate aspects of life to audiences. Rachel Lampert is a young choreographer who works with dialogue, silence, sound and music as accompaniment to her dance. She uses the post-

modern techniques of movement manipulation and phrase manipulation. Clay Taliaferro emerged from the José Limón Company, steeped in the heritage of Doris Humphrey. His approach to choreography explores new ways of implementing Humphrey movement principles. Moses Pendleton has worked with Pilobolus Dance Theatre and Momix and as an independent choreographer. His dances use stage lighting, costume, props and scenery as participants in the movement design. Buzz Miller is a jazz choreographer who believes in dance as entertainment and who uses a traditional vocabulary of social and stage dance movements from the 1940s and 1950s.

The five choreographies can be analyzed in depth due to the richness of the documentation of their rehearsal and performance process in 1983 and the availability of dance notation scores for each. The documentation consists of:

Scores

Five Labanotation scores, each 15-25 minutes (150-250 pages) of dance works created for college companies

Videotapes

Concert performances of the five dances

125 hours of videotape footage on the process of creating and rehearsing the dances

Five edited videotapes which clarify the choreographers' intentions and methods of implementing their ideas in movement

Audiotapes

Interviews with the choreographers

Classes, seminars, and forums organized by the choreographers in composition techniques, their philosophy of concert dance, and influences on their work

The analysis of the five choreographies will be followed by a synthesis of the results, designed to provide the basis for future choreographic research in general. Part II will focus on Principles of Choreography, to determine the range of beliefs and attitudes about concert dance among these choreographers. A matrix of principles derived from the studies will provide what is intended as a limited sample of choreographic philosophies operative in 1983. The matrix can be used for choreographic research in general by virtue of its establishing a range of principles against which other choreographers can be compared. Future research can alter the matrix, moving toward a definitive set of choreographic principles.

Part III will focus on Techniques of Choreography. There will be many more techniques than principles of choreography, since each basic idea about dance can be implemented choreographically in a variety of ways. A matrix of techniques derived from the five studies will provide what is intended as a limited sample of compositional devices operative in 1983. This matrix can also be used for choreographic research in general, by virtue of its establishing a range of techniques against which other choreographers can be compared. Future research can enlarge the matrix, moving toward a definitive set of choreographic techniques.

The Conclusion of this dissertation will compare and contrast the work of the five choreographers. The choreographers whose work seems very dissimilar will be shown

in fact to share some common principles. The choreographers' different techniques for realizing those principles will be shown to be the factors that make their work diverge so acutely in its result. Conversely, the choreographers whose work seems more similar will be shown to share techniques of composition, but the polarity of their principles will be shown to be the standard by which their achievements can be contrasted. In sum, choreographers differ from and approach each other in their principles and techniques of choreography. Choreographic comparisons and contrasts are made most clearly and defensibly by bringing the matrices of principles and techniques to bear on choreographers' work.

**I. Five Choreographic Studies**

Anna Sokolow: Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives

Author's note: Miss Sokolow refers to the choreography under analysis both as Scenes from Charles Ives and Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives. For the sake of brevity, the shorter title is used in this text.

When you listen to music, the first thing you ask is, does it touch you? Does it touch you enough to make you feel, "I want to do this?" Then you go to work. (Anna Sokolow, Composition class, University of Hawaii, April, 1983.)

Sokolow opened the first day of rehearsal for Scenes from Charles Ives by saying, "Imagine, you are going to show us Charles Ives. And that is important."<sup>1</sup> The music of Charles Ives and her choreography to five of his works are indeed important to Sokolow. When asked to compose a new dance work in 1983, she insisted, rather, on reworking and finalizing Scenes from Charles Ives, a choreography originally created for students at the Juilliard School in 1971.

Ives is important to Sokolow for a number of reasons. Certainly she favors him as an American composer who worked with American themes. Sokolow told a composition class at the University of Hawaii, "I've always been interested in what America has contributed in the realm of music. And that's one reason why Charles Ives interests me so much."<sup>2</sup> Sokolow feels that Ives was undervalued during his lifetime for the revolutionary techniques he introduced and that, as an innovative artist, he merits strong recognition. There

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<sup>1</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: Fall, 1983), foot 0038.

<sup>2</sup>Transcript from seminar given by Sokolow (University of Hawaii: April 14, 1983), p. 10.

was a suggestion during one of Sokolow's rehearsals that she perceived Ives' position in music history as not dissimilar to her own in the history of twentieth-century dance. The extent to which Sokolow is justified in this perception is debatable. Certainly, early in her career, critics acclaimed her choreography. When her signature work, Rooms, was first presented in 1955, Walter Terry wrote that "Rooms is a powerful, deeply penetrating exploration of man's aloneness . . . ."3 Terry showed understanding for Sokolow's serious aims for concert dance. "Rooms is hardly a cheerful work of the theater, but it is the function of any theater art to disturb and to stimulate as well as divert. Miss Sokolow has given her subject stunning theatrical treatment through movements which are striking as pure dance action but also revelatory of the individual dreams of each of the participants . . . what more effective magic can a choreographer work?"4 That Sokolow's tendency toward serious concert dance was unremitting is revealed by Terry's reminding his readers nine years later in a review of another Sokolow choreography that "one of the purposes of modern dance is to challenge and to disturb, rather than to divert or simply amuse. . . . Miss Sokolow's works view humanity by a standard which makes Medea seem like little Nell. Her Dream is really a nightmare, her Rooms (a masterpiece of

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<sup>3</sup>Walter Terry, "American Dance," New York Herald Tribune, May 16, 1955. Reprinted in Walter Terry, I Was There (New York: Audience Arts, a division of Marcel Dekker, 1978), p. 298.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

theater dance) is sinister and her Metamorphoses almost induces suicidal thoughts."<sup>5</sup> In short, the nature of Sokolow's dances have almost precluded enthusiastic response. Her concentration on themes of alienation and social injustice have impressed her audiences and garnered her a reputation for intelligence and concern blended with artistic skill. But dances on such themes do not send audiences cheering into the streets, nor spark the warm accolades Sokolow might desire. The universality of these dance themes, however, combined with Sokolow's choreographic skill, probably do ensure her work a solid place in history.

One other aspect of Sokolow's work has inhibited critical applause: its themes and movement vocabulary are relentlessly similar. Despite the "power and purpose"<sup>6</sup> of her choreography, critics have grown impatient with the persistence of certain moods and movements. By 1967, Terry was writing, "With Anna Sokolow . . . you have a choreographer who derives from herself. As she moves from opus to opus, you find yourself seeing lots and lots of things (glares as well as steps) that you've seen before."<sup>7</sup> In 1968, Sokolow was introduced as "always the purveyor

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<sup>5</sup>Walter Terry, "A Company of Moderns," New York Herald Tribune, December 6, 1964, reprinted in Walter Terry, I Was There, p. 468.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Walter Terry, "Ballet Takes 'the Trip,'" Saturday Review, October, 1967, reprinted in Walter Terry, I Was There, p. 320-1.

of doom;"<sup>8</sup> by 1980, Sokolow had become the standard of "looming, empty portentousness" for Arlene Croce.<sup>9</sup> Taken individually, Sokolow's works can be viewed as courageous forays into aspects of human existence rarely investigated in the dance medium; the movements from which she has constructed her dances come from a minimalist's palette. Taken as a series, Sokolow's forays into the depths of human existence seem obsessive, the movement exploration constrained. What judgement history will make of her oeuvre remains to be seen; Schoenberg's tribute to Ives could perhaps be applied equally to the composer and to Sokolow:

There is a great man living in this country - a  
composer.  
He has solved the problem how to preserve one's  
self and to learn.  
He responds to negligence by contempt.  
He is not forced to accept praise or blame.  
His name is Ives.<sup>10</sup>

Sokolow admires Ives for his ability to have functioned as a successful businessman, yet to have emphasized creativity and art in his life. She feels there is "an 'extraordinary lesson" to be learned from his capacity to "put away his business and go into the world of music and write what he did. People today say, 'Well, we don't have

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<sup>8</sup>Walter Terry, "Dance Peak in the Rockies," Saturday Review, November 16, 1968, reprinted in Walter Terry, I Was There, p. 544.

<sup>9</sup>Arlene Croce, "Swing Street Revisited," New Yorker, February 11, 1980, reprinted in Arlene Croce, Going to the Dance (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1982), p. 241.

<sup>10</sup>Peter Yates, Twentieth Century Music (n.p.: Minerva Press, 1968), p. 262.

time for things like that.' If you have the desire in you, there's always time."<sup>11</sup>

Ives' philosophy of art was sympathetic to that of Sokolow. Both artists stress bringing art and life closer together, by choosing their content from events and ideas that are important to contemporary society and from common concerns of humanity through the ages. Both artists are committed to making their work accessible to a range of performers and to incorporating ideas and interpretations from different performers in presentations of their work.

What [Ives] wanted was often intentionally unclear or imprecise, and he himself changed the way he played his music over the years. His idea was to involve the performer in the activity of creating the music.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, Sokolow choreographed a substantial part of the second section of Scenes from Charles Ives, "Central Park in the Dark," by giving dancers general instructions to follow, and by encouraging and accepting their responses. Her instructions were:

Walk backwards here, not too fast. Here, use a theme like turn, turn, another way, another way, each one on their own. This could be very interesting if you make it mysterious, very mysterious. Now, go. Don't make it fast. From there, focus upstage. All right.<sup>13</sup>

In his introduction to "Halloween," Ives wrote,

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<sup>11</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0038-0056.

<sup>12</sup>Eric Salzman, Twentieth Century Music (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 147.

<sup>13</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: Fall, 1983), foot 0489-0552.

It was intended that this piece be played several times, and differently each time . . . . It has been observed by friends that three times around is quite enough, while others have stood for four - but as this piece was written for a Halloween party and not for a nice concert, the decision must be made by the players, regardless of the feelings of the audience. P.S. After measure 8, a bass drum may add his own part - impromptu, or otherwise.<sup>14</sup>

Sokolow, expressing a similar philosophy, has remarked that "it's very important for me to see new dancers do it [Scenes from Charles Ives]. Then it becomes a new dance to me."<sup>15</sup>

In his love of American subjects, undervaluation in his lifetime, his concern with serious questions and flexibility in permitting performers to affect his final products lie the bases for Ives' appeal to Sokolow. "When I hear that music of Charles Ives! I have the greatest respect for artists, like I would have for God."<sup>16</sup>

In general, Ives' music presents a challenge to performers of Sokolow's choreography, although the way Sokolow has linked her dances to the music simplifies somewhat the dancers' task. Sokolow has worked extensively with sound cues, perceptible points in the music which coincide with moments in the dance. The cues serve to motivate movement; they stir visible responses to developments in the music by compelling the choreography to take its next step. Also, they function as guideposts within the music/dance spectrum.

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<sup>14</sup>Charles Ives, "Hallowe'en" (Hillsdale, NY: Mobart Music Publications, 1977), p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1312.

<sup>16</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: Fall, 1983), foot 1419.

When dancers hear cues, they can judge where they should be in the dance and can slow down or accelerate their pace accordingly. Working with cues relieves dancers of the burden of trying to count Ives' music. The cues, however, are sufficiently subtle to keep dancers listening attentively. Most find this helps them maintain the high level of overall concentration the choreography requires.

The themes of Ives' music, captured in his titles, are reflected in the dances. The five pieces used by Sokolow in Scenes from Charles Ives are: "Hallowe'en," "Central Park in the Dark," "The Pond," "In the Cage," and "The Unanswered Question." "The Pond" and "In the Cage" are paired by Sokolow; thus there are only four separate sections to the dance. Sokolow chose five works of Ives with which she had special empathy. "Hallowe'en" she likes for its theme of a "great American holiday, which is not celebrated in any other country except here."<sup>17</sup> "Central Park in the Dark" gives Sokolow a New York theme with which to work, something that is a favorite of hers. In this piece, she says, "we have to think that you are entering into another kind of world, a beautiful world . . . the mystery of the night" and the beauty in the movements of trees.<sup>18</sup> "The Pond" and "In the Cage" are seen by Sokolow as two variations on the theme of enclosure, which in "The Pond" is seductive and captivating, and in "In the Cage" is destructive and maddening. The fact

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<sup>17</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0085.

<sup>18</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1419.

that Sokolow also called this section a private homage to Nijinsky overlays the dance with a further, psychological dimension. "The Unanswered Question" is built on "one of the most profound themes that you can imagine."<sup>19</sup> The "why?" of existence is asked repeatedly with questioning music and movement motifs in what Sokolow has referred to as a dance hymn.

Ives' music does not run uninterruptedly through the dance. There are moments of silence which serve to focus the audience's attention. As the lights rise on "Central Park in the Dark," a transition must be begun in the way the audience is viewing the dance. The entertaining mania of "Hallowe'en" is over. Another type of fantasy lies before us in the second section, much quieter, more mysterious. The silence in which the onstage "forest" begins to move is sobering, and poetic. It creates a moodier atmosphere from which a different kind of dance can emerge. Silence here gives the audience time to adjust between the brash end of "Hallowe'en" and the enigmatic night sounds of "Central Park in the Dark."

Silence also introduces the third section of the dance, "The Pond, The Cage." Here, the choreographer must again narrow the audience's perspective, from a forest of fantasy to an individual alone on stage. The individual is in a pool of light, into which he is absorbed in looking. He is crouched, and he moves slightly, slowly, soundlessly. We peer at him and wonder, "Who is he? What's going on there?"

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<sup>19</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: Fall, 1983), foot 1080.

The dancer unfolds as we ask these questions and the dance and music begin. The silence has given the audience time to enter another frame of mind, to focus in on a single man. We are made to wonder about him, then his dance reveals something to us. Silence has again been used by the choreographer to increase the audience's level of concentration on the dance.

Sokolow needs to focus an audience on her dances, because they are not easy to watch. She choreographs about psychology, philosophy, poetic images, the grotesque and sublime, and she expects earnest attempts at understanding from her audience. Arlene Croce closets Sokolow as belonging "to the elder generation of social-content choreographers."<sup>20</sup> To Sokolow, dance is a serious occupation. She thinks that ideas and emotions that move people make excellent material for dances, and that it is unacceptable to choreograph about trivia. It is for entertainers to try to make people happy; dance as art should make people feel and think. Sokolow as a choreographer shares her visions of society and existence, and her dances require observant, thoughtful viewing.

Her premise for choreographing Scenes from Charles Ives was of course the music. Sokolow explained that listening to Ives' music inspired strong feelings in her, which in turn evoked images of movement. The content of her feelings dictated the form her movements took.

Sokolow is extremely critical of contemporary

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<sup>20</sup>Arlene Croce, After-Images (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 330.

choreographers who compose dances devoid of narrative content, based on abstract movement. It is her opinion that form without dramatic content is an inappropriate approach to dance. Sokolow sees dance as a mirror of life, and life is full of content. Abstract choreography represents an increased intellectualization of dance and, for Sokolow, the intellect is not the force that motivates people to move. This force is feeling, emotions in response to thought and experience. For Sokolow, choreography should be based on content that determines form. She believes that it shows a failure to understand the art to work with form alone in dance.<sup>21</sup>

Because Sokolow wishes to convey content in her dances, she makes use of movements that are recognizable, that communicate fairly universally without being clichés. This results in the inclusion of a great deal of gesture in her dances. The more serious the statement Sokolow wishes to make, the more pared-down, representational movement she chooses. This results in arrangements of gestural movement that are not always recognizable as "dance." The clearest example of this in Scenes from Charles Ives is "The Unanswered Question," in which Sokolow deals with the question of the meaning of life. There are three basic points Sokolow makes in the dance: that people desperately want to know the answer to the question; that there is no answer forthcoming to the question; and that people have to

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<sup>21</sup>Interview with Anna Sokolow, New York City, November 14, 1983.

accept this fundamental irresolution in their lives. The motif she chooses to make these points is an outstretched hand and direct, searching gaze that repeatedly is addressed to the audience and the dark void of the theatre in which it sits. At the end of the dance, the dancers take their heads and forcibly pull their gazes away. The impact of the final tableau of dancers lying onstage with their hands on their heads in despair is enormous because the meaning of the movements is unmistakable. Without its investment of meaning, the outstretched-hand motif would have little movement interest.

Critics are divided about Sokolow's choreographic vocabulary. Marcia Siegel finds "intense drama rising out of basic movement . . . . Time, space and gesture are condensed and crystallized—like some complex, beautiful stone you fish out of a California stream, the dance seems capable of enduring for thousands of years."<sup>22</sup> Arlene Croce frets at the limitations of Sokolow's movement range, that "once an evening, the performers come to the footlights and stare out accusingly."<sup>23</sup> Sokolow's gestures are both "powerfully spare" and "peeled off in one parsimonious phrase at a time." They grow out of her insistence that dance must convey content.

Sokolow's major concern in directing her dances is that the dancers capture the essential ideas and mood of each

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<sup>22</sup>Marcia B. Siegel, Watching the Dance Go By (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1977), p. 159.

<sup>23</sup>Arlene Croce, After-Images, p. 385.

piece. A performer who is unconscious of the meaning of her dances will reduce the impact and value of the work. Sokolow asked dancers to prepare offstage for each section of Scenes from Charles Ives, and in coaching sessions she emphasized the different emotional requirements of different dances. She asked students at the City College of New York to "prepare with deep thought inside" for "The Unanswered Question," but told them they needed to feel "wild, wild!" for the middle of "Central Park in the Dark." Sokolow recommended the students read Stanislavski to help them develop a methodology for preparing to perform the four contrasting sections of Scenes from Charles Ives. The Stanislavski approach to acting offers a variety of kinds of assistance to the Sokolow performer. One is the notion of the "small circle of attention that moves about with you,"<sup>24</sup> allowing the performer to concentrate, to repel distractions and self-consciousness. Stanislavski wrote of ways to develop imagination, and complained as bitterly of "mechanical acting" as Sokolow does of "mechanical dancing."<sup>25</sup> Like Sokolow, Stanislavski advised against working in front of a mirror. "It teaches an actor to watch the outside rather than the inside of his soul, both in himself and in his part."<sup>26</sup> Both directors recommended

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<sup>24</sup>Konstantin Stanislavski, An Actor Prepares, translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1979), p. 81.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

pursuing the widest possible variety of life experiences, in order to develop a reservoir of reactions and memories on which to draw in performance. "Always and forever, when you are on the stage, you must play yourself. But it will be in an infinite variety of combinations of objectives . . . . The roles for which you haven't the appropriate feelings are those you will never play well."<sup>27</sup> Altogether, the "art of living a part" developed by Stanislavski in An Actor Prepares, Creating a Role, and Building a Character is highly applicable to developing a successful performance of a Sokolow work.

Sokolow aims for realism on stage. "Don't look like modern dancers," she admonished during a rehearsal of "Hallowe'en." "You're not modern dance. You're people who are celebrating a holiday."<sup>28</sup> "Put the whole foot on the floor," she said to a dancer walking with pointed toes in "The Unanswered Question." . . . Forget all of the dancing things."<sup>29</sup> When, in "The Unanswered Question," dancers starting moving in unison, she said, "It should be uneven. Not everyone doing everything at once. . . . Don't do modern dance technique," she repeated. "You don't need it."<sup>30</sup> The most difficult challenge for dancers in a Sokolow work is often the very thing that is most critical to the

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>28</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0436.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., foot 0925.

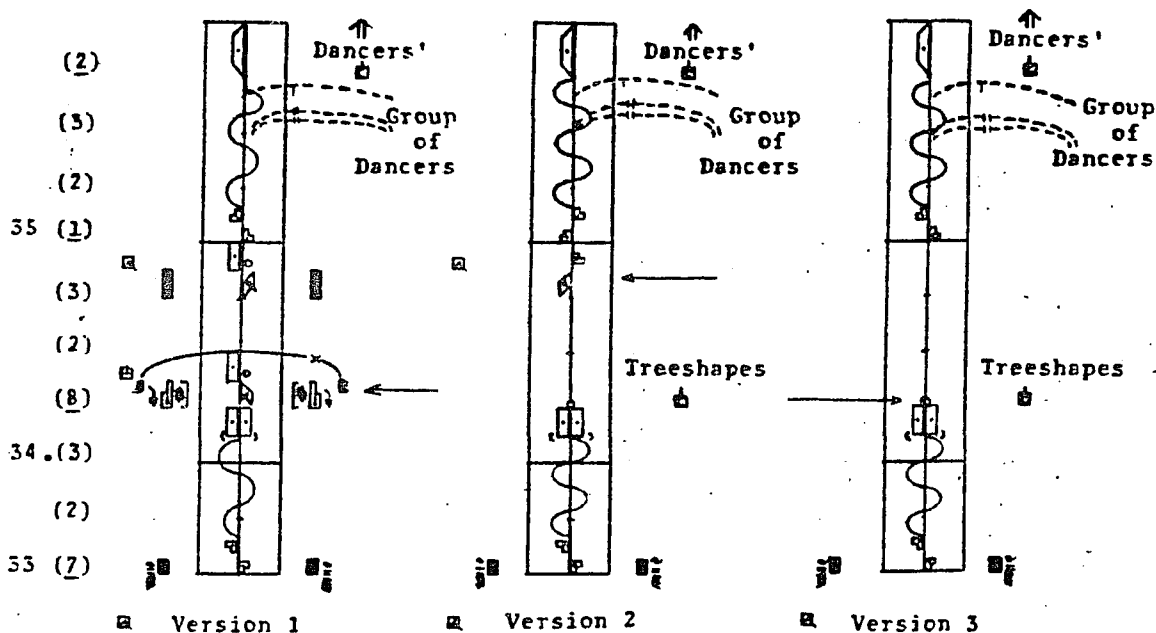
<sup>30</sup>Ibid., foot 0964.

choreographer: to appear natural and believable. "I don't believe you" and "That's too mechanical!" are Sokolow's two most common criticisms of dancers. She cannot forgive performers when they don't look like real people with real feelings.

In an attempt to increase the dancers' grasp of their roles, Sokolow spent time exploring the motivation for movements. "Do you know why you run out?" she asked the dancer who leaves the "forest" in "Central Park in the Dark." "What do you see there? Look!!" It is what the dancer sees in the fantasy of trees that makes her run out, stop, and return to wander through them. The dancer needs an image of a forest at night, with its mystery of dark, moving shapes, to rush out for a better look and to return with the realistic expression of wonder Sokolow requires.

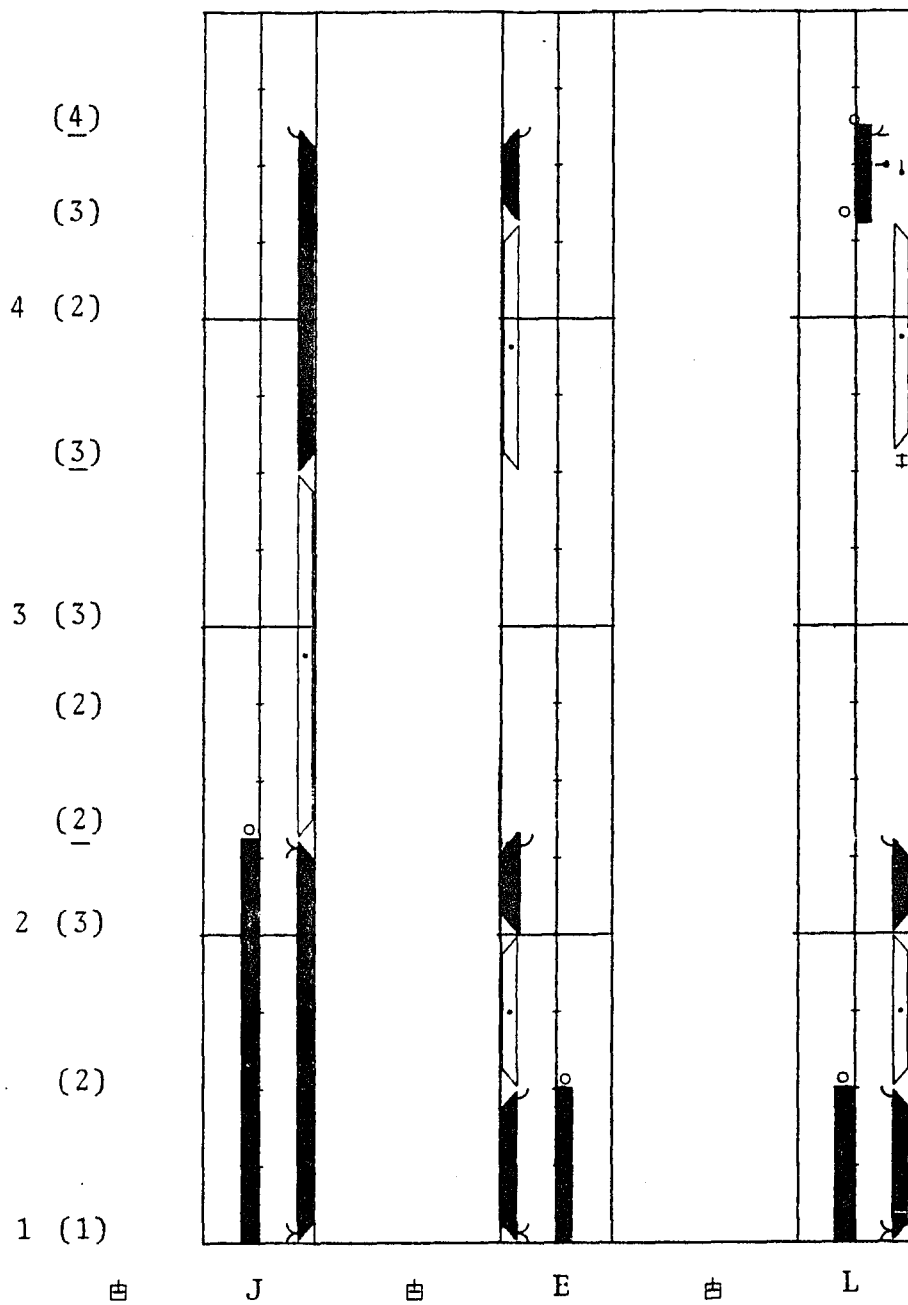
It is more important for the dancers to be believable in terms of the content they are communicating than it is for them to present content via a particular movement. Sokolow changed movements repeatedly until she found a sequence a dancer could perform convincingly. In measures 40-42 of "Central Park in the Dark" at the City College of New York, the running/stopping movement was tried three ways: with hands clasped to the chest, with a breathless turn, and with a simple pause before running back. (See illustration 1.) Finally, Sokolow felt satisfied that the dancer was comfortable with the simple pause, and that with this movement sequence, she was believable as a person captivated by the strange shapes and shadows around her.

Illustration 1. Alternate Versions of Measures 40-42 of "Central Park in the Dark"



Sokolow advised dancers on how to proceed technically to master the execution of movements. Beyond clarifying the intent of sections of the dance, she explained how to approach movements physically. Her major caution was against categorizing her movements in rational ways. The lifting of the legs to the side at the opening of "Central Park in the Dark" may resemble a battement, a relevé lent, or a side kick to dancers, but they ought not to conceptualize the movement in those terms. (See illustration 2.) Sokolow asked them to move from an impulse in the center of the torso. Rather than think "kick," she asked them to begin a lift in the torso that extended into the leg and made it rise in response. In this way, the movement involves the body even though it is

Illustration 2. Measures 1-4 of "Central Park in the Dark" for selected dancers



4  
4

□ = ♩

most visible in an extremity. "Kick" produces an articulation of a leg; Sokolow's instructions ask for a more global movement sensation in the dancer.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the single most important directorial emphasis of Anna Sokolow is that the quality of her choreography is lost if dancers concentrate on the external shape of a movement. In sections of Scenes from Charles Ives in which there is improvisation by the dancers, it is critical that they remember that Sokolow wants them to project mood, not shapes. The lengthy improvised section which begins at measure 34 of "Central Park in the Dark" is a prime example. Sokolow directed the dancers with these words:

Let me point out something to you. When you get to the center [of the stage], and you're moving the arms and the body, keep the thing moving, moving, so it doesn't look like designs.<sup>32</sup>

Later, when the lighting designer innocently remarked that he liked the patterns made by the dancers, Sokolow replied with acerbity that she didn't want patterns, she wanted movement. The choreographer's image of Central Park at night is not one of static shapes or moments of intact design. Her image is one of motion, sometimes subtle and often forceful. But even when momentarily at rest, "nature in the park" has vitality and moves imperceptibly. Only death, she pointed out, is utterly still.<sup>33</sup>

Dancers and dance directors who wish to forego Sokolow's

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<sup>31</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0818.

<sup>32</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0762.

<sup>33</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0971-0983.

directions on how to stage her work should be aware of critical reaction to productions that focused on visual results rather than the content that defines and shapes her dances.

But as the repertory idea has worked out in practice so far, the big works haven't been too successful stylistically. Not enough attention has been paid to the qualities and performing attitudes that made Limon's work look the way it did, or Graham's or Sokolow's. Companies that do a lot of repertory, like Ailey or Utah's Repertory Dance Theater, have acquired an all-purpose, technically stunning, and stylistically bland way of doing everything. Their reconstructions overdramatize the drama and leave the movement unfulfilled. The creators did it the other way around. Converting the classic modern dance repertory into staple, contemporary dance is not only unacceptable, it's a rip-off.<sup>34</sup>

Dramatic content fulfills Sokolow's choreography. With the reason for the dance firmly in mind, performers can fully realize each movement possibility. But feeling emotion for its own sake is dismissed by Sokolow as sentimentality. "There's nothing sentimental about this -- nothing."<sup>35</sup> Emotion has a place in her dances only as the force which makes movements manifest themselves in a certain way. Without it, her dances are "bland." With an excess of it, she throws up her hands at sentimentalism and maudlin clichés.<sup>36</sup>

Sokolow eliminated unnecessary movements dancers used to accessorize or embellish basic movement ideas. "It's too

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<sup>34</sup>Marcia B. Siegel, Watching the Dance Go By, p. 155.

<sup>35</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1396.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., foot 1396-1410.

fancy," she remarked more than once.<sup>37</sup> "I would prefer it without all that," she told dancers learning measure 16 in "The Pond, The Cage."<sup>38</sup> (See illustration 3.) In order to keep their balance during a turn, the men were gesturing with two arms and obfuscating the basic idea of a tight spin. Sokolow explained that their gestures were a distraction: "What's more important is how the body moves around" (giving impetus to and shaping the turn).<sup>39</sup>

In another instance, Sokolow asked the dancers not to move their arms as they walked toward the audience in measures 23-29 of "The Unanswered Question." What has significance in this movement is the long gaze forward of each individual and the approach of the group toward the audience. Swinging arms can add nothing to this effect; they can only detract.

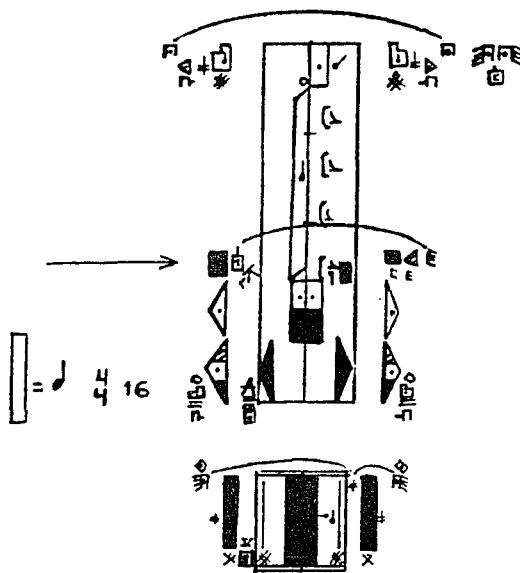


Illustration 3. Turn from "The Pond , The Cage;"  
measure 16

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., foot 0714.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., foot 0811.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

## Structural analysis of the dance

Overall, Scenes from Charles Ives seems to progress in an inverted order that is in opposition to the traditional sequencing of dance works. It seems that Sokolow begins with the climax, and ends with the nadir. That is, if the criteria for determining climax and nadir center on the external appearances of the dance. In "Hallowe'en," the dancers are garishly costumed, lights are brightly colored, the music is audacious, the movements are energetic. "Hallowe'en" is funny, bizarre, entertaining. In "The Unanswered Question," the dancers are wearing their own unexceptional clothing, lights are dim, the music is solemn, the movements are sparse. This section of the dance is perturbing, philosophical, sober and sobering. Hasn't Sokolow gone downhill consistently from her bold beginning?

Sokolow herself gives the clues to understanding her logic for ordering the sections of her dance in this way. "I give the audience what they expect to see in "Hallowe'en," she said.<sup>40</sup> And, about "The Unanswered Question," "what's very important for me is that a profound statement like this ends the whole piece. This is very, very important."<sup>41</sup> In Scenes from Charles Ives, Sokolow takes audiences on a voyage. It begins with a section of dance that satisfies popular expectations, and finishes with a section that

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<sup>40</sup>Interview with Anna Sokolow, New York City, November 14, 1983.

<sup>41</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1675.

epitomizes what the choreographer expects of dance: that it reveal to viewers aspects of their world and the human condition. In terms of depth of subject matter, Scenes from Charles Ives moves from nadir to climax in a traditional way.

Do the four sections of the dance adhere together? They each have characteristics the choreographer describes as "mysterious" and "frightening."<sup>42</sup> In "Hallowe'en," the mystery lies in the disguises and hidden identities, the unpredictability of this group's movements. This section of the dance is frightening in the way Hallowe'en is frightening-- on the surface, in fun. "Hallowe'en" is pretend.

In "Central Park in the Dark," mystery is equated with the opacity of night. The theme of fear is present in the way darkness transforms an understandable, identifiable world into one of impenetrability and potential danger. Many audience members at the City College of New York shared a reaction to this section: they felt it was about nuclear war. Obviously, the element of fear in the choreography communicated strongly. The mystery and fear in this section of the dance are projections onto the night. The dance provokes real feelings, but whether there is real justification for them is uncertain. Mystery and fear are fantasized in response to an ambiguous situation.

The solo dancer in "The Pond, The Cage" depicts mystery and fear directly. In "The Pond," Sokolow advised

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<sup>42</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0489-0552; videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1152-1232; videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0513.

the dancer that the opening "should be so mysterious that we wonder, what is he looking at?"<sup>43</sup> His activities, totally engrossing to him, resist quick explanation. He seems to be sensing and exploring his immediate environment (the pond), and, after rising, sensing and exploring his own muscularity, suppleness and grace. The dancer is engaged in a mysterious ritual, self-oriented and self-absorbing. In "The Cage," the dancer looks into his hands, then jumps up and spins tightly. His movements become percussive, jerky, anxious. He seems to want to leave his pool of light, but he cannot. The calm, sensual delight of "The Pond" has given way to the tension and near-hysteria of "The Cage."

Sokolow's attributing this choreography to homage for Nijinsky makes psychological interpretations of the choreography inevitable. Is "The Pond" about Nijinsky's personal beauty, his leonine grace, his animal magnificence that audiences acclaimed? "The Cage" may then be about Nijinsky's madness, the tormented mind within the body. "The Pond, The Cage" are a schizophrenic duo. They may represent Nijinsky's legendary success and failure. They certainly are mysterious and frightening in their juxtaposition.

In terms of their mystery and fear, "Hallowe'en" is pretended, "Central Park in the Dark" is poetic, "The Pond, The Cage" is psychological, and "The Unanswered Question" is metaphysical. The mystery and fear of this section relate

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<sup>43</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0513.

to the ultimate question humanity faces: the "why?" of existence. Mystery surrounds the nature of life, and fear permeates our lack of understanding of it. By the closing section of the dance, Sokolow has brought her audience to at least a consideration, perhaps a confrontation, of the mystery and fear that is universal to humankind. The successive layers of mystery and fear the choreographer explores unify the four sections of the dance. After investigating pretense, poetry and psychology, Sokolow steers us toward her main thrust, our fear of the metaphysical mystery, "The Unanswered Question."

#### "Hallowe'en"

When it is being taught and set, "Hallowe'en" is one of the most improvised sections of Scenes from Charles Ives, with measures of ad lib movement, timing, or both. This is clear from the starting positions, which are left to the discretion of the dancers, within bounds. The Labanotation score contains twelve poses which were created by dancers at the University of Hawaii in response to Sokolow's directions, which were:

1. Choose a Hallowe'en pose.
2. Do not hide the face; let the audience see the mask.
3. There must be energy in your pose.
4. There should be energy in your hands and fingers.
5. Animate your face even though it is behind a mask.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox (New York: Dance Notation Bureau, 1983), p. 2.

Sokolow evaluated the opening positions performers offered as their particular solutions to her instructions, and suggested some changes. Future solutions in new stagings may depart from the examples in the score. However, Sokolow emphasized certain overall features in the opening tableau: that there be a variety of levels from very high to very low, and a variety of directions of facings on stage; that dancers abandon "modern-dancy looking" positions in favor of more grotesque, angular ones; and that they accentuate their masks by assuming positions in character.<sup>45</sup>

In measure 12 (See illustration 4.), Sokolow uses ad lib timing. She told City College dancers, "You don't all have to do this" with four torso movements on four musical counts.<sup>46</sup> She encouraged some of them to opt for moving to

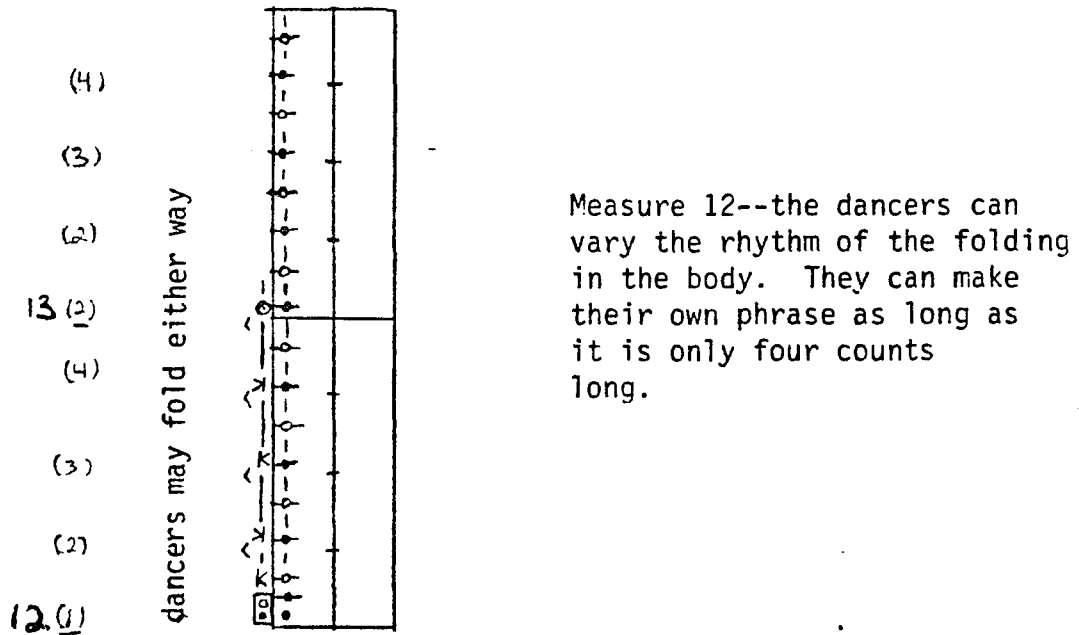


Illustration 4. Examples of ad lib movements and timing in "Hallowe'en"; measures 12-13

<sup>45</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0085-0108, 0520.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., foot 0265.

their own rhythmic phrase, accenting selected counts, as

1	(2)	3	4	
1	2	(3)	4	
1	2	3	(4)	, etc.

(Numbers within parentheses indicate counts on which there is no movement.)

Slightly further on, in measure 17 (See illustration 4, continued.), Sokolow allowed dancers to devise their own four-count clapping sequence. "Do it anyway you want but hit on each beat."<sup>47</sup> Extended improvisations in both movement and timing come in measures 34-36 and 40-57. (See illustration 4, continued.) Sokolow's instructions here include some spatial patterning of the dancers on stage (although she told City College dancers that "You go your own way here."), and the command to "Show off!"<sup>48</sup> by running, jumping, cartwheeling, and other exuberant movements. The Labanotation score shows movement motifs that Sokolow approved for this section, but performers are not limited to these responses.

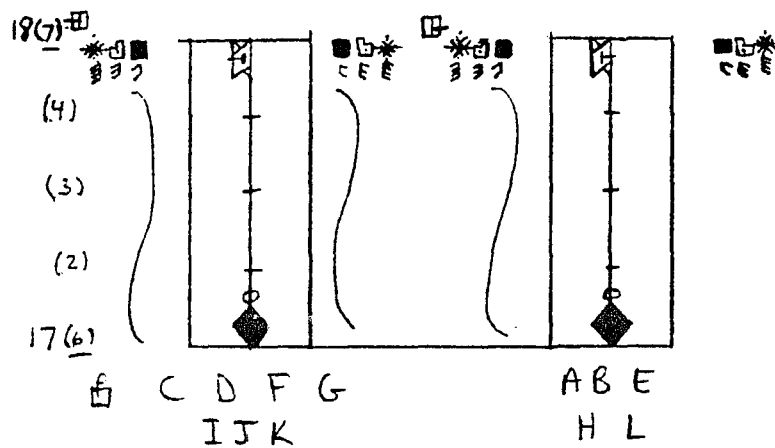
Both the brief and lengthy sections of improvisation in "Hallowe'en" project the dynamism, indeed the chaos of Hallowe'en night. Strange figures dart about with demonic energy. Faces poke startingly out of the shadows. Based on a holiday with a reputation for wild disorder and merry confusion, "Hallowe'en" should whiz by at a breathless pace.

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., foot 0330.

<sup>48</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1482-1529.

Illustration 4, continued. Examples of ad lib movements and timing in "Hallowe'en"; measure 17



Measure 17--Each couple should choose their own clapping pattern. Ms. Sokolow said, "Do it anyway you want but hit on each beat." Below is one example.

Example of clapping pattern

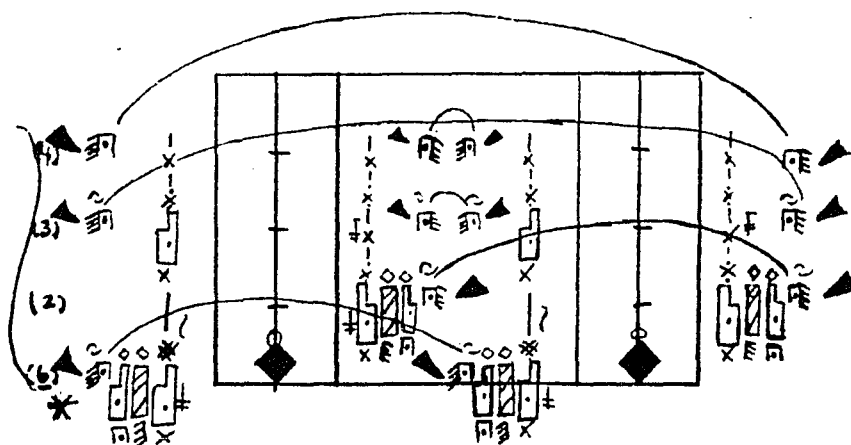
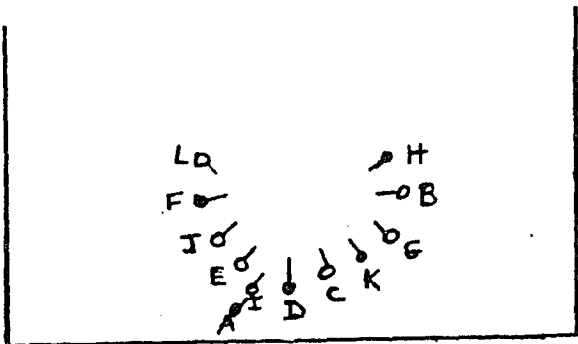
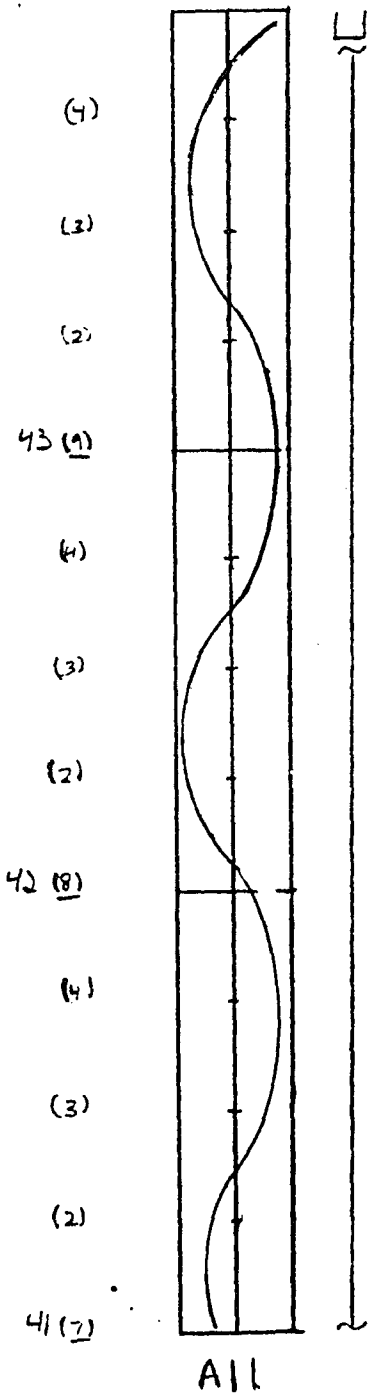


Illustration 4, continued.  
 Examples of ad lib movements  
 and timing in "Hallowe'en";  
 measures 41-43.



Positions at end of measure 43



SUGGESTED MOTIFS

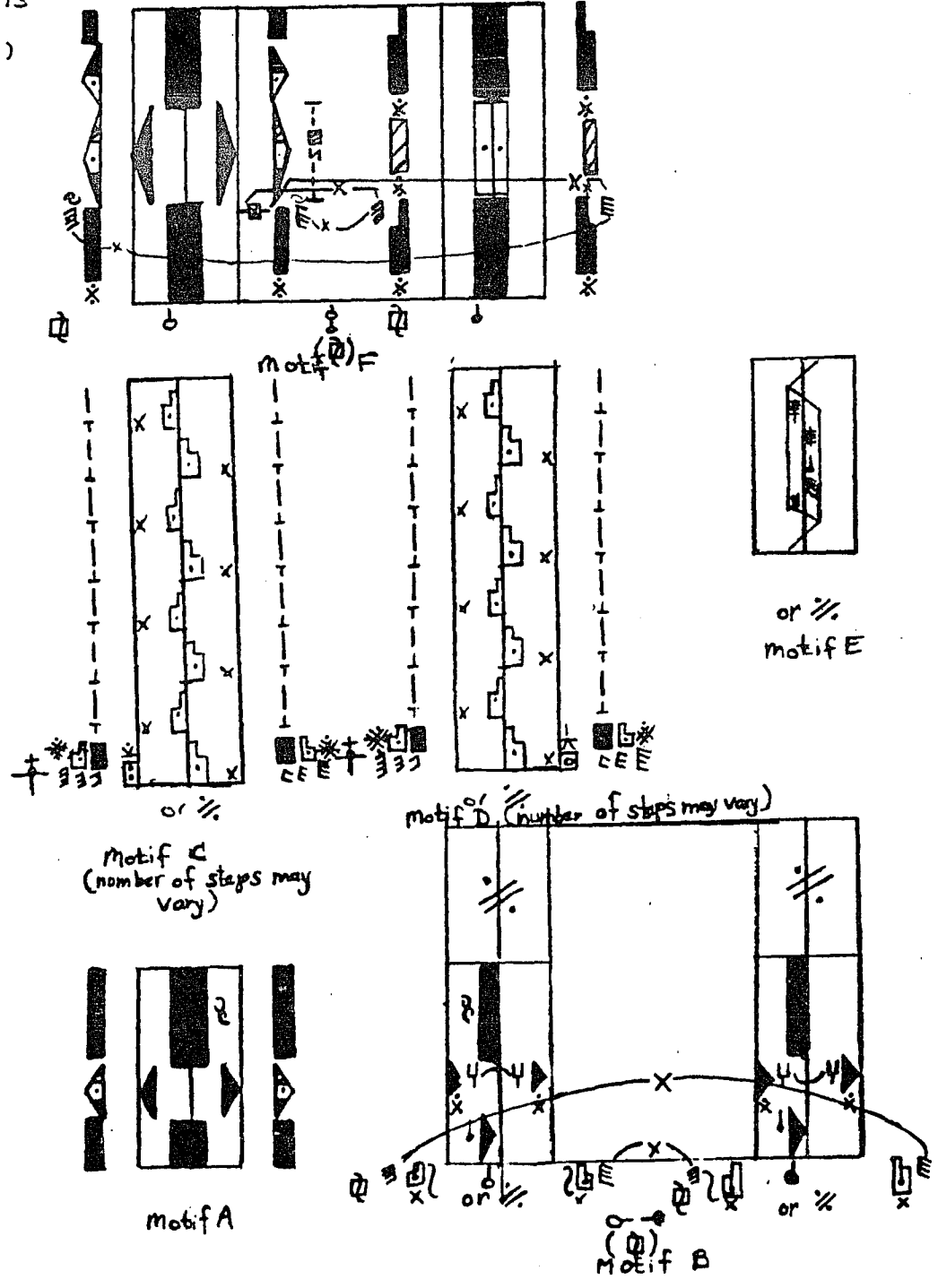
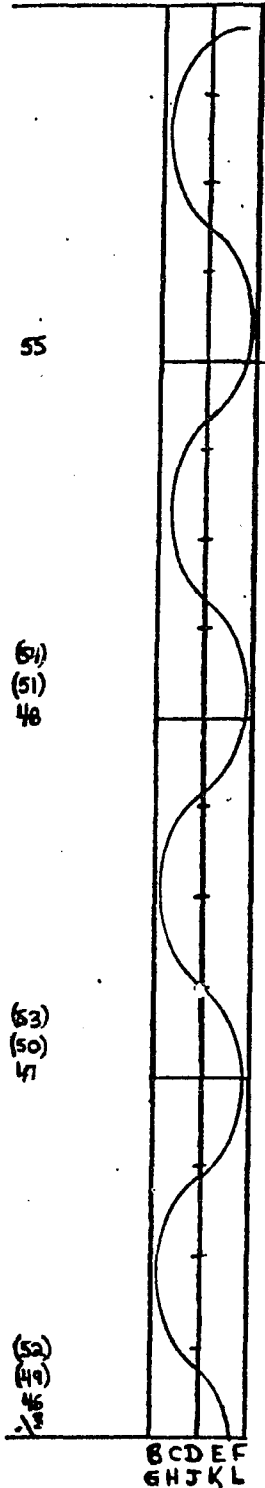
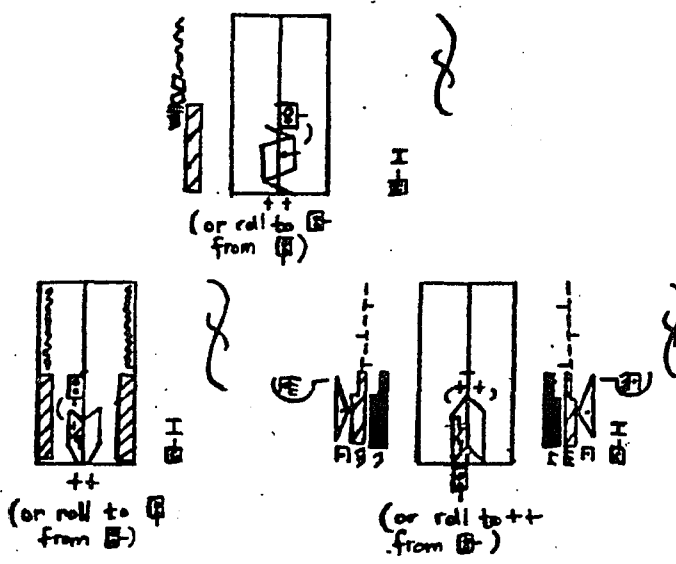


Illustration 4, continued. Examples of ad lib movements and timing in "Hallowe'en"; measures 46-56

Measures 46-56 BCDEF GHIJKL -- The dancers have the motifs shown below to use in any way they choose. They may do each one for a longer or shorter duration than is shown and go from one to the other in any order they choose. Ms. Sokolow said it is as though they are applauding I and A. They are showing how many different ways there are to applaud.



MOTIFS



As though clapping but the hands do not actually touch.

With this effect in mind, Sokolow delivered a major caveat against improvisation in performance. In order for the dance to look wild and spontaneous, performers "must know every bar and every count. It's very precise."<sup>49</sup> Following the informal setting process of the dance, performers must consolidate their ideas into repeatable phrases. The chaos of "Hallowe'en" will work only if movement, formulated through improvisation, is later memorized. Sokolow took accidents into account in setting "Hallowe'en," but none were permitted in performance.

In contrast to the ad lib timing of some parts of "Hallowe'en," others are precise and mark a regular 4/4 pulse. Illustration 5 shows two ways Sokolow organized time in the dance. In measures 5-10, each pulse is stressed with a landing from a jump; in measures 20-22, running steps provide a steady rhythm, as does this example of a jump into second position on the downbeat, a motif repeated elsewhere in the dance. (See measures 3-10, 15-17, 36, 61. In measures 3-17, Sokolow had to warn the dancers, who were anxious to please her about accenting each beat, not to make so much noise that they drowned out the music.) Measures 44-45 are much freer rhythmically. Dancer A, carrying dancer I, begins to walk around the stage. The other performers wait for I to begin throwing kisses, and then they fall to the floor. This movement doesn't happen on any particular count. Measures 38-40 show a transition from "generally busy"

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., foot 1526.

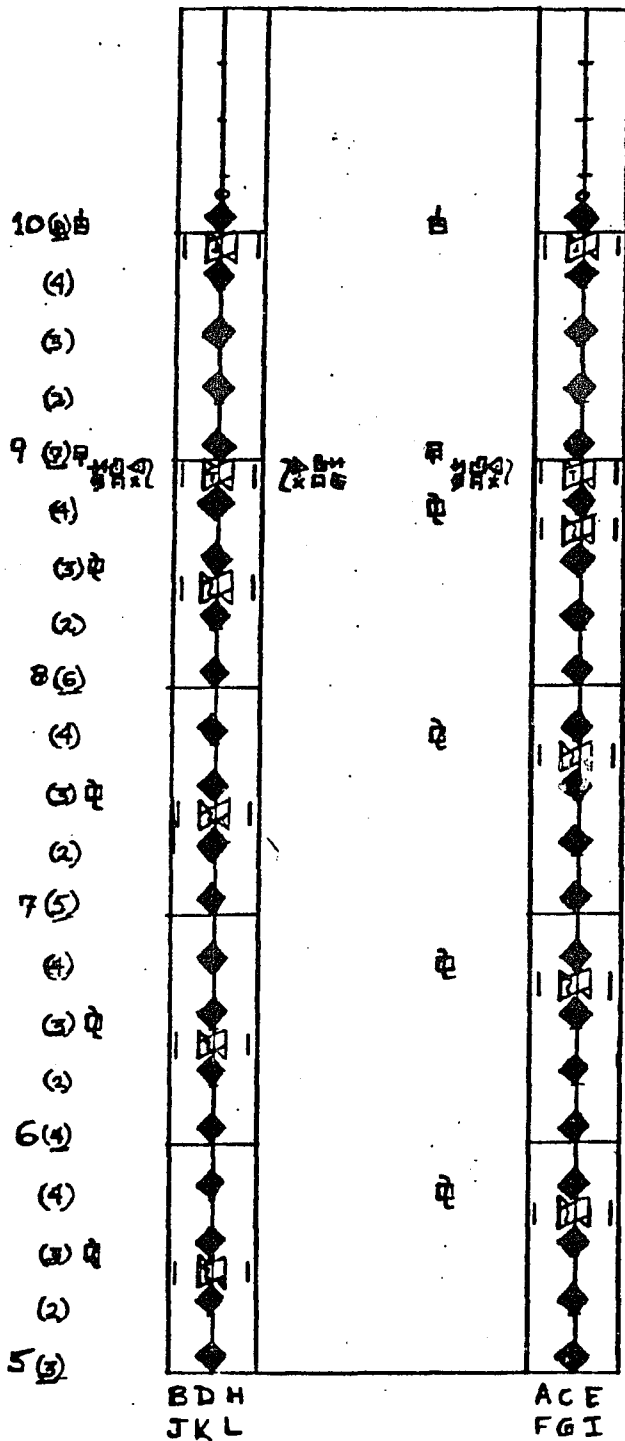


Illustration 5. Examples of different uses of timing in "Hallowe'en"; measures 5-10

Each time the dancers turn they should take a new halloween pose. Each pose should have more energy than the last one. As they turn to face back, end of measure 8, they all take the pose written. See alternate versions for the arms. They hold this pose as they turn to face front, end of measure 9.

Alternate versions for arms:

Although they all landed in second position at the beginning of measure 9, there was some freedom as to the position of their arms. Some of the dancers held their arms:

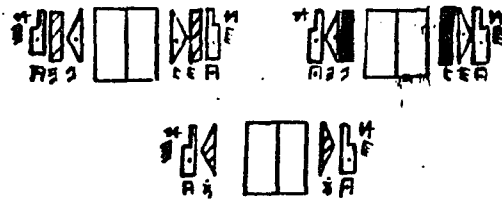
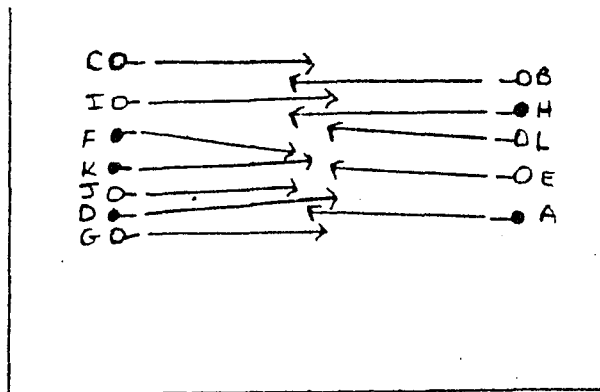


Illustration 5, continued. Examples of different uses of timing in "Hallowe'en"; measures 20-22



20-21

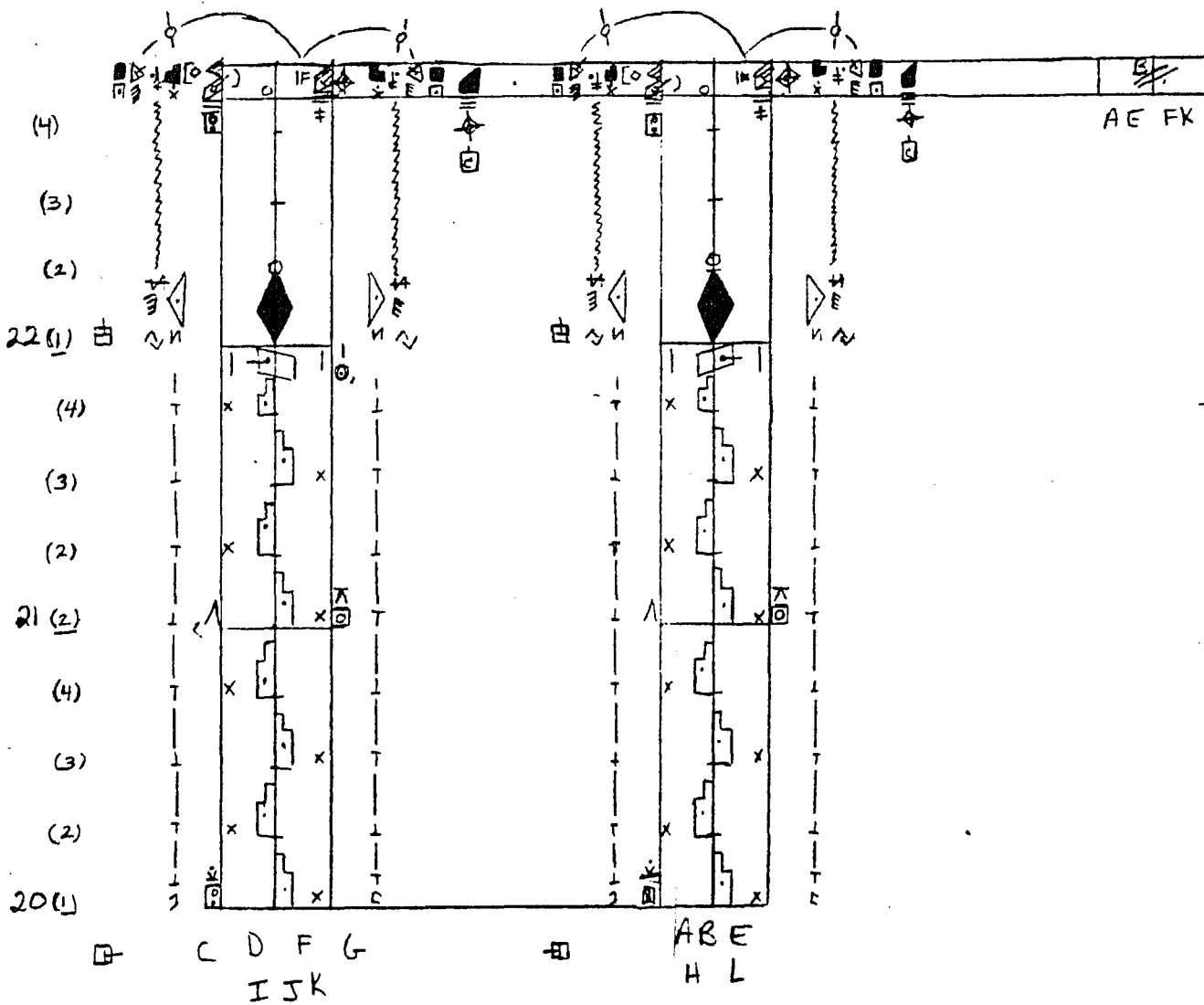


Illustration 5, continued. Examples of different uses of timing in "Hallowe'en"; measures 44-45

44 A may lift I to either shoulder

45 See next page for instructions for dancer I

45-55

They all stopped in an energized pose and watched I and A. See below for two examples.

→ Take cue to go down from when I starts throwing kisses

ad lib timing

Examples of Poses

o = center of mass group

ACDEF  
GHIJKL

TA



activity to runs specifically marking each count of the music. By shifting freely between movements with sporadic timing and movements to a regularly recurring pulse, Sokolow keeps viewers off-balance and increases the sense of disorder in "Hallowe'en."

Because of its alternation of regular and sporadic timing, and of unison and individually improvised movement sequences, "Hallowe'en" is full of chaos that keeps resolving into order, which soon crumbles back into chaos. The choreography makes use of still another fluctuation: between poses and movements. When the lights rise on "Hallowe'en," the dancers are all in individual poses. After jumping and turning in various directions, they face front in unison on count 1 of measure 10 and hold a position. The end of the next sequence of movement is punctuated with a pose in measure 22. The dancers then do the "old jazz step"<sup>50</sup> with knee slaps and run around the stage, but this running leads to the formation of the first tableau (end of measure 28-measure 30). After more running, leaping, and acrobatics, the second tableau is established in measures 36-39. It is followed by the dance's most exuberant movement sequences, which stop instantly when dancers I and A begin their promenade. Their tour of the stage, accompanied by the frenzied, mute applause of the other dancers, concludes with the two poses that end the dance (measure 60-61). In terms of stops and starts, the choreography proceeds like this:

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<sup>50</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0348.

<u>Stop! Pose!</u>	<u>Move!</u>
opening position, m. 1	m. 2-9
m. 10	m. 11-21
m. 22	m. 23-28
* m. 29-32	m. 33-36
* m. 37-39	m. 40-43
m. 44-approx. 45	approx. m. 46-57
m. 58	m. 59 (I and A)
m. 60	
m. 61	

\* Even though there is some movement in the tableaux, Sokolow called them "tableaux" for a reason; they arrest most movement to let the audience look at the Hallowe'en characters.

Each time the dancers stop, Sokolow is giving the audience time to look at their strange masks and costumes. Faces are turned full-front on each pose, with the exception of the focus on the "pas de deux" couple in measure 44-45 and 58. The masks are a central feature of the dance. They are insistently presented to the audience, and when they are, movement is arrested.

Not only masks are highlighted by the poses in "Hallowe'en." When the dancers stop, they show off classic "show-biz" gimmicks and tricks. The opening and closing poses are visually exciting moments, designed to make the audience applaud when the lights bump up and black out. The two tableaux are balancing acts, and the on-the-shoulder carry around the stage is such a good trick that it is wildly

applauded by the other dancers. Sokolow is taking a dig here at what she perceives as the cheap thrills of standard theatrical dance. In "giving the audience what it wants" in "Hallowe'en," she employs costumes, tricks, visual delights, even a climactic pas de deux moment. "Dance for the audience," Sokolow coached. "You have to earn a living."<sup>51</sup> "Hallowe'en" is a satire of what many American dancers and choreographers do to make a living. They perform what is commercial, and they hide behind false faces that reveal nothing of who they really are. They are living Hallowe'en.

#### "Central Park in the Dark"

This section is, I think, the most complicated, and I'd like to explain to you the idea I had. You see the image of trees at night, strange shapes, not photographic at all, but a fantasy of how they look. So that the beginning has that quality.<sup>52</sup>

Sokolow uses a number of devices to portray her image of trees at night. One is a restriction of stage lighting. "Central Park in the Dark" is composed of movements that seem half-seen and half-imagined. Through dim light, it is nearly impossible to identify individual dancers, and often possible to see only the more global movements of individuals and groups.

The faces of the dancers, disguised by masks in "Hallowe'en," remain concealed in "Central Park in the Dark."

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<sup>51</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score by Ilene Fox, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0247.

Sokolow told City College lighting designer Ron Burns that there was "no need for the faces to be visible."<sup>53</sup> Lighting faces would seriously damage the image of anonymous, animate nature Sokolow's choreography projects. The focus of the dancers is often to the floor or to the ceiling, to further diminish the visibility of their features. (See illustration 6.)

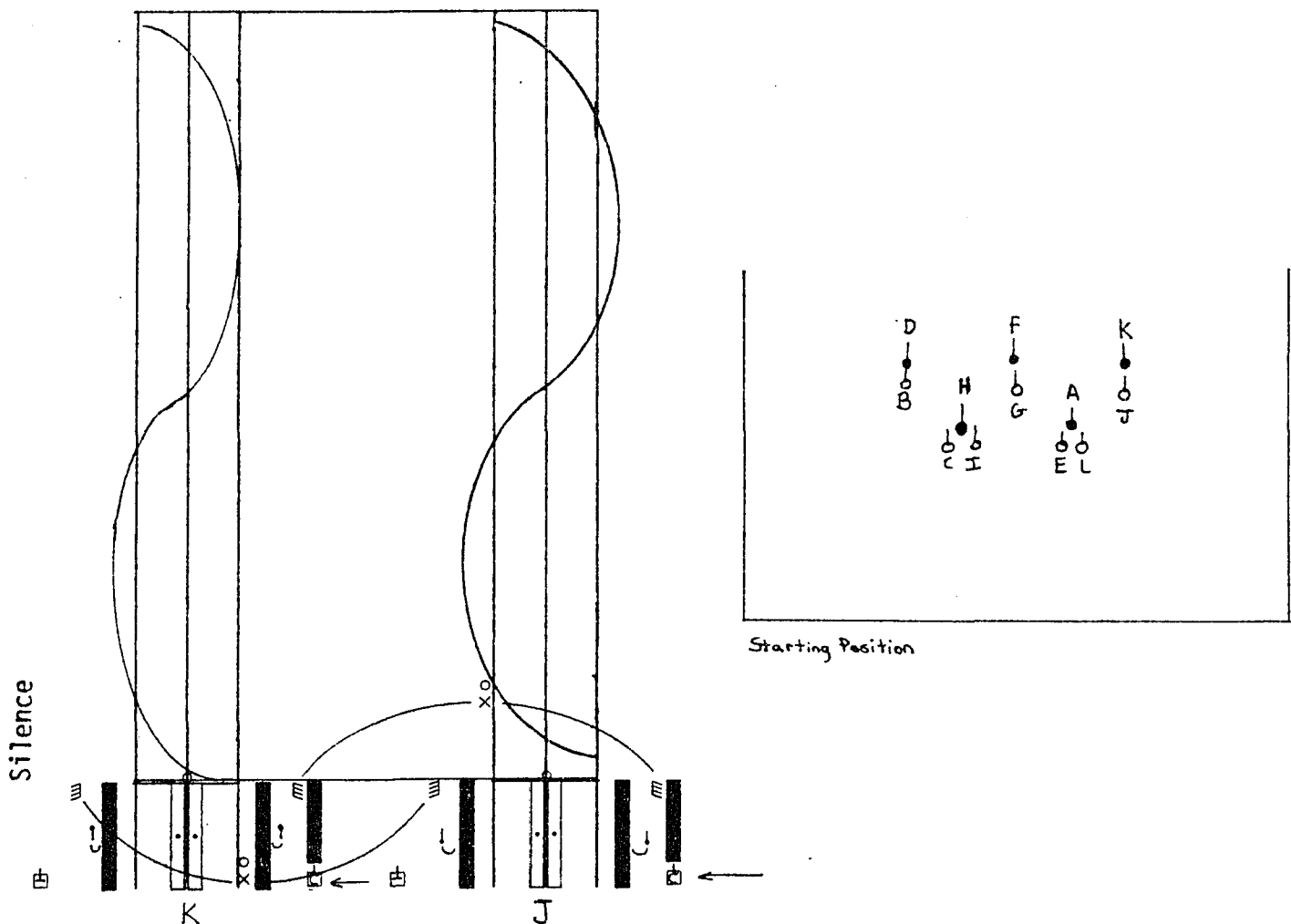
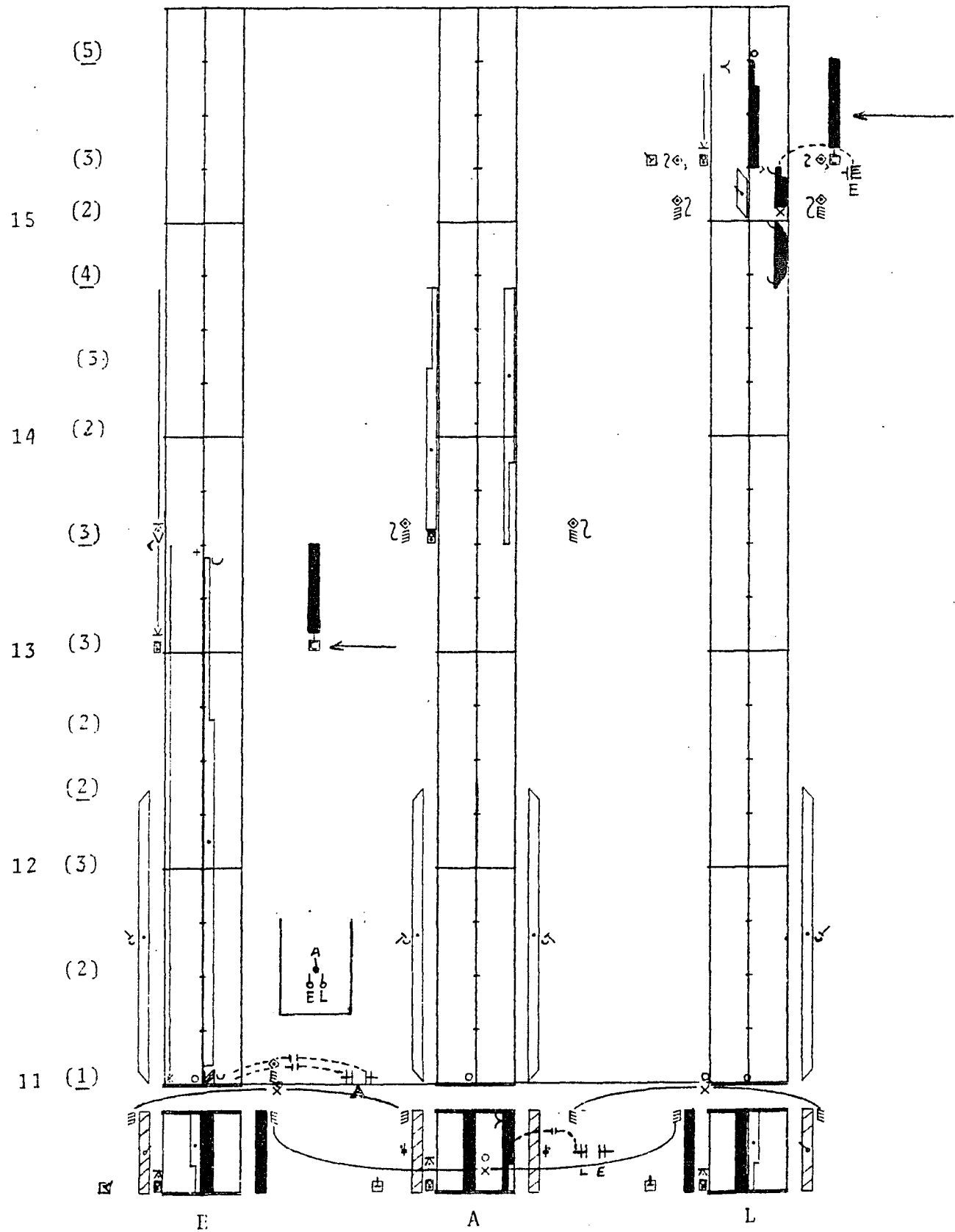


Illustration 6. Dancers focusing to the floor in "Central Park in the Dark"; starting position

<sup>53</sup>videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1292-1312.

Illustration 6, continued. Dancers focusing to the floor in "Central Park in the Dark"; measures 11-15



Another device is extensive use of canon. Staggered beginnings give the illusion that movement is being transmitted from one cluster of dancers to the next, as though by the wind. Nature rarely moves in unison, nor do the participants in this dance. The theme of movement in tree branches is translated choreographically into sets of similar movements that occur at different times in different parts of the stage.

Yet another device is continuity of movement and of the sense of power inherent in the dancers. Sokolow emphasized "contained dynamism" during pauses in the dance. Unlike "Hallowe'en," she cautioned dancers not to think "pose." Sokolow termed pauses "rested moments"<sup>54</sup> during which the vitality of the natural image should not diminish.

Ad lib movements by the group are another way in which Sokolow captures her content. In measures 34-45, the dancers engage in contact improvisation, using each other's weight, directions, levels, and timing as stimulus for responsive movements. Just as wind in the trees seems to arise spontaneously and produces varied impact, parts of "Central Park in the Dark" are performed spontaneously and produce varied results in each performance.

Contact between dancers is an important formal element in the choreography. Dancers intertwine their arms, legs, and torsos, creating a sense of many parts belonging to each base of support. Limbs stretch out in different combinations, the limbs of groups of dancers creating the

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<sup>54</sup>Videotape 2 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0971.

sense of volume and multiplicity that the image of trees requires. Perhaps the most direct choreographic result of the theme of trees at night is the lack of locomotion. Clusters of two and three dancers remain rooted to their spots for the opening and closing segments of "Central Park." In the middle segment, the dancers become observers of the environment of trees they represented, and only then do they move freely about the stage.

Sokolow achieves the impression of mass onstage with the use of weighty movement. Dancers remain almost always in plié through the opening and closing segments of "Central Park." Their movements are strong and sustained. Clusters of dancers appear as substantial, grounded entities.

Sokolow has organized "Central Park in the Dark" into relatively long choreographic phrases, to facilitate working with Ives' music. After the opening in silence, during which the lights slowly rise, the first segment of the dance proceeds in three phrases of ten measures. These measures are counted by the choreographer in three beats, despite Ives' time signature of 4/4.<sup>55</sup> One must adopt Sokolow's slow pace of counting to make dance and music correspond. If one counts too fast, one can, as Sokolow said and did, pause until the cue to begin the next phrase is heard. The beginning of each of the opening three phrases is recognizable by the A<sup>b</sup> played by cello and bass.

It is noteworthy that Sokolow repeatedly changed her

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., foot 0284.

method of counting as she set "Central Park in the Dark."<sup>56</sup>

It highlighted the fact that Ives' music is not easily counted, and that the crucial element in performance is to complete each dance phrase by the time the next music cue is heard. The lack of easily discernible counts keeps precision from entering the dance, an unsuitable quality, and forces the dancers to probe their way through the sound. This may help them to move fluidly, and in response to their concept of the movement phrase and the general atmosphere produced by the sound and light. Lacking musical counts, the dancers are detached onstage, forced to create an environment which moves to its own impulses.

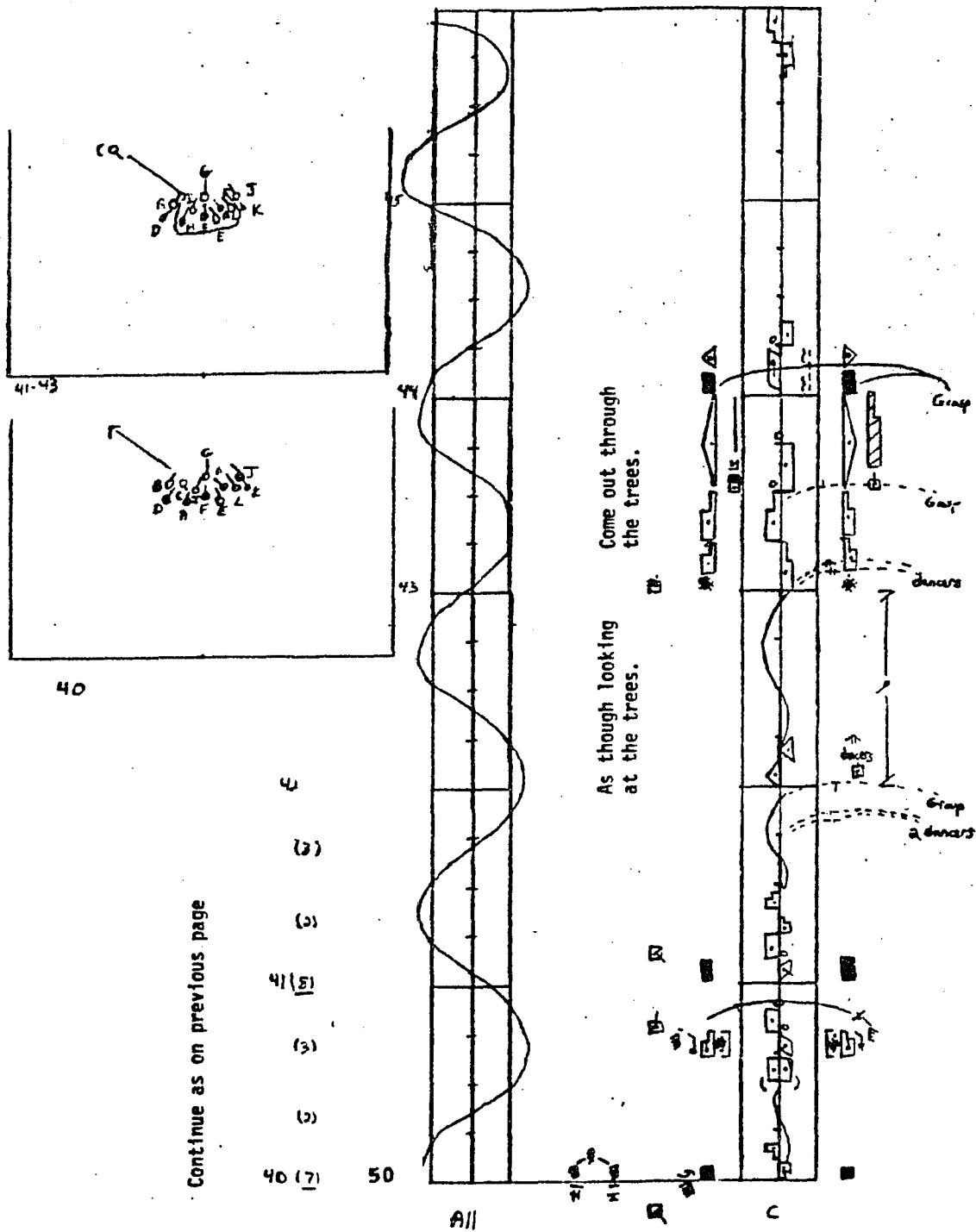
"Central Park in the Dark" follows an A B C A format: "... the end is like the beginning."<sup>57</sup> In the two A sections, the dancers represent trees at night. The first A section extends from measure 1-49, ending with the dissolution of the improvised "forest" in center stage. As the dancers move apart, their role is transformed from "trees in the night" to "observers of trees in the night." This change is presaged by dancer C in measures 40 following, when she darts out of the group, and returns to wander through the trees as a spectator. (See illustration 7.) This technique of having one dancer introduce a change in theme that will shortly affect all the dancers is an instance of the "staggered beginnings" of canon that permeate the choreography of "Central Park in the Dark."

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., foot 0617-0671.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., foot 0247.

Illustration 7. Dancer C leads a change in characterization for participants in "Central Park in the Dark"; measures 40-44



Continue as on previous page

In measure 46, the dancers break contact, and for the first time, move as individuals. The movement of their arms in the following measures provides a transition between the tree theme of the A section and the "looking and marveling" theme of the B section. By the time they have arrived in their positions for the backward hinge (measure 49), the dancers have completed the transition to their new characters. From this point, their focuses become the central choreographic device conveying their awe and delight.

As the dancers drop slowly to the floor in canon, they give the impression that what they see in the treetops is overwhelming, and they must draw back. Focus motivates their movement. They cover their eyes and slowly turn away (measure 50), and when they look again, their upward focus pulls them to their feet (measures 51-52). Still in canon, they begin to move, revolving, and gather at downstage center, staring upstage. Again, the force of their focus propels them to move, and they run, in staggered groups, toward the source of their attention (measures 58-59). What the dancers "see" in the B section causes them to react in movement and to travel about the stage. And what they "see" is what the audience saw in the first A section and will see again in the repeat of A: trees at night. Sokolow shows us her image in the A sections, and her reaction to that image in the B section.

Measures 64-66 represent the next transition, into the jazz of section C. Sokolow explained section C to the dancers: "Then Charles Ives suddenly goes into a jazz

episode, and [the dance has] a step in jazz, but done on the floor. . . .If he does it [goes to jazz], we should do it."<sup>58</sup>

Sokolow remarked to lighting designer Ron Burns that the dancers "look like animals, and they should."<sup>59</sup> In section C, nature seems to respond to the strains of "raucous city noises and a ragtime piano" drifting across the park.<sup>60</sup> As the volume of Ives' music increases, so does the pace of activity in the choreography. In a flurry of whirling, shaking and flying, the world moves in time to different kinds of night sounds.

Sokolow not only follows the general mood of the music in section C, she incorporates its strong accents into the choreography and uses them to generate momentum. For the first and only time in "Central Park in the Dark," movements are percussive and punctuated with bursts of energy. The change in dynamics in section C, partly achieved through the driving power of the accents, is tremendous. "This section starts with accents.  $\overset{>}{1}$   $\overset{>}{2}$   $\overset{>}{3}$   $\overset{>}{4}$   $\overset{>}{5}$   $\overset{>}{6}$ . Then no accents [as the dancers slide downstage on the floor] until you get to [measure 91]. That's the second time the accents come, before you run. When you do this [measures 91-4], it should be wild, wild! And when you hear the percussion, start running. . . . The big lesson is to relate what you're

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., foot 0247, 1372.

<sup>59</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1336.

<sup>60</sup>Peter Yates, Twentieth Century Music, p. 257.

doing to the music."<sup>61</sup> Strong accents build both music and movement to a climax. When the climax ends abruptly, "Central Park in the Dark" returns to its sounds of stillness and images of trees at night.

### "The Pond, The Cage"

Form and meaning are indissolubly wedded in his body, which is totally expressive of the mind within . . . .<sup>62</sup>

In "The Pond, The Cage," Sokolow manipulated the music of Charles Ives to create an acoustic environment for her "homage to Nijinsky." She combined two separate compositions by Ives, "The Pond" and "In the Cage;" "The Pond" is played once through, followed by "In the Cage," ending with a repeat of "The Pond." A period of silence precedes each playing of "The Pond."

The music is thus arranged in A B A form, and the choreography follows the same pattern. When "The Pond" repeats musically, the movement is largely that of the beginning of the dance. The A B A form harkens back to "Central Park in the Dark," which employed the same device of circling back to the beginning for its concluding statement.

When the pool of light rises on the solo male dancer in "The Pond, The Cage," he moves to silence. "I shouldn't see your face," Sokolow directed. "When you do this

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<sup>61</sup>Videotape 3 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: Fall, 1983), foot 0080-0092, 0199.

<sup>62</sup>Auguste Rodin, "Le Matin," Paris, May 30, 1912. In reference to Nijinsky.

[introductory sequence], you are putting your hand in the water . . . . The use of the hand should be very mysterious."<sup>63</sup> The dancer's focus on the surface of the stage, the pool of light, the movements of the hands, suggest water before the audience hears the liquid sounds of Ives' music.

Why has Sokolow chosen this context for her homage to Nijinsky? One explanation is that Nijinsky danced the role of Narcissus in 1911, to choreography by Fokine. The fact that the choreography was not a success<sup>64</sup> may have stimulated Sokolow to create her own version. The legend of the beautiful Narcissus is compatible with the legend of Nijinsky, who was vastly admired for his grace, power and magnetism. Sokolow's use of silence, apart from its value in focusing the audience's attention, may also be a nod to Nijinsky, of whose L'après-midi d'un faune Richard Buckle wrote,

Instead of the law-ordained married bondage between music and dance, the possibility of a freer union . . . could now be perceived. In retrospect, we can say that a step had been taken which might lead to dancing without any musical accompaniment at all.<sup>65</sup>

The introductory use of silence is of course also a formal link between "Central Park in the Dark" and "The Pond, The Cage."

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<sup>63</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1170-1234.

<sup>64</sup>Richard Buckle, Diaghilev (New York: Atheneum, 1979), p. 194. Citing Alexandre Benois.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

The movement quality of "The Pond" is sinuous and legato, smooth and continuous. Each movement is linked causally to the next. When the hands draw in to the feet in the opening sequence (See illustration 8.), they gather the strength for the body to rise.<sup>66</sup> This interdependence of movements continues throughout "The Pond."

"Did you ever see photos of Nijinsky?" Sokolow asked. "I always think of him here."<sup>67</sup> (See illustration 9.) There are several moments in "The Pond" that recall Nijinsky, his two-dimensionality and his bas-relief positions. The elasticity and gentle luxury of Sokolow's movements capture intangible qualities of the legendary dancer. Simplicity and clarity define these movements, each slowly shaping a subsequent image of the body. As Diaghilev said of L'après-midi d'un faune, ". . . actual dancing is almost dispensed with--it is supplanted by a new plastic art."<sup>68</sup>

"The Cage" is a dramatically contrasting section. Its direct opposition to "The Pond" is shown in several ways. One is an expanded use of levels. In "The Pond," once the dancer rises from the floor, all movements are performed standing. In "The Cage," the dancer bends low toward his reflection in the water and jumps high into the air. He

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<sup>66</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0196.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., foot 0416.

<sup>68</sup>Nesta MacDonald, Diaghilev Observed by Critics in England and the United States 1911-1929 (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), p. 78. Citing interview in the London "Daily Mail," June 18, 1912.

The lights come up slowly as the right arm moves forward. The pool of light is the pond. As the hands slide on the floor, feel the water. The hands should finish on a line with the right foot, they should not be taken forward of the foot. The arms should be taken forward in the same rhythm. (Each arm takes approx. 10 sec.) The use of the hand should be very mysterious, so mysterious that we think "What are they looking at? What?"

Take the water over your foot. (approx. 5 sec.)

Silence

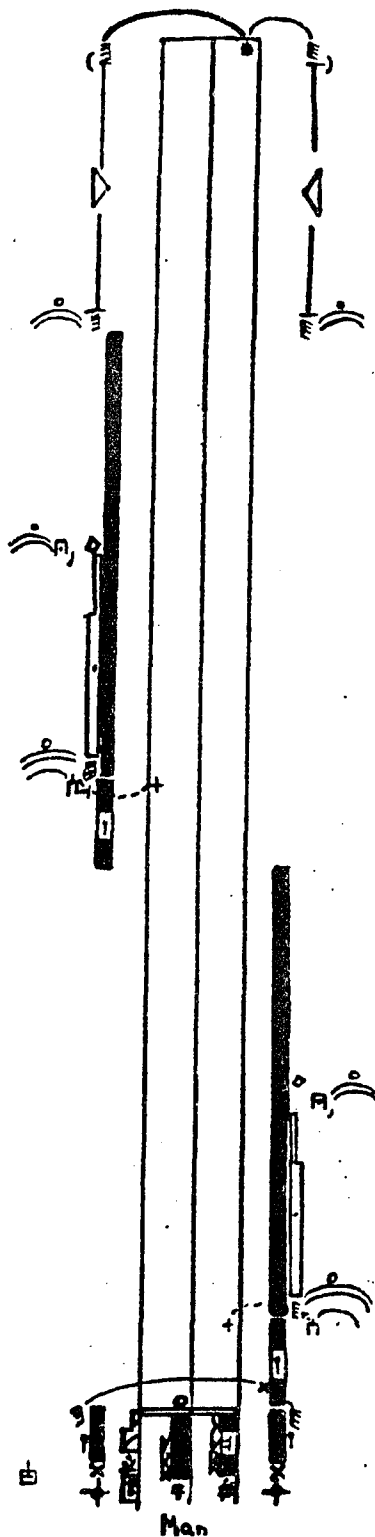
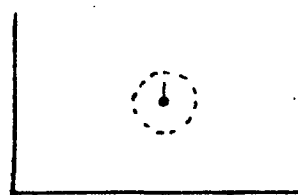


Illustration 8.  
Opening sequence of  
"The Pond, The Cage"

Everything done during the silence is done slowly. As long as he moves slowly, the performer has some freedom as to exact duration. Approximate times for each movement are given in the score. These times are based on the performance at the University of Hawaii. These are given so that the reconstructor has a general idea of the timing but do not need to be strictly adhered to.



Starting Position

Illustration 8, continued. Opening sequence of "The Pond, the Cage"

(approx. 4 sec.)

Feel as though you are going to put your head on the floor, into the water. The head must not lift as you come to standing, if anything it goes even lower. (approx. 6 sec.)

Ms. Sokolow said here, "Show us who you are. Rise to the peak." Lift very high so that it affects the head. (approx. 6 sec.)

(approx. 2 sec.)

Silence

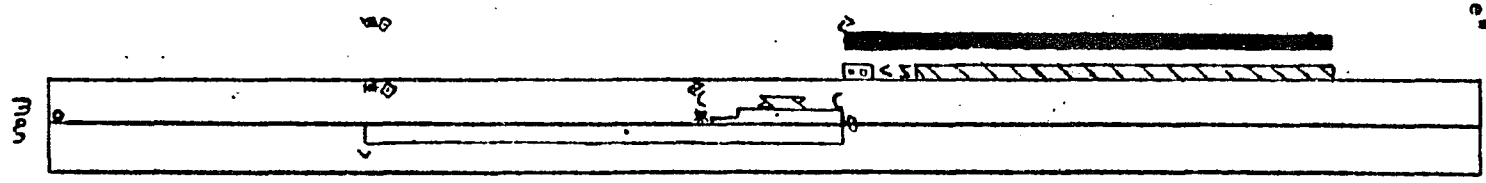


Illustration 9. "I always think of him [Nijinsky] here."  
measures 11-12

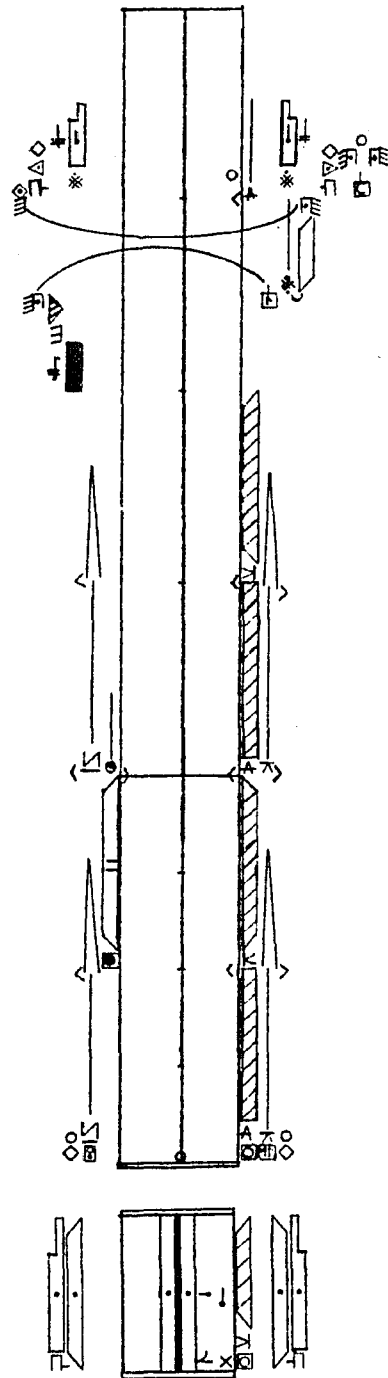
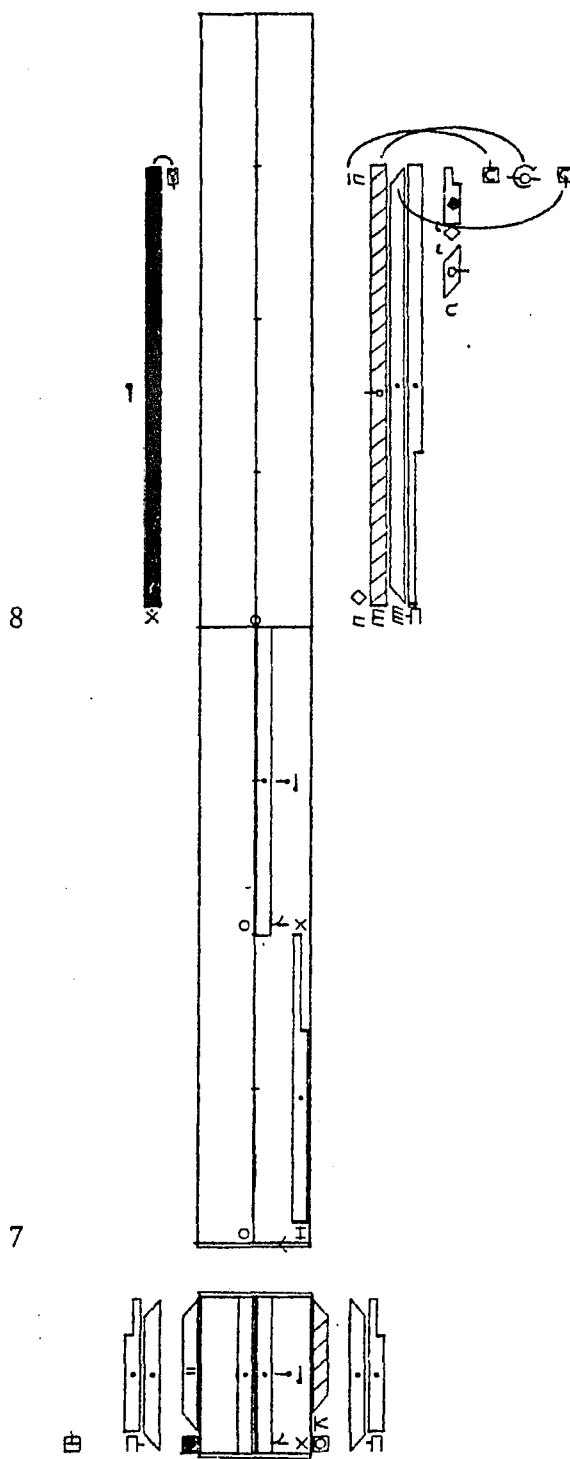


Illustration 10. Possible references to Nijinsky's choreography and movement qualities in "The Pond, The Cage"



Example of sensuality; measures 7-8

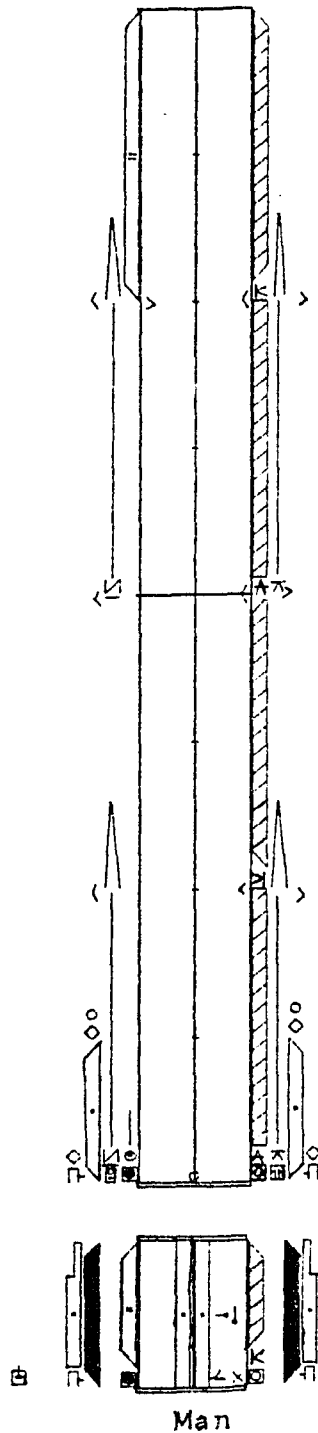
For example of 2-dimensionality, see Illustration 8.

Illustration 10, continued. Possible references to  
Nijinsky's choreography and movement in  
"The Pond, The Cage"

Go far out on each side. Feel as though  
your body goes way beyond your hand.

5

4



Example of luxuriant stretch; measures 4-5

For example of bas-relief position, see illustration 9.

makes strong use of vertical space, since the pool of light still encloses him horizontally.<sup>69</sup> Another is the quality and timing of movements, which in "The Pond" were elongated, light and sustained and in "The Cage" become increasingly staccato, strong and quick.<sup>70</sup> Still another is the emotion projected by the dancer, which changes from placid in "The Pond" to frantic in "The Cage." "Grip intensely!" Sokolow directed. "This part is a conflict . . . ."<sup>71</sup> The pool of light, captivating as "The Pond," has become captivity in "The Cage." Enjoyment of self has become the torment of isolation. The beauty of Nijinsky has given way to schizophrenia.

When "The Pond" returns, it is introduced with silence, just as at the beginning of the dance. The man's focus over his right shoulder re-establishes the Narcissus image and, in effect, the dancer begins the dance again. The final movement, however, is not from "The Pond" (measure 49-50). It embodies the anxiety and impossibility of escape of "The Cage." The device of leaving the dancer jumping and spinning in place as the light fades suggests that the cycle of "The Pond" and "The Cage" is never-ending.

Sokolow may have made this dance about Nijinsky because she perceived him as having experienced life's greatest joys and terrors. She may view his life, perhaps not unlike her

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<sup>69</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0633-0721.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., foot 0569-0596.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., foot 0769-0790.

own, as having been alternately the experiences of "The Pond" and "The Cage."

"The Unanswered Question"

Do you understand what this is about? I'm sure you know, that there are questions in life [for which] there are no answers. And this is the theme of this dance.<sup>72</sup>

". . . when you do this, and when you prepare for it, prepare with deep thought inside."<sup>73</sup>

"The Unanswered Question" is at once the most universal and most personal statement in Scenes from Charles Ives. The dance is about the existential condition, a universal theme. It is also about Sokolow's reaction to that condition. Although her feelings may be shared by many, Sokolow's dance reveals the anguish of the woman who made it.

That the dance carries deep meaning for Sokolow was clear from the respectful way she approached teaching and directing the work. She tried to motivate dancers to concentrate: "All the phrasing for this kind of work starts here [pointing to her chest]; it doesn't start there" [pointing outside and gesturing with her arms]. "All from here . . . . You see, it comes from inside, and the more you can feel that, the better."<sup>74</sup> In breaks in rehearsal, she refused to relax: "I wouldn't do that in-between. Stay in the mood."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1152.

<sup>73</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1080-1090.

<sup>74</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1014.

<sup>75</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1444.

As Ives did in his music, Sokolow used a repeating motif of query and search in "The Unanswered Question." It is varied by performing it with different body parts: the hand and arm and visual focus all question the audience, the void of the theatre, the space above the dancers' heads. The querying, searching motif recurs as follows:

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Body part performing the motif</u>
20-21 (and through 29)	Focus
36	Focus
39, 40-42	Focus, Arm
46-49	Hand and arm
51-52	Focus
53-56	Arm and focus

Sokolow used the repeating motif to build toward her final image of frustration (measures 56-58). The growing certainty that there is no answer to the why of existence leads dancers to draw their heads to the ground in despair. Ives' musical motif echoes above them, and the dance ends with his articulation of the perennial question. At the conclusion of Scenes from Charles Ives, one is as far removed from a traditional finale as one could imagine.

It is in "The Unanswered Question" that the audience sees all the dancers' faces for the first time in Scenes from Charles Ives. This is not a haphazard circumstance. Of all the sections of the dance, "The Unanswered Question" must project the strongest sense that there are people like ourselves onstage. One of the ways Sokolow achieves this is

by withholding the actual identities of the group of dancers in "Hallowe'en" and "Central Park in the Dark," revealing them only at this juncture in her choreography.

The faces are not revealed all at once. The dancers begin "The Unanswered Question" in a single line, facing upstage. When they offer a hand to their neighbor to start the dance, they turn full profile to the audience and address the person next to them. Sokolow said, "What's interesting is seeing everyone's back, and then we see a face, a hand, and taking the hand. It's like saying, 'Will you be my friend?' And you say yes. And then another."<sup>76</sup> It is not until measures 20-21 that the dancers turn full-face to the audience, and this revelatory movement is done slowly and with reluctance. Sokolow suggested that experiencing physical difficulty in turning would invest the movement with the right quality, and asked the dancers not to bend their knees or to release the pressure of their arms against the turn. "Don't be in a hurry to turn," she directed. "It's like you're very withheld, withdrawn, [turning] to face the world."<sup>77</sup> Sokolow directed dancers to face the audience as real people, not anonymous performers. To aid in this, she asked them to wear their own clothing on stage in place of costuming. They were, by showing themselves honestly to viewers, to narrow the traditional distance between those on stage and those in the audience. She challenged them to

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., foot 1163-1183.

<sup>77</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0925.

enter completely into the realization of the work, in which they had no possibility of hiding behind the movements, of relying on mere technical skill to reach the audience. Sokolow urged dancers to go beyond their self-consciousness. She wanted them to understand the meaning of the dance, and to do all movements in a way that demonstrated their understanding.

Sokolow's movement is the most spare in this section of Scenes from Charles Ives. What she sought from dancers were movements that communicated her ideas in the simplest, most direct ways. On the first turn to the audience, Sokolow admonished, "Don't dramatize that. Just simple."<sup>78</sup> She repeated these instructions in measures 46-49 (See illustration 11.) when the dancers lie on their sides and gesture with one arm to the audience. "Don't spread the fingers," Sokolow advised. "Just simple. Now, really just drop [the hand]."<sup>79</sup>

However, movements could not be so simply presented that they lost all eloquence. In measures 23-26, Sokolow told the dancers, "When you drop hands to go forward, don't just do this [let go the hands]. Hold on longer."<sup>80</sup> A simple letting go of the hands was too minimal to express the tentativeness and temerity just seen in the group's walks backward (measures 16-21). By adjusting the timing of the

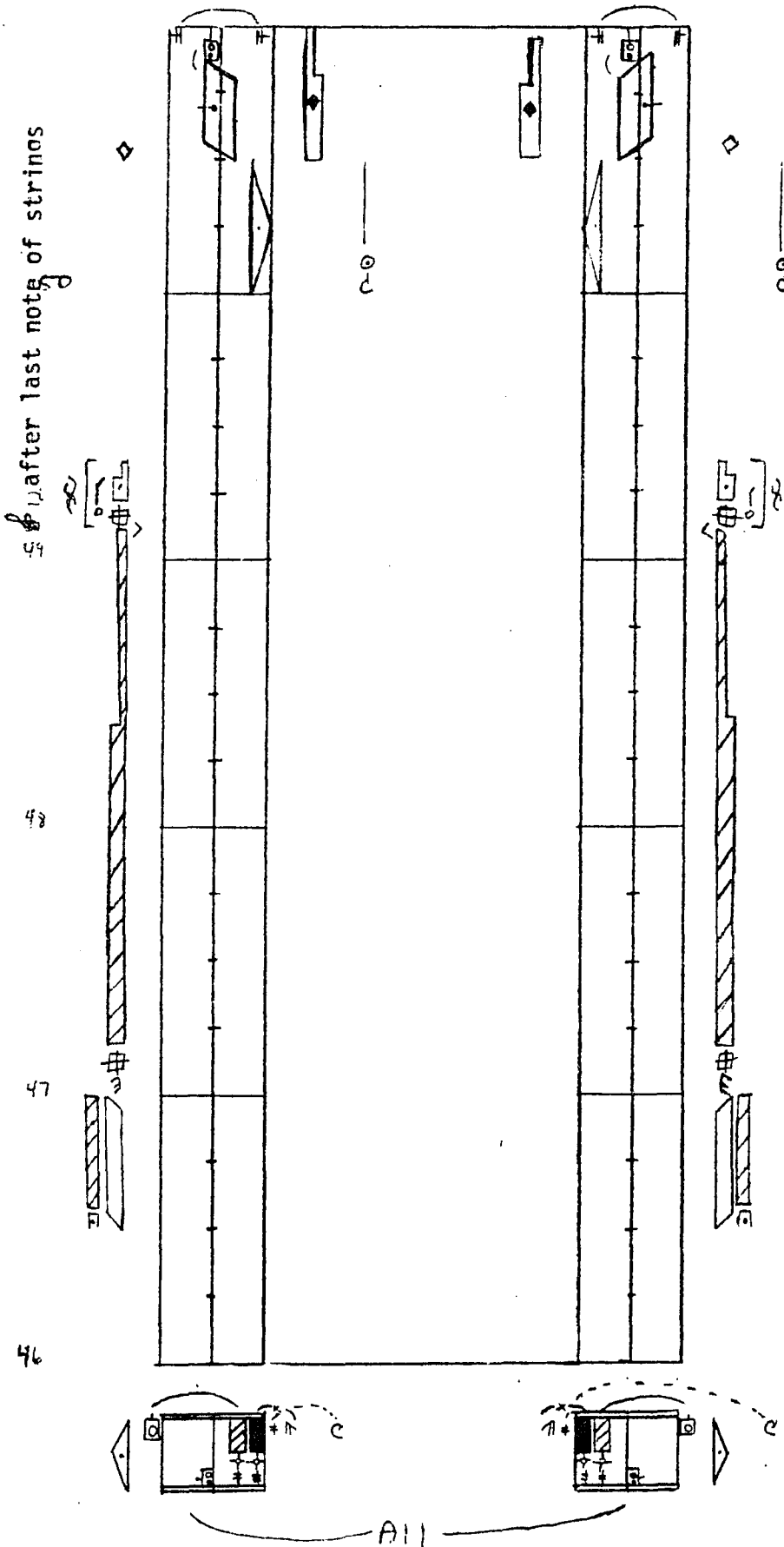
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<sup>78</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1430-1439.

<sup>79</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 0992.

<sup>80</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal, foot 1220-1229.

Illustration 11. "Just simple. Now, really just drop [the hand]."; measures 46-50



Measure 50, end -- Legs must be together.

Measure 49 -- All the dancers drop their arm after the last high note of the strings (See music score). They do not all have to drop their arm necessarily at the same time as long as it is after this note.

Measures 47-48 -- the dancers must be careful not to spread their fingers as they raise their lower arm.

movement, Sokolow subtly increased its complexity. Although barely perceptible, the slower speed of the letting go of hands showed the reticence of individuals at leaving the group. The performance challenge for dancers in "The Unanswered Question" is to discover ways of communicating the choreographer's ideas fully, without moving beyond what is necessary in order to do so. Personalized approaches to the movement are possible, indeed are to be encouraged. But with movements as simple as those in "The Unanswered Question," interpolations become highly visible, and some may obscure or overly dramatize the meaning of the dance.

Audience reaction to "The Unanswered Question" at the City College of New York seemed nearly unanimous: viewers felt helpless and uneasy. The choreography induced a state of mind similar to the one it depicted. For this reason, Sokolow considers this choreography especially successful. She believes choreography is meaningful when it produces thought and feeling in audiences that are parallel to the ideas and emotions that originally inspired it. When this happens, Sokolow said, choreographers and audience have shared a view of life. Dancers make possible this sharing, as they give shape to thoughts and feelings so that audiences may recognize them and respond.

Rachel Lampert: What's Remembered?

My work is generally very personal, somewhat autobiographical, usually with a sense of humor, underlying something that is not so funny - a kind of bittersweet approach. (Rachel Lampert, University of Iowa Radio Forum, April, 1983.)

What's remembered in Rachel Lampert's choreography are the traces of a past relationship. The dance features persistent recollections concerning two people and the active bond between them that alternately delighted and chafed them. There are "pushing away" motifs in the dance, movements that seem to try to put the past behind the dancers. But the bulk of the choreography is testimony to people's inability to control their remembrances of relationships that once affected them deeply.

The choreography is episodic, shifting between separate images of past experiences. There is no unity of time, place, or action; the dance ranges freely through history and geography, carried along as if by a train of thought. The content is dramatic, but it resists the linear progress of a story line.

Lampert's piece is in effect a monodrama, in which all the characters are manifestations or projections of the one couple whose remembrances are captured in the choreography. Leslie Rotman wrote in her introduction to the Labanotation score, "Dancers A and a are the central figures and Bb through Ee represent four different aspects or elements of

Aa's relationship."<sup>1</sup> The dance is peopled with echoes of the A couple and with dancers who offer supplementary images of behavior that aren't captured in the A couple's dancing.

At points in the dance, the stage is given over to people who represent the thoughts of one character, projected onto the outside world. One example is E's solo in the section "Forget/Remember" and the ensuing "Fives" section. In her dance, E vigorously demonstrates one facet of A's remembrances, her frustration at the couple's lack of communication and her inability to break out of a repeating thought pattern. As the "Fives" begin, E introduces the noisy, pounding sequence in which the group joins. She takes her place at the center of the stage, and watches the dancers circle around her. "It's as if the things that are going on in your head are actually going on outside of you," Lampert directed.<sup>2</sup>

What's Remembered?, then, is about the memories of a single couple. Additional characters on stage represent alternate glimpses of their complex relationship. Sometimes one member of the couple is featured more than the other, and the thoughts of this character may be rendered visible by group movements. Taken as a whole, the choreography is a series of approaches to communicating inner movement. The dance makes manifest the mental processes and emotional

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<sup>1</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman (New York: Dance Notation Bureau, 1984), p. iv.

<sup>2</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January, 1984), foot 0370.

experiences that comprised part of the life of this couple.

The choreography is arranged in six sections, the first of which is reprised at the end. The sections are made more distinct by the changes in audio which accompanies them. Lampert uses pulsing sound, lyrical music, silence and spoken dialogue with different sections of the dance and in transitional passages. The changes in sound enhance the separateness of each memory and aid in projecting differing dramatic qualities. (See illustration 1.)

Illustration 1. Sections of What's Remembered?  
and their audio accompaniment

<u>Section</u>	<u>Audio</u>
Opening	Pulsing music
Transition	Silence
Dream	Monologue
Duet	Lyrical music
Transition (Flings)	Silence
Drive in the Country	Lyrical music
Forget/Remember solo	Dialogue
Fives	Silence (percussion of feet)
Canon	Pulsing music (as at beginning)
Transition (end of canon section; carries to starting positions)	Dialogue
Reprise	Lyrical music (same as Duet) and dialogue

Just as the sound varies between sections, so do the compositional devices underlying the choreography. Some of the sections rely on set, unison movement. Others use improvisation, or were originally derived from improvisatory work. Some sections are predominantly gestural and

stationary; others use more abstract movement and travel generously across the stage. Canon, fragmentation of previous phrases, reversals of previous lines of travel or of the sequence of movements, changes in orchestration (which dancers and how many perform recurring phrases in the dance), changes in meter and changes in the placement of accents are some ways the choreographer manipulated her original movement ideas to achieve diversity. Sections of the dance feature different compositional techniques.

In rehearsal, Lampert was very concerned with having the dancers "fully realize" their movements. She asked the dancers to invest their movements with intent. Lampert resisted describing her choreographic intent to the dancers if they seemed to have their own ideas about how to perform sections of the dance. However, she did offer them a choice of motivations for particular movements when their imaginations failed. The primary need she established in her direction was for the participants in What's Remembered? to arrive at a personal interpretation or understanding of the dance, which would make it possible for them to invest each of their movements with a quality. Lampert did not accept straightforward, technical performance of her work. She expected dancers to establish a reason for doing particular sequences, and to perform them with this reason in mind. The dancers' reasons could differ from her own vision of the work, but dancers had to imbue their movements with qualities so that they "looked real." By asking dancers to arrive at their own understanding of the work, Lampert hoped they would

internalize the choreography and perform it with conviction, with mental as well as physical involvement. The dance concerns assorted memories, and memories typically have emotions associated with them. Lampert asked the dancers to help decide what emotions they felt should be tied to different sections of the dance, and to "feel that" as they performed each memory sequence.

### Structural Analysis of the Dance

#### Opening

The first impression received as the lights come up is of couples; "two-by-two" is stated clearly in the opening positions, with the primary couple Aa at the center of the stage. The introductory dialogue is about plans for a week-end, ambitious plans made by a couple who "feel they can do a million things in a week-end," that "their feelings will carry them along."<sup>3</sup> When movement begins, it is phrase "Q," a phrase that will reappear in various guises throughout the dance, and which will return to end the piece.

Lampert's dance begins with "collaborative choreography;" the movements in the "Q" phrase are designed by the dancers to her verbal instructions. Lampert's philosophy that choreography should be flexible enough to change and adapt to different performers while preserving its basic identity is put into practice right at the beginning of

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<sup>3</sup>Videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January, 1984), foot 1200.

What's Remembered? Lampert's instructions in the "Q" phrase are for nine Shape Duets:

- #1: Hug. Embrace your partner.
- #2A: She pushes.
- #2B: He pushes.
- #3: Hang. She hangs on him a little.
- #4: Up on her. Now he actually climbs onto her, with all his weight.
- #5: Whisper. The woman whispers in the man's ear.
- #6: Lean. Casually lean against your partner.
- #7: Lift. Invent a wild lift.
- #8: Show. Show your partner something beautiful about yourself.

Although all five couples do the Shape duets, they do them in different orders.

<u>Couple</u>	<u>Order</u>									
Ee	1	2A	2B	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Aa	2A	2B	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	
Bb	2B	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2A	
Dd	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2A	2B	
Cc	4	5	6	7	8	1	2A	2B	3	

The sequencing places all the couples within the same dance phrase, but ensures that they will each be at a different stage within the phrase at any given moment. This technique foreshadows much of the later choreography. Often in What's Remembered? there will be multiple events going on

at the same time, which are all aspects of one memory. Memories are presented as moments with many facets, rather than as unified, linear ideas. Unison dance is seen as too orderly, too precise, to serve to depict the comprehensive scope of some recollections.

The "Q" phrase embodies most of the themes of What's Remembered? In the couple's relationship, there is love, mutual support, sharing of secrets, an opportunity to show the best sides of oneself, leaning on the other, showing strength to the other, pushing away to get some distance from the other. These themes will recur in this and other sections of the dance; they represent the patterns of behavior into which couples fall. They can be the source of security and comfort, or of irritation and confinement. They can hold a couple together, or force them apart, depending on which "Q" elements take strong precedence over others and how monotonous the behavior pattern becomes.

The "Q" phrase is performed four times. With each repetition, the quality of the movement changes. Lampert asked that each series be consistent internally. She also asked that the dancers concentrate on keeping the space between them active, since it is the connection between the dancers that is thematically important, rather than the individuals. The first time through, Lampert wanted the series to be warm, to feel nice. The dancers had to find ways to make even "She pushes" a warm movement. Lampert suggested "It's not confrontational. When you put your hand on him, [see] the rings that he bought you, the ones that you

wear."<sup>4</sup> The choreographer altered stereotypical "dancing" poses that clouded dramatic intent. Some dancers took poses with one ball of the foot on the floor behind them. "How about this foot over here? I think that's extraneous. It stayed in from Swan Lake somewhere."<sup>5</sup> And Lampert urged the dancers to start very warm so that they would have a possibility for clear change as they progressed through their four "Q" phrases. "Start with luxury and swoon in the hanging shape, so you can move toward "strangle" later. . . . Find what's nice," she kept repeating. "Show your strength to someone you love. It's nice when you're bigger to throw her over there, and over there. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

On the second time through the "Q" phrase, Lampert directed, "Let's make the next set just a little bit cooler. When somebody has . . . shown all their charms, all the jewels, and then it begins to wear a little thin. So you cool out, take a step back, and look at the person again."<sup>7</sup> On the third set, the cooling down continued. "You'd like to push the person away. You've already seen their favorite parts. You already know everything about them and you're ready to go on. Anyone else in the room would be a better partner for you than this person you have right there."<sup>8</sup> In

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., foot 1055.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., foot 1057.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., foot 1080.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., foot 1156.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., foot 1175.

the final repeat of the "Q" series, Lampert said, "I want you to take what you just did, and physicalize it even more. The third time through, you're really pushing the other person away. The last time through, [be] very physical, so we lose as much transition material as possible . . . . Three and four are similar, but they're different in that four is just totally physical. I don't want to put things in your head, I want you to find them. But [this may be about] when you've gone beyond the intellect about why you have these feelings, and you're in just the feeling state, the plate-throwing state."<sup>9</sup> This very physical version of "Q" leads into the exiting circular paths, which "are connected to the idea that you already know you want to get away from this partner."<sup>10</sup> There is no falling in the circling; the movement is absolutely in control. But even as they move away on their own, partners stop and take up their half of some of their shape-duet poses. They are already engaged in the theme of the dance: remembering. "It's as if you're trying to recall 'what was that like?'"<sup>11</sup>

Lampert directed the dancers to avoid unison timing on the scalloped paths of their exits. (See illustration 2.) They were to move as individuals, not couples or a group. "Stop each in your own time. You don't have to stop as a group. . . . Continue in the same way through the scallops

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., foot 1198.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., foot 1276.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., foot 1283.

and let yourself be affected by the people around you, their timing, when they move and stop." Dancers were instructed to keep in mind what they were doing. "It's not a shape study. Remember what it was like. The heat is gone. The mutual support is gone. Try to feel what that person was like in the spot they're no longer in." <sup>12</sup>

The first duet begins while the other couples are exiting. Lampert described it as a "power struggle," but pointed out that it is open to interpretation as to how the individuals decide to exert their power. "There are some choices you can make there," Lampert directed the woman, "about how you get him. Right now, you're only getting him by trying to match his strength, but I think there are other ways."<sup>13</sup> How did this dancer exert her power in her actual relationships? Could that become part of this movement?

As the group re-enters, the men jump on the women's backs. One dancer wanted to know where she should focus on this movement. Lampert responded by asking, "Where would you focus if he just did that?" The answer, down to the floor, was accepted, as was another dancer's response to look back at the man. Lampert, in this as in most of the work, was open to individual solutions to unspecific moments in the choreography. Her attitude was, consistently, "Have a reason for doing things, and make your own choices."

The transition into the first "full dance" phrase of

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., foot 1291.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., foot 1395.

Illustration 2. Scalloped Paths of the Dancers' Exits

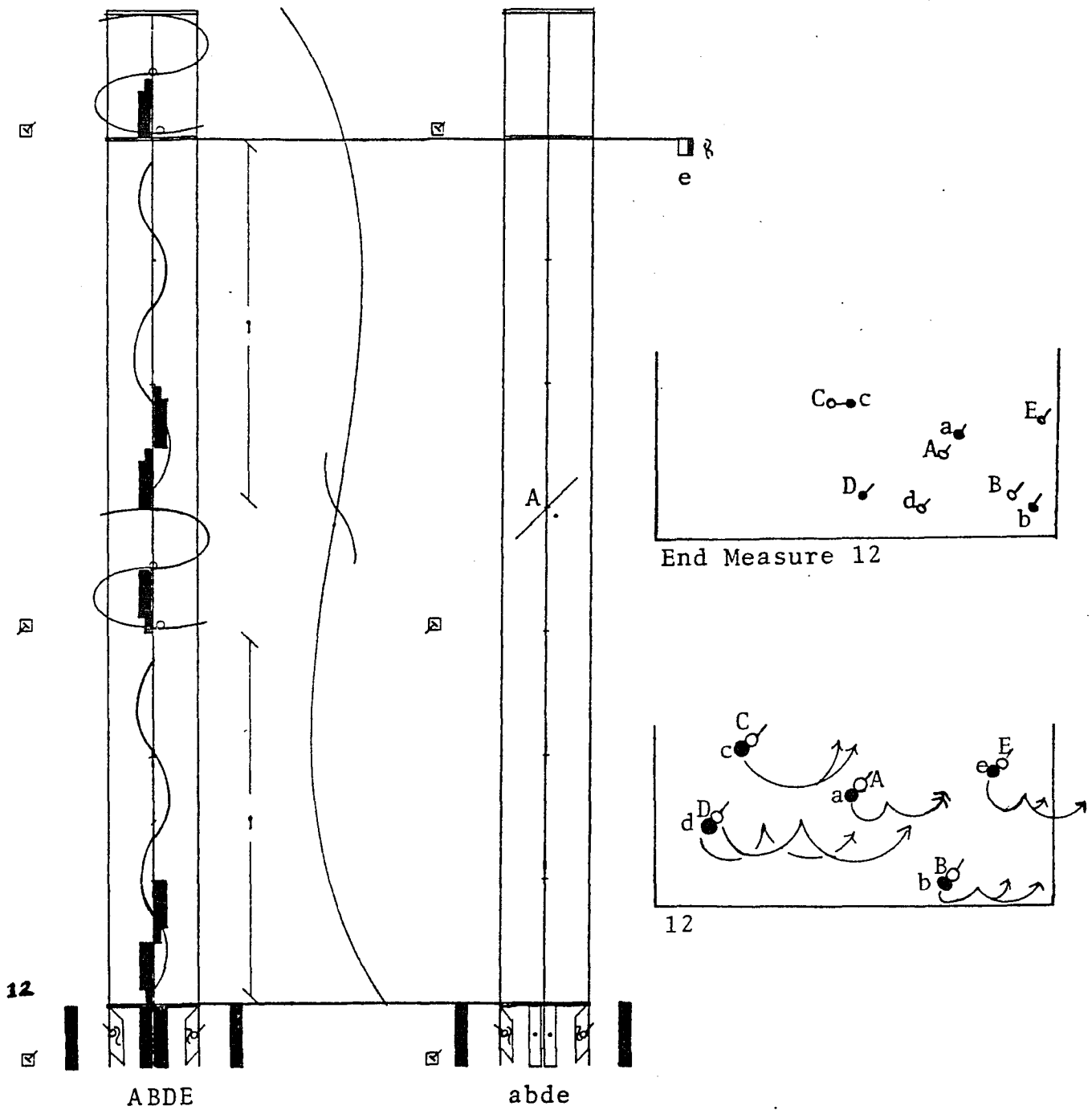
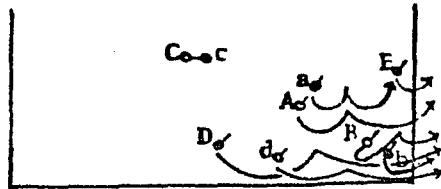
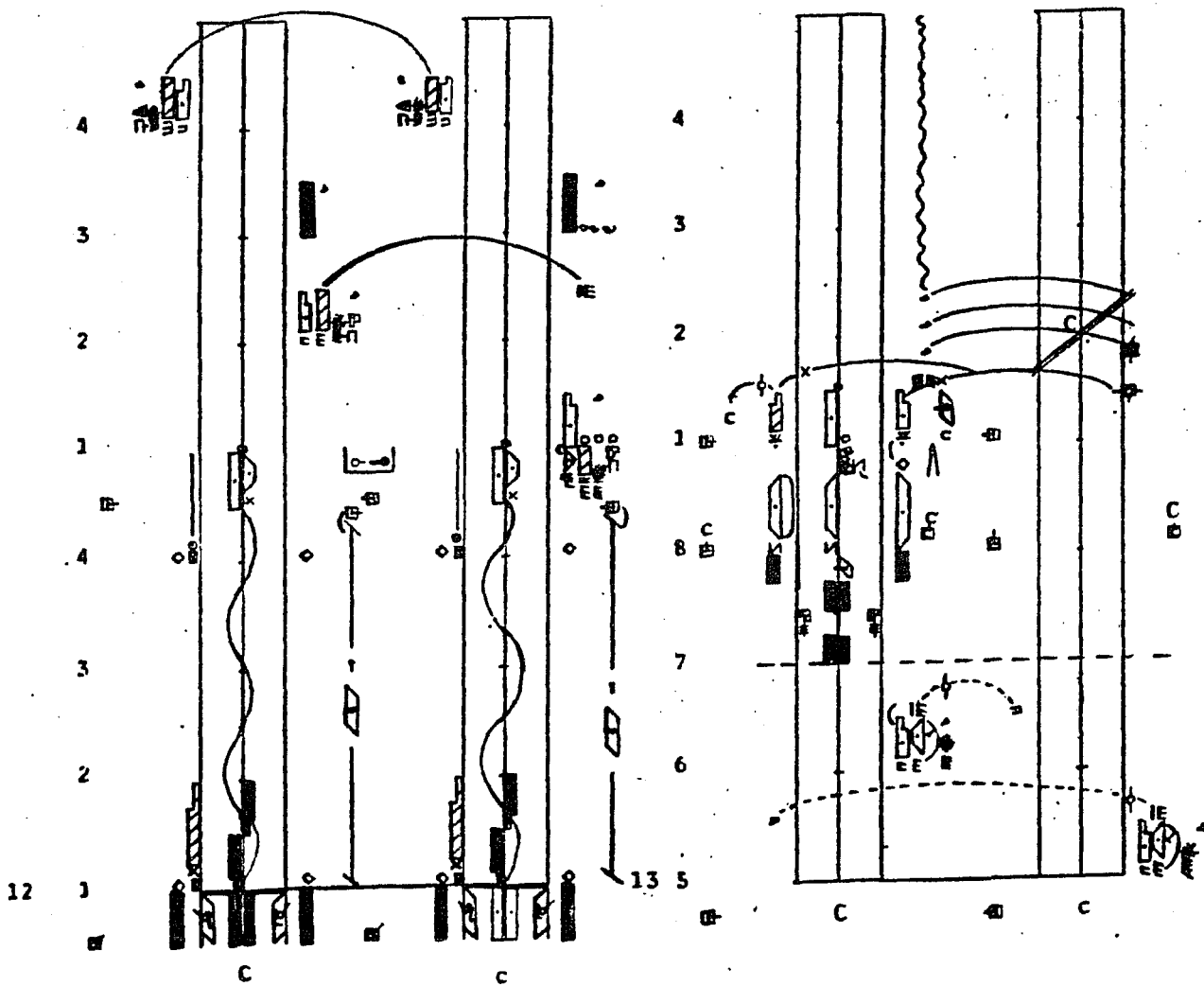


Illustration 3. The First Duet, a "Power Struggle"



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What's Remembered? can be awkward, since it involves a pause for four couples. (See illustration 4.) Lampert advised the men to use the jump's momentum to carry them into the first movement, and the women to stay with their reaction to the jump during the pause. She asked the dancers to fill in the transition with a physical flow that would link the two segments, and encouraged them not to be shy about experimenting with different options. "I will never laugh at any choice you make."<sup>14</sup>

This first "full dance" phrase, called the "SIVA" phrase, has scope and scale. It pushes vigorously through space, and moves the entire group in unison in a long diagonal cross of the stage. (See illustration 5.) Siva, the third god of the Hindu triad, represents the principle of creation that follows destruction. Notice the word notes to measure 21, count 1: "Sit like the god Siva."<sup>15</sup>

Following the "SIVA" phrase is the "traveling," or "T" phrase. (See illustration 6.) It moves the dancers in unison laterally across the stage, and is very physical. It uses changing levels: hops and leaps, turns in relevé, lunges in plié; it changes direction by turning left and right several times each. The "T" phrase introduces an arm motif<sup>16</sup> that reappears in the dance. It seems expressive of letting go, dropping, or laying something before a viewer or listener.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., foot 1515.

<sup>15</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 26.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 29, measure 24, counts 1-2.

Illustration 4. Transition  
into "SIVA" phrase

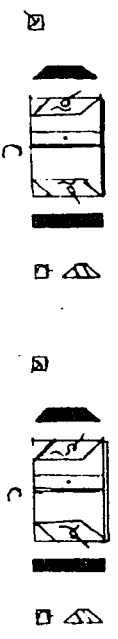
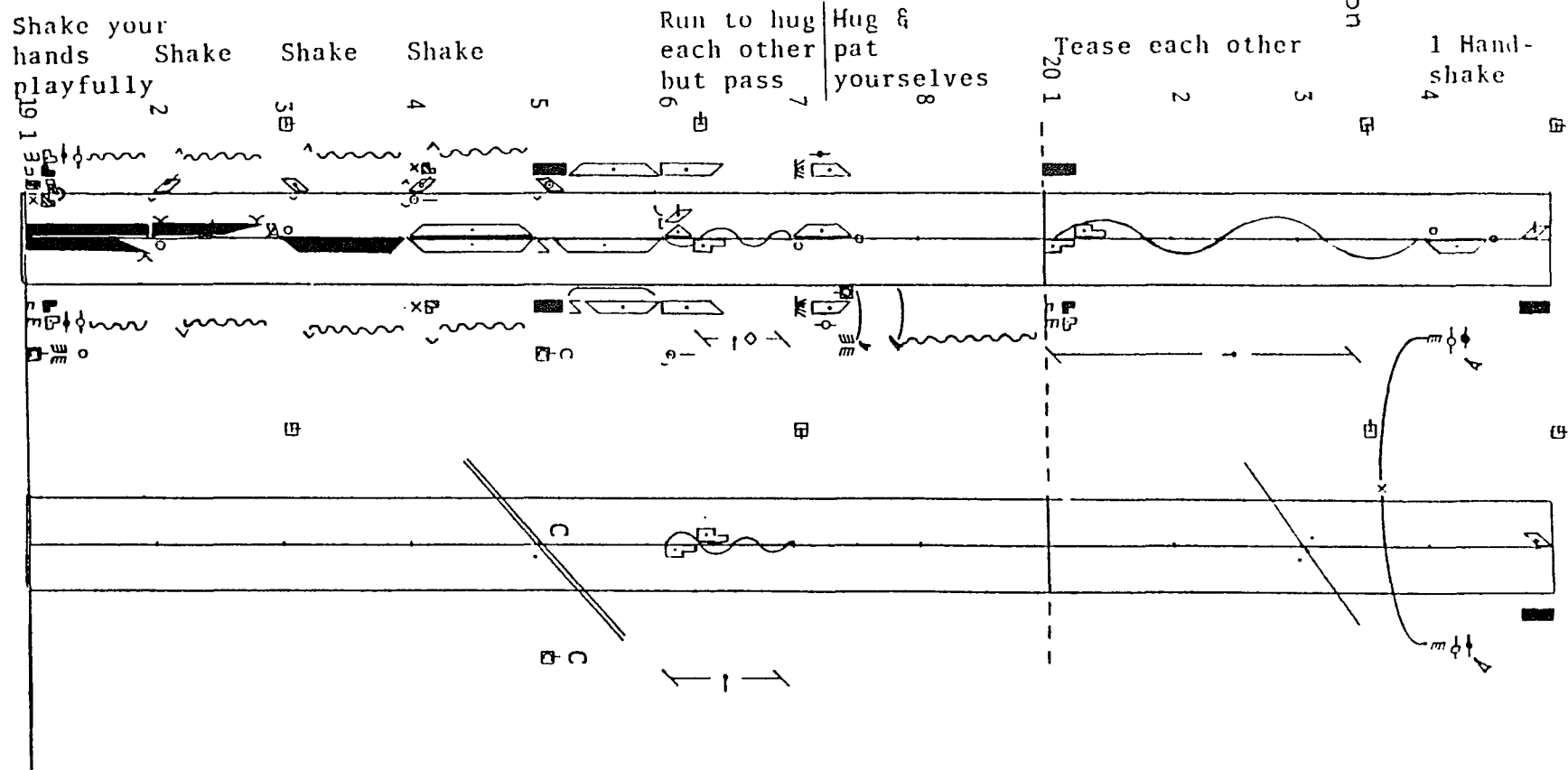
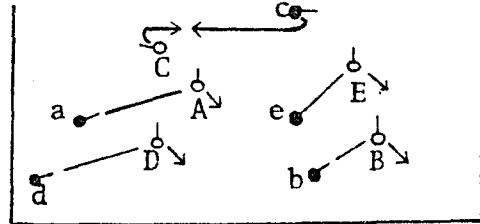
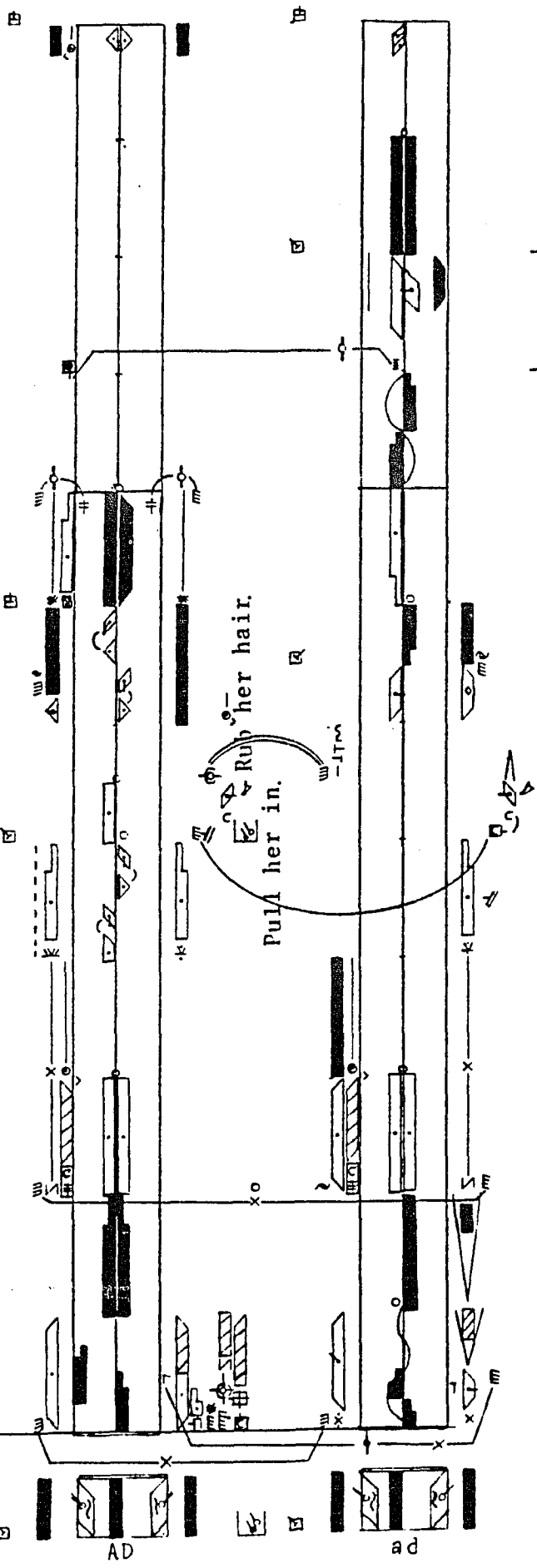


Illustration 4, continued.

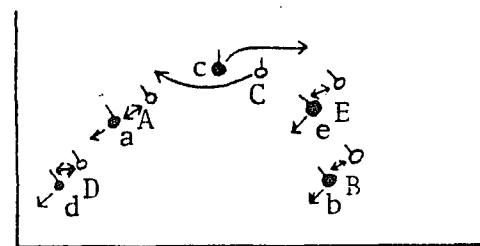
Transition into "SIVA" phrase

Push his face.

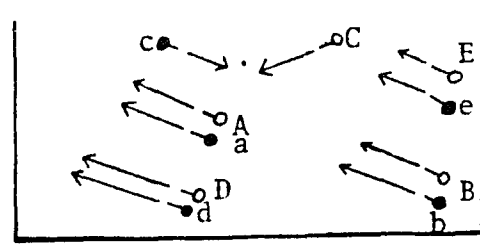
Pull her in.  
Rub her hair.



20<sup>1-3</sup>



19<sup>5-7</sup>



19<sup>1-2</sup>

Perform this fully and energetically. Don't worry about emotional quality.

Siva Phrase

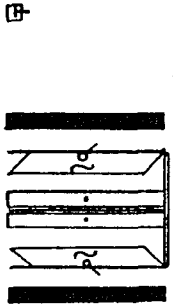
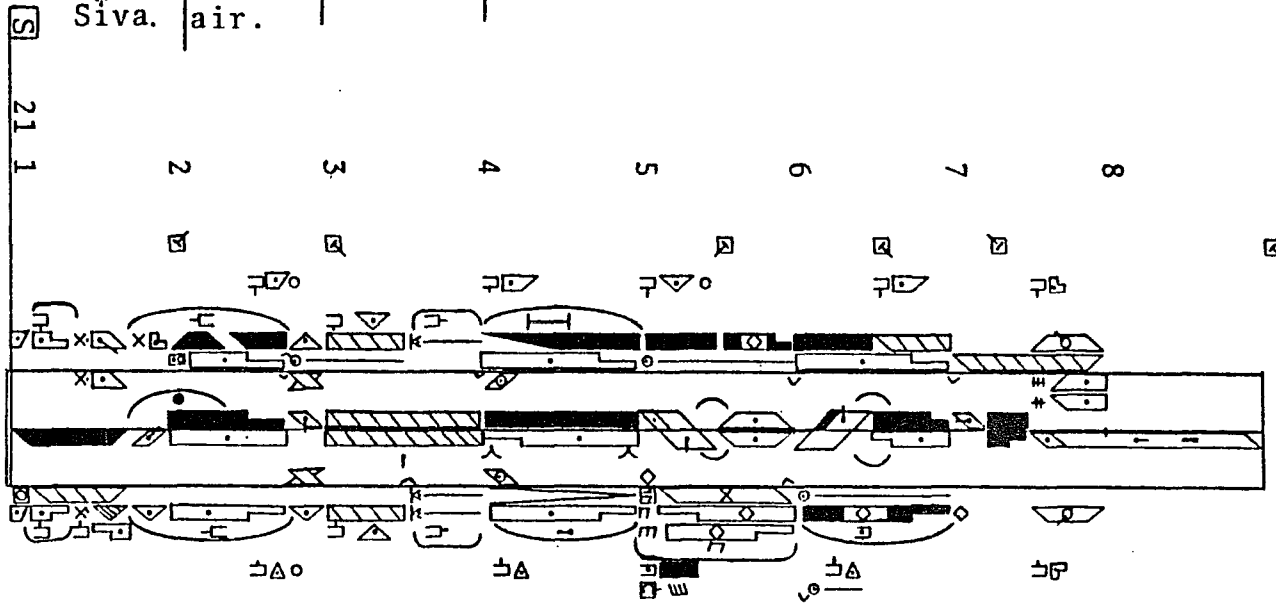
Sit like  
the god  
Siva.

Push  
the  
air.

Prepare  
to dive.

Scoop  
under.

Sail around.

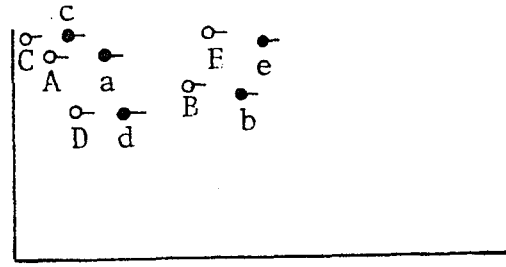
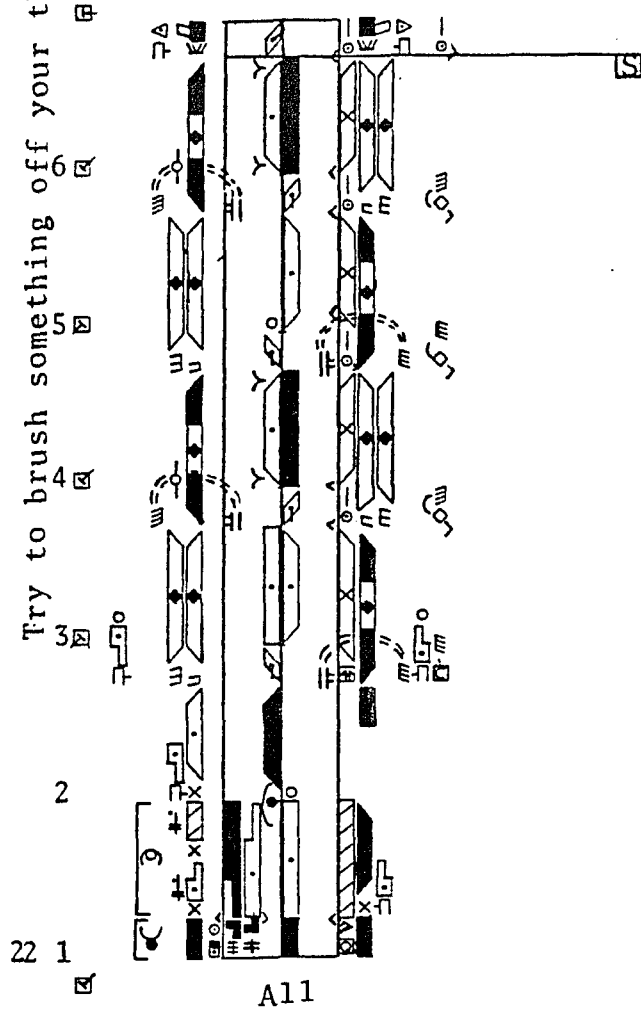


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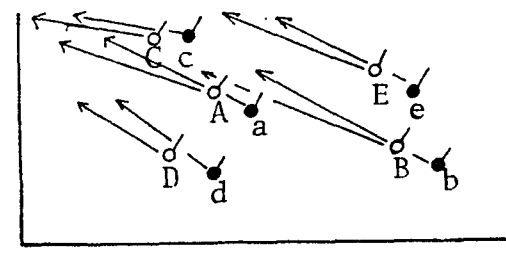
Illustration 5. "SIVA" phrase

Illustration 5, continued. "SIVA" phrase

Try to brush something off your thighs.



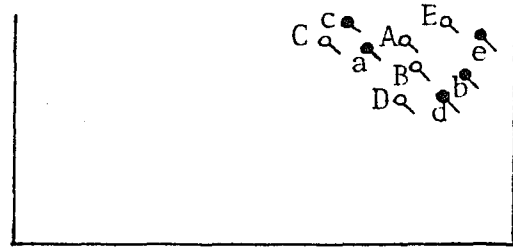
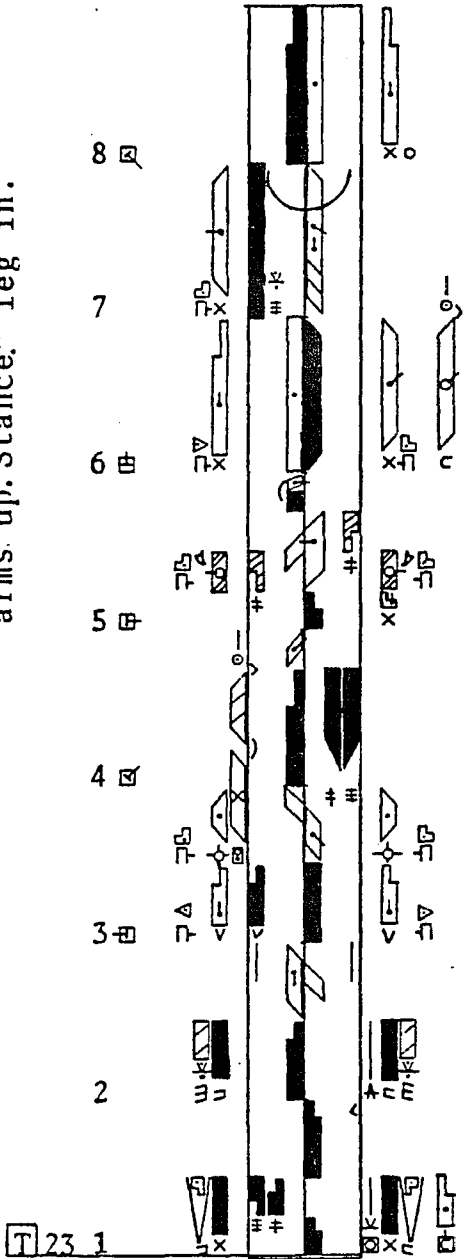
22<sup>2-6</sup> Get to approximately here



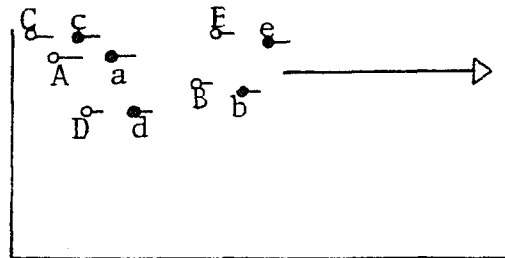
22<sup>2-6</sup>

Illustration 6. "T" phrase

"Westside  
Throw Story Pull  
arms up. Stance." leg in.



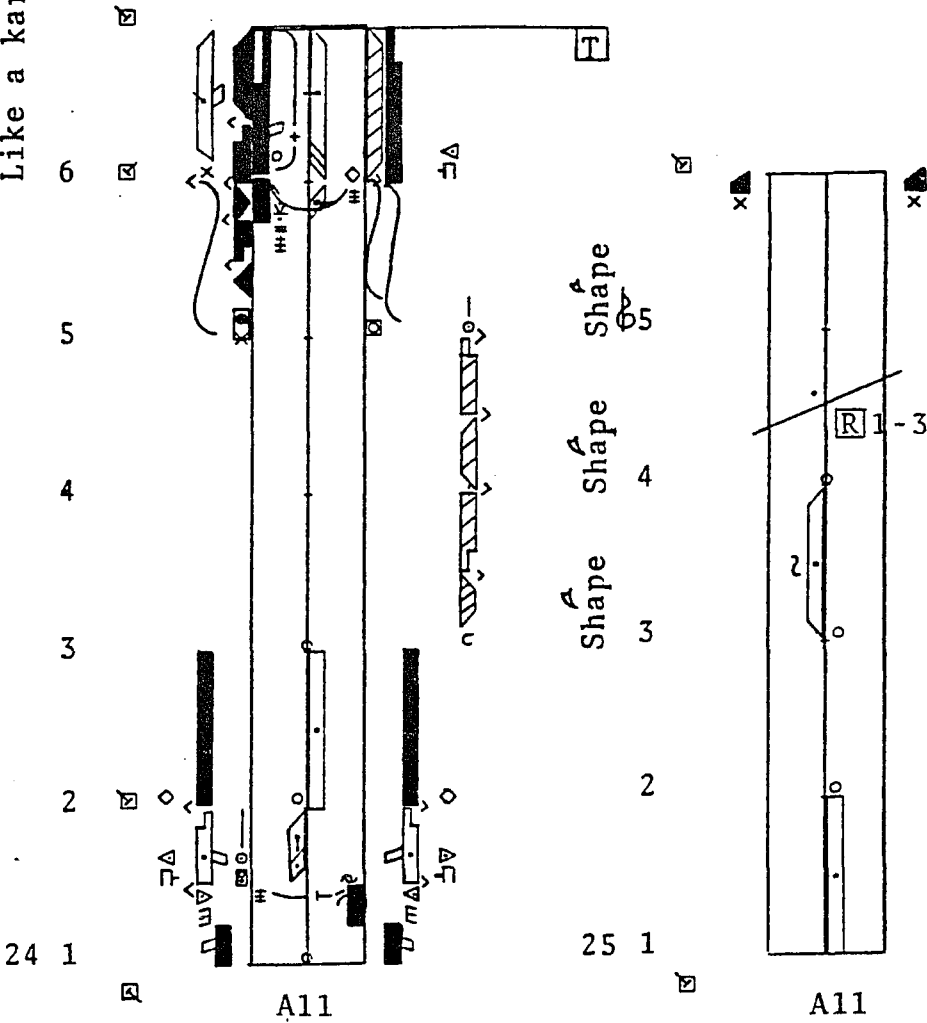
23<sup>1-8</sup> Get to approximately here.



23<sup>1-8</sup>

Illustration 6, continued. "T" phrase

Let  $\square$  react to  $\square$  a little.  
Like a karate position.



Note:

$\square$  is the designation for "Shape Solos," positions from the "Q" phrase done without partners.

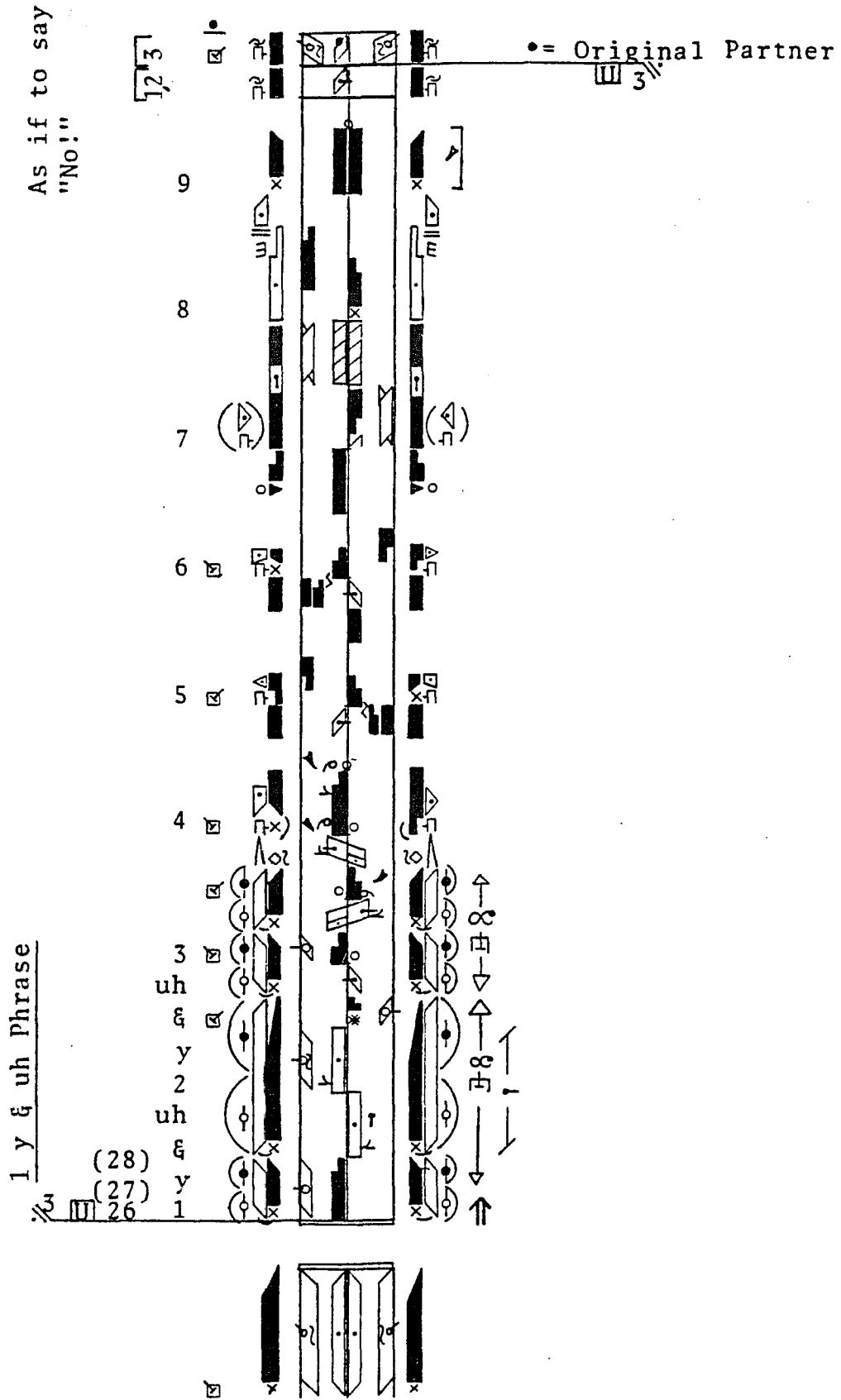
The confusion of the changes of directions in the phrase seems to enter the dancers' bodies in the final counts, as a head circle carries into the pelvis and leads the dancers onto one leg. Fragments of "Q" return to add to the confusion, performed as three shape solos without partners.

The next phrase of this opening section is labelled "U." (See illustration 7.) It too is presented in unison, and is performed three times with varying qualities. If the "SIVA" phrase emphasizes pushing arm movements, the "T" phrase travel and changes in level and direction, the "U" phrase emphasizes the rhythmic play of the feet on the floor. It is choppy, percussive, and does not travel. The "U" phrase is argumentative. The first time through, it is performed in a teasing way. The second time is angrier, tighter. The third time is looser, bigger, more carried away with the movement. The opening section concludes as it opened, with the "Q" phrase performed once.

This section of What's Remembered? functions as the exposition of a sonata or the first act in a 3-act play: it introduces the themes which the artist will develop and manipulate through the rest of the work. The "Q," "SIVA," "T," and "U" phrases will all reappear in Lampert's choreography, but in revised forms. In order for the audience to gain familiarity with them so that later development can be appreciated, the themes are presented in the opening section either in unison or with repeats.

The structure of the opening section, then, is as follows:

Illustration 7. "U" phrase



1. "Q" phrase danced four times
2. Exit for 4 couples ("Q" fragments) and Power-struggle duet for one couple
3. "SIVA" phrase (unison)
4. "T" phrase (unison, then "Q" fragments)
5. "U" phrase (unison, danced three times)
6. "Q" phrase

### Dream

The dream section is one of those in which multiple things are ongoing simultaneously. As it begins, five dancers are involved in the "V" phrase. (See illustration 8.) This phrase is performed "as if to say, 'Go away!'"<sup>17</sup> This intent is captured in several ways: the face looks away (measure 1, counts 1 & 3); the arms are in an attitude that wards off approach (measure 1, counts 1 & 3); one supporting foot moves away from the center, as if trying to move the body away (measure 1, counts 3-4); the arm motif of letting go from the "Opening" reappears (measure 1, count 7); the leg wraps into back attitude (measure 2, counts 1-2) as if to say "I'll put this behind me;"<sup>18</sup> the hand pushes the shoulder out of the way (measure 2, count 4). The pointing at the end of the phrase can be accusatory or hopeful. "That's the place we went every Sunday," or "I'm going there; I'm not going to

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<sup>17</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 40, measure 1, counts 1-3.

<sup>18</sup>Videotape 5 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January 1984), foot 0164.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., foot 0295.

be here anymore" are two of many possible options in interpretation. "Anything that you invest it with will work," said Lampert.<sup>19</sup> But the phrase needs to be done with a sense of significance, not abstraction.

The "V" phrase is complicated by the fact that it is done in canon and at two different speeds. Three dancers begin the phrase as soon as the monologue is heard. Two others join in four movements behind them. They perform "V" to the opposite side, and more slowly. The "go away, I'll put it behind me" sequence has been subjected to movement manipulation in tempo, direction, and by staggering the entry of dancers into it.

At the same time that this chorus of activity is ongoing around the stage, three additional dancers enter downstage and cross the apron. They are involved in rendering the woman's dream visible, which is being described in the female monologue accompanying this section. In counterpoint to all the movement, one couple stands upstage, looking off at the sunset. In a scene full of antagonism, this couple may represent a whisper of something that used to be wonderful.

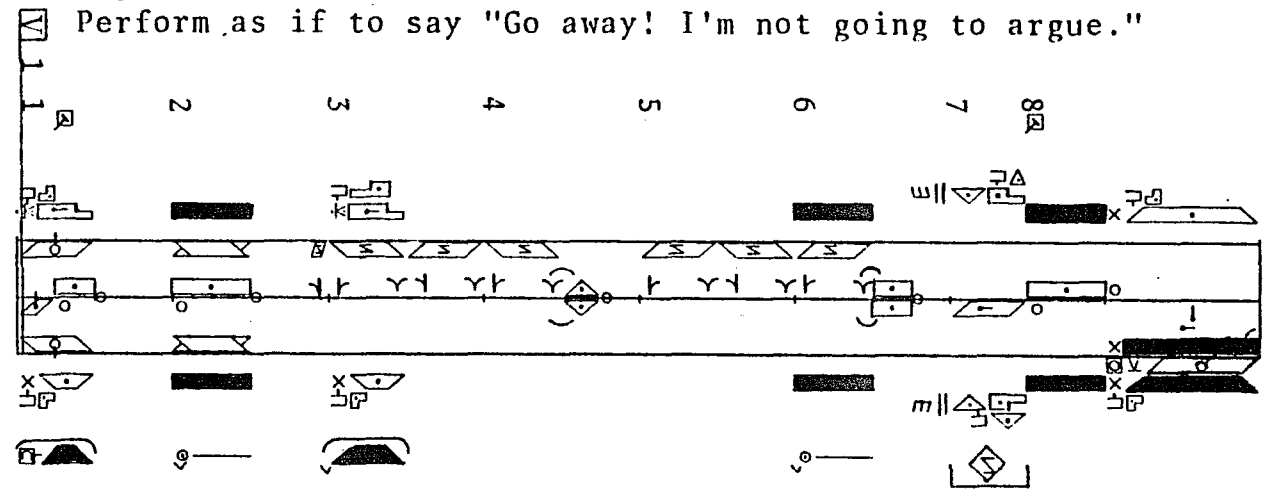
There are, therefore, four things ongoing as the "Dream" begins. The differentiation of activities is enhanced by their uses of space.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., foot 0295.

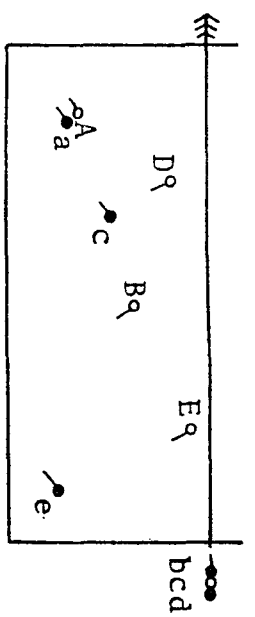
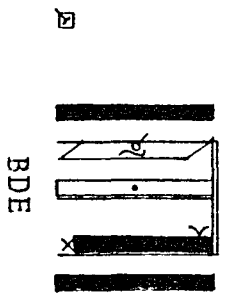
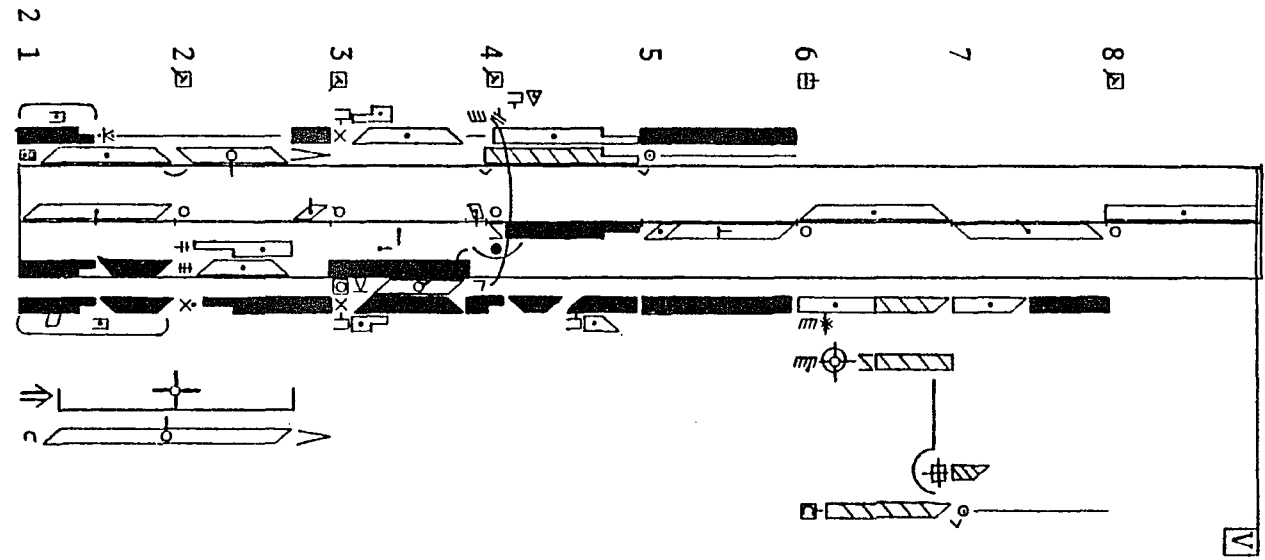
Illustration 8. "V" phrase

Begin on " I remember when we used to tell each other..."  
 Perform as if to say "Go away! I'm not going to argue."



Wrap leg, "putting it behind you."

Throw shoulder. Point at something special.



17-32

1. verbal description of the dream
2. physical representation of one aspect of the dream  
(lateral downstage cross: traveling)
3. attempts to subvert regressive thoughts, to put the past behind (scattered across stage, active but in place)
4. stillness, a fragment of contentment (removed, upstage looking off, static)

After the three "Dream" dancers complete their downstage cross, two of them (a couple) re-enter and perform a reverse cross that is a movement metaphor for real life. They are doing a two-step together. As they make their way along, the woman compulsively reaches after things that she wants and that are outside the couple's parameters. The man stops her, holds her firmly; she seems to accept his control but then begins her compulsive reaching all over again. Lampert provided some images to help the dancers with this sequence. It is as if the woman agrees, "OK, I'll do it your way. Then 'I can't stand it! I've got to do it this way.' [She] would like to get over this neurotic problem, but [she] can't."<sup>20</sup>

Lampert's method of coaching this segment was especially effective. She asked the dancers to converse throughout their movements, talking out their behavior while they were dancing it. When the intentions of their movements became clear through the process of verbalizing events, the dancers stopped talking and just danced.<sup>21</sup> Two things were obvious from this exercise: the extent to which dance is

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<sup>20</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1400-1435.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., foot 1450.

communication for the choreographer, and the extent to which dancers can communicate when they are clear about what it is they are trying to say. It is only fair to add that audience appreciation of this and other of Lampert's choreography is not limited to how well viewers decipher certain movements. Lampert's movement can be interesting in the abstract. It is, however, usually tied to story in design and performance, and is perhaps better appreciated if it is tied to story in its viewing. References to real life in the dance can be as general or specific as performers care to make them, and as full of content as viewers care to see.

The loosely defined counts of the "compulsive duet" are typical of one of Lampert's approaches to time: that acting timing dictates movement timing. "You're missing a beat here, an acting beat," she advised the dancers.<sup>22</sup> The logic of each chain of events, and the time it takes for people to act, react, and interact, determines at what speed and with what temporal accents and pauses movement can occur. It is therefore not possible to give fixed, externally imposed counts to sequences such as this one. Each time the movement is performed, it will justify a particular use of time. The acting will determine the timing which will group movements together.

At the end of the "Dream," there is again a hint of promise. It comes with a brief solo, during which all characters shift into a ruminative pose, and a single, tender

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., foot 1435.

memory is revealed. Lampert's transitional solo is a bridge to the "Duet," the most caring, the happiest section of What's Remembered?

### Duet

"You can't stay away from each other," Lampert pointed out to these two dancers. "And holding onto that feeling will give these movements a sense of rush, of quiet urgency."<sup>23</sup> "Don't worry about counts. Don't count at all. Eventually it will fit within a feeling of the counts. It will set itself . . . there's so much weight and trust you have to deal with. . . . If you're not ready to go, you'll make it up the next time. And you'll make it up in performance too the next time."<sup>24</sup> "There isn't a move in here that isn't done without both of you feeling the weight of the other. There is no little, arbitrary move."<sup>25</sup>

Lampert's "Duet" is about interdependency, and the pleasure found in trusting a partner and taking responsibility for the partner's trust of you. It deals with each person accepting the other's weight, with passive movement, movement guided by the other, the abandonment of throwing oneself onto the other. The movements themselves have requirements which will dictate the time they take. Once again, as in the "Dream" duet, time bows to the needs of

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<sup>23</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January, 1984), foot 0078.

<sup>24</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1718.

<sup>25</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0840.

movement, not the reverse.

"The couples exiting and entering during this section are reflections of couple Aa."<sup>26</sup> While this is true of other sections of What's Remembered?, it is particularly clear that here the inside of the main characters is shown on the outside, through the medium of the other couples. Generally, the couples seem symbolic of togetherness, desire. The D couple, however, introduces a disruptive note in the partners' distance from one another and their inability to approach each other.

The "pointing motif" which has appeared before in the "Opening" (measure 19, count 1) and the "Dream" (measure 2, count 6 of "V" phrase), returns for A, B, D, E in the "Duet." (See illustration 9.) It is used five times in its original form by three couples<sup>27</sup> and is adapted for the principal couple. As the "Duet" begins and the man raises his partner's arm, Lampert asks for directional focus in the arm movement. (See illustration 10.) "I don't know where you're taking her" if the man doesn't fix on a real point in space and lead his partner's arm and gaze to that point. This gesture is less specific than the actual pointing by the other couples, but it should be no less indicative of a search for something, a goal to be reached, a real place the couple wants to go. The gesture expresses desire, showing a

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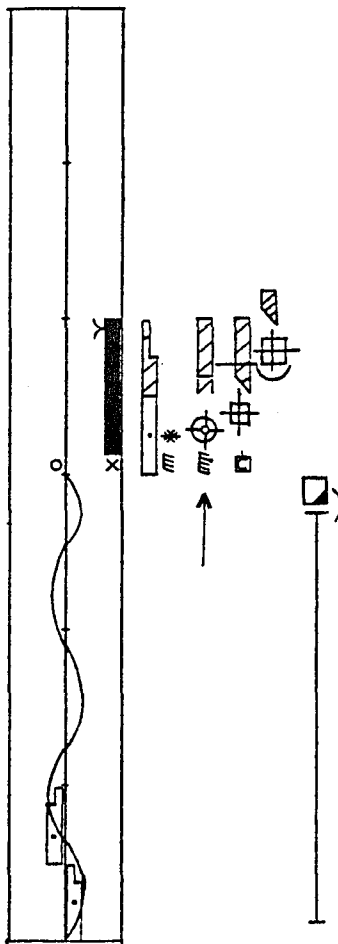
<sup>26</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 66a, C in m. 2, ct. 4; p. 81, C in m. 17, ct. 4; p. 97, C in m. 36, ct. 4; p. 108, e in m. 46, ct. 2; p. 114 b, C in m. 50, ct. 2.

Illustration 9. The "Pointing Motif" in "Duet"

Show B the sunset.

2



Q



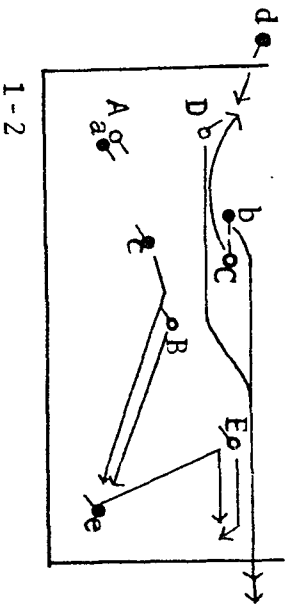
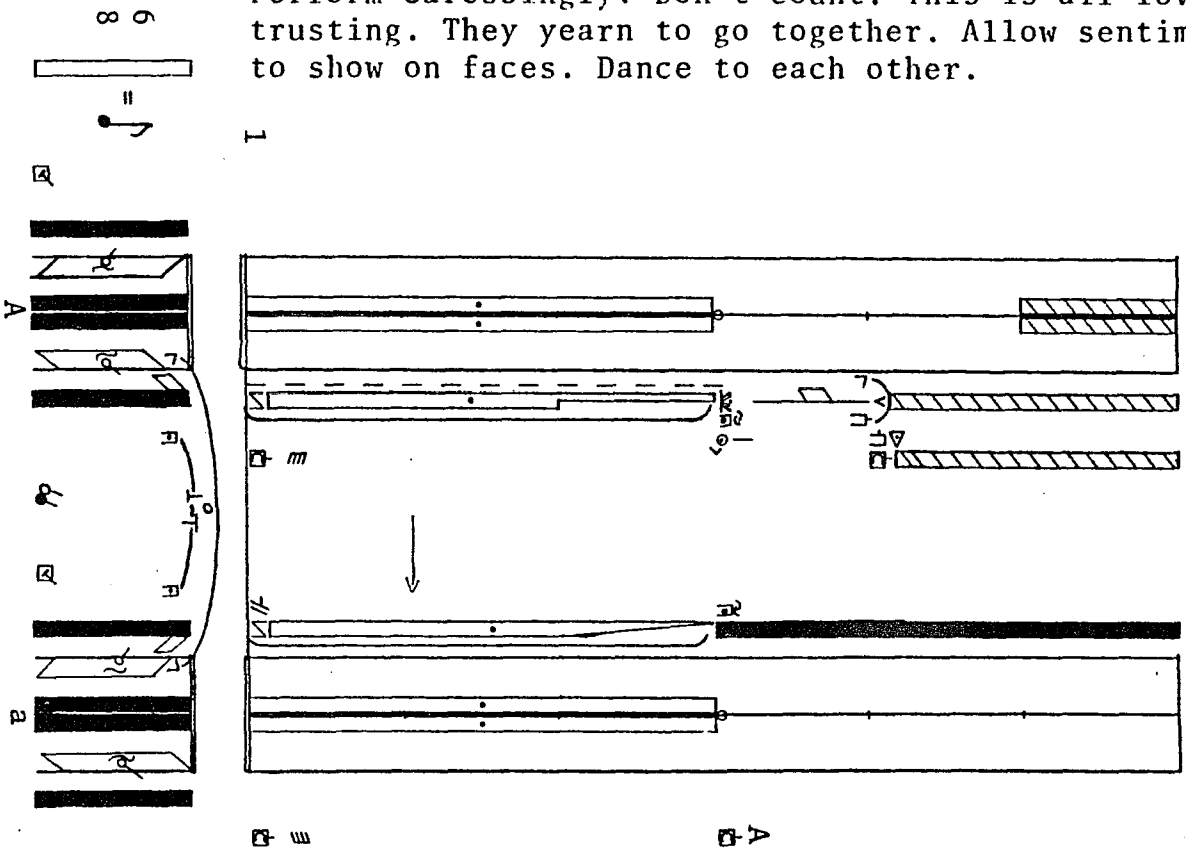
C



End Measure 2

Larghetto

Perform caressingly: Don't count. This is all loving, trusting. They yearn to go together. Allow sentiment to show on faces. Dance to each other.



view of the world to the other, a leading movement.

The "Duet" is structured around supportive contact. Partners catch each other, lean on each other, allow themselves to fall and be caught. There is infrequent separation between the two dancers, but when there is, there must be energy between them that draws them back together. In measures 19-20 (See illustration 11.), Lampert directed the woman to send her partner out, but to feel the ties still there between them. Then, "When you go by him, you stop. Don't make it such [a lunge]. Make it more gestural. He looks at you; you feel his look, heat again, and you turn."<sup>28</sup> Every movement in the "Duet" is loaded with a quality, an emotion, a motivation linked to the bonds of trust and need between these two people.

Lampert provided some images which were helpful to the dancers at Ohio State University. When the man perches on his partner's back (measure 11), she explained that it is as if the woman is saying, "I'll even let you sit on me. I'll support you, I care for you so much."<sup>29</sup> The man's touch to his partner's cheek (measure 14, count 6) receives a rapturous response (measure 15, count 1). The woman experiences a burst of delight; she opens suddenly, extends into an off-balance position, and wraps around him.

Lampert explained the "Duet" as being "very much based on pulling and being led by each other."<sup>30</sup> The weight of the

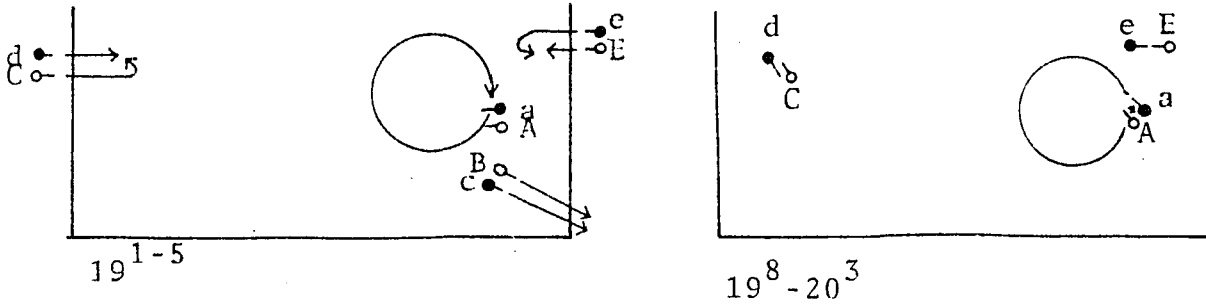
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<sup>28</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0228.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., foot 0735.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., foot 0475.

Illustration 11. Momentary Separation in "Duet"



These circles are done with large, sweeping steps.

Send him out, and pull him back. Arms should look as if they've got him by an elastic string.

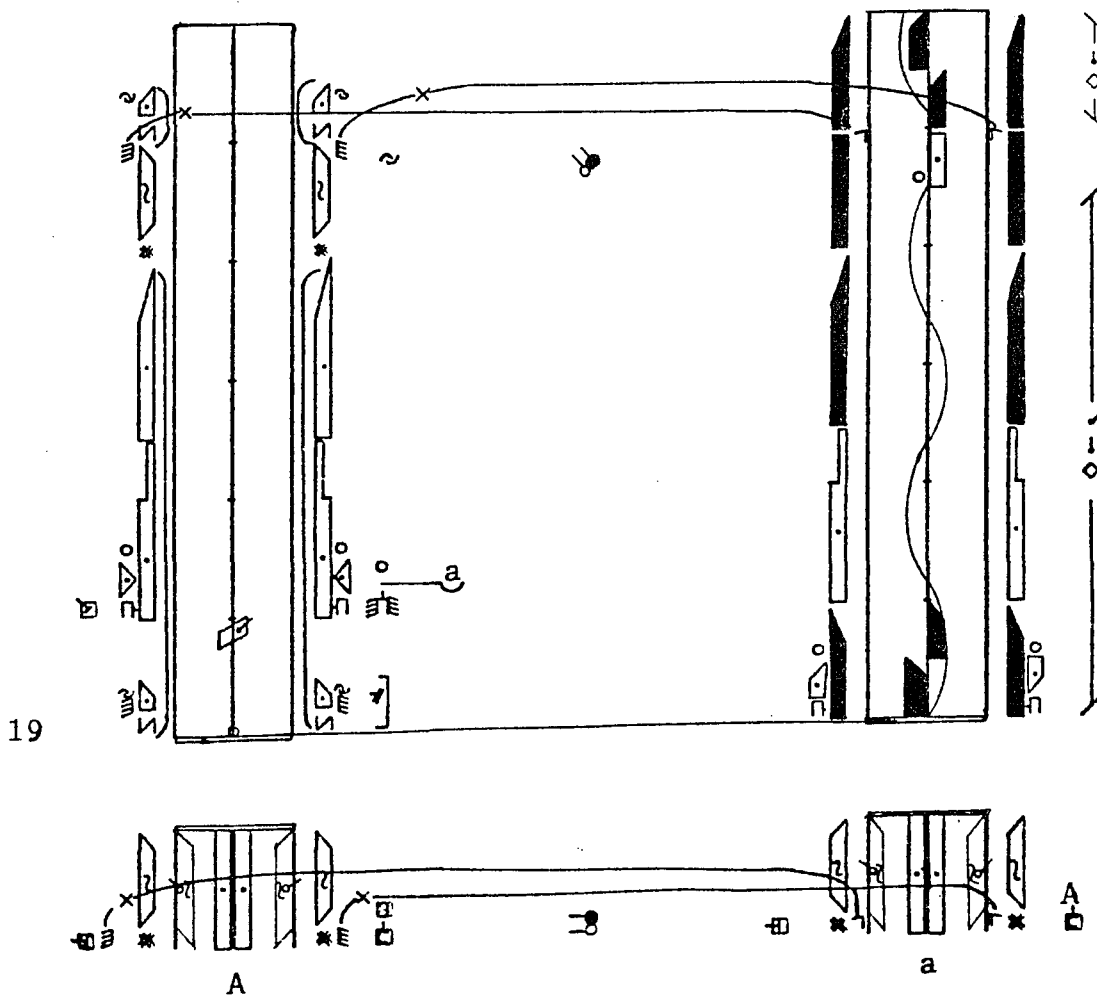
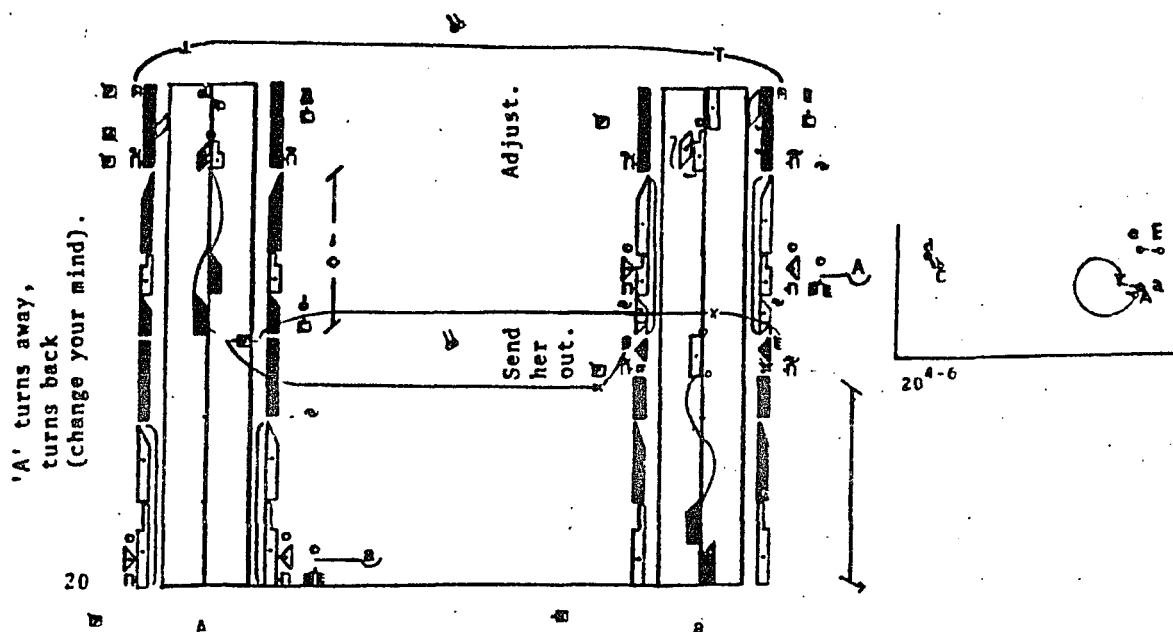


Illustration 11, continued. Momentary Separation in "Duet"



dancers should be very equally borne by the two throughout. There is equal reliance: they do things together. On the other hand, one partner has more of a leadership role at any given moment. In measure 25, it is the man who "is telling his partner 'go there,' and she's the one who holds onto old ideas."<sup>31</sup> Alternately, in measure 26, the woman pushes the man into a turn, surprises him by falling suddenly, and catches him. The dancers respond to each other's momentary dominance. The balance of power, constantly shifting between them, is a game they enter into generously.

Of the circling movements of the arms and circular runs of one partner propelled by the other (See, for example, measure 17-19.), Lampert said, "You are casting a spell. You

<sup>31</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1672.

have secret strings over [him/her] and you pull [him/her] up by the strings."<sup>32</sup> "Don't anticipate the pushes into the circle. Wait with quality. 'I'm willing to go anywhere you send me.'"<sup>33</sup> The dancers in the "Duet" can develop their own reasons for doing things. What they must avoid are "abstract shapes." As Lampert said of measure 31, "The shape has more to do with reaching for the other person than making an abstract shape."<sup>34</sup>

The "Duet" is organized as A B A. When section A returns (measures 1-16 are repeated in measure 38-53), it changes in quality and in the directional facing of the performers onstage. The falls of the woman are deeper, and the timing may vary from the first performance of A. There is a coda that concludes this section, which is the couple's "Q" phrase, done in a slightly different sequence. A hug (shape #1) ends the "Duet." The Aa couple leaves the stage intact; the memory of love they presented is not directly affected by the next transition.

#### Flings (transition)

The bridge from the "Duet" to the "Drive in the Country" is violent and in direct contrast to the preceding section. It scatters one mood to make way for another. In silence, first a woman, then a man, angrily break apart the other

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<sup>32</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0105.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., foot 0275.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., foot 0700.

couples on stage. It is the D couple, who never approached each other during the "Duet," who wreak the havoc.

### Drive in the Country

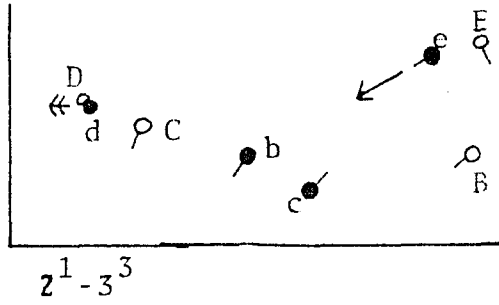
"Actually, I think you're going all the way across the country . . . . And you decided that it would be a great idea to go in a car together. We start out; it's a nice, easy trip, seeing it all. And then it gets a little hot, and a little crowded, and they want to stop at every scenic overlook they see, to take a picture."<sup>35</sup> The "Drive in the Country" section is very much a story, but the pieces don't fall into place immediately. Seemingly abstract movement opens the section, becoming more and more concrete until it takes on literal meaning.

As this section begins, there is once again more than one activity ongoing, and new material mixes with movement seen previously. The D couple exits with a rolling sequence they are asked to compose themselves. The other dancers, now positioned as individuals, alternate between a bouncing movement in place and an 8-count phrase ("W") which contains the familiar laying down or dropping arm movement in counts 7-8. (See illustration 12.) The following chart shows how the bouncing and "W" phrases are distributed among the dancers, and also how the "SIVA," "T," and "Shape Solo" (labelled "R" in the score) phrases are brought back. They are used as devices to move the dancers across the stage to

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<sup>35</sup>Videotape 5 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0770.

Illustration 12. "Bouncing" and "W" phrases of "Drive in the Country"



Rounce along; like riding in a car.  
 (8)  
 (7)  
 (6)  
 (5)  
 (4)  
 (3)  
 (2)  
 (1)  
 (8)  
 (7)  
 (6)  
 (5)  
 (4)  
 (3)  
 (2)  
 (1)

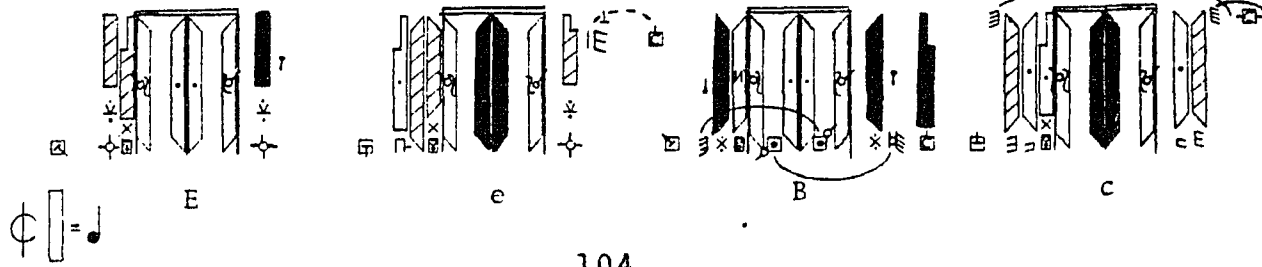
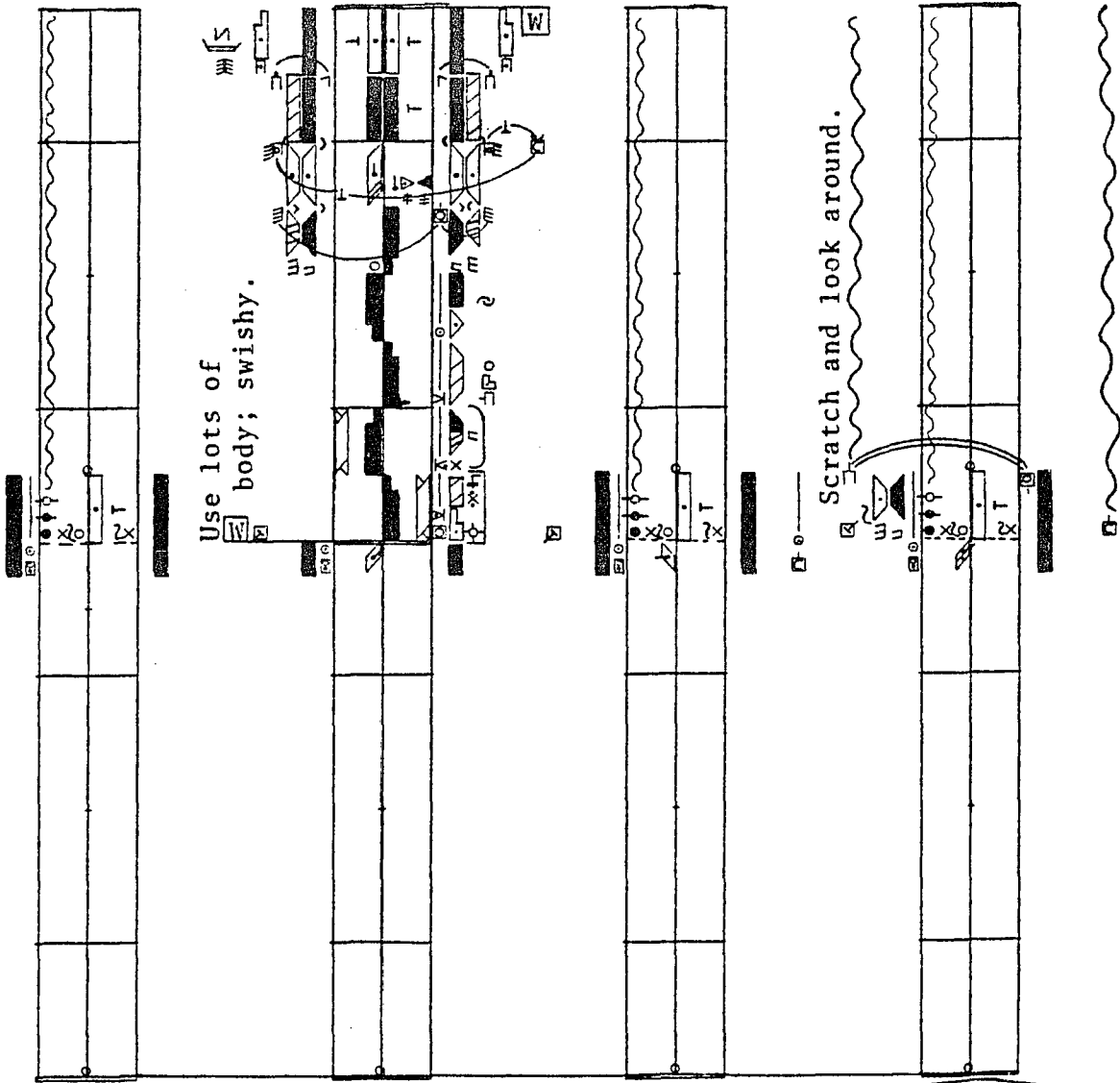


Illustration 13. Chart of opening of "Drive in the Country"

<u>Dancer</u>	<u>Pattern of Movements</u>							
E	B	B	W	B	B	B shape solos	B solos	quick exit stage right
e	W	W	B	W	B	T	T	enter "car"
B	B	B	W	B	B	B shape solos	lie down (new)	slow exit stage right
c	B	W	B	W	B	B shape solos	T	enter "car"
C	B	W	B	W	B	SIVA 1-8 twice	Wait	enter "car"
b	B	B	W	B	B	T	T	enter "car"

B = bouncing phrase  
W = W phrase  
T = T phrase  
// = Repeat to the other side

new positions, and are a unifying element in a choreography which deals with many disparate images. At the end of the phrases charted above, the dancers are in place to begin the story of the drive and what's remembered about it.

By measure 22, the bouncing is no longer abstract, but is the movement of passengers in a car. They stretch in cramped quarters, throw a tantrum (about which way to go?) and get out to take pictures. Lampert described this and succeeding events as "a scene." She asked that some of the movements remain improvised. "I told them they could change [the picture taking] every night, just to keep it spontaneous."<sup>36</sup> "Be human beings; be a person, not a dancer," she directed.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0690.

<sup>37</sup>Videotape 5 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1226.

"We have to know how this scene works. She's looking over the cliff, and you want to know what she's found. That's a connection. And you can find that on your own; you don't have to be like Curly, Moe and Larry. This can be just played as a scene."<sup>38</sup> The four people in "Drive in the Country" are individuals who need to establish a narrative logic for the choreography they perform. They are responsible for adding personalized detail to the movements that will distinguish them as separate characters. Each man for example, should go off-balance in a different way. People normally have different feelings about looking over the edge. "Connect these two ideas," Lampert advised repeatedly.<sup>39</sup> What does each movement have to do with the one before and after it, with someone else's movements? There is more than one logic that will link the movement ideas in "Drive in the Country." Some story is needed to create what Lampert wants: a dramatic scene full of movement, as opposed to sets of dance steps.

The woman's cross in measures 35-37 is based on the "Fives" phrase,<sup>40</sup> which is still to come. These measures serve as a foreshadowing of an entire section based on rhythmic hopping and leaping. The reference ahead to the "Fives" is made even clearer by the woman's traveling both forward and backward with her "Drive in the Country"

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., foot 0800.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., foot 0860.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., foot 1126.

sequence, as the group will do with the "Fives" phrase. (See illustration 14.)

To help the dancers with this scene, Lampert offered advice:<sup>41</sup> "It's better to think in active terms than in playwriting terms. Playwriting is saying, 'Things are not so great.' That's the audience's reaction. For you, the active idea is 'cool.' How you feel, rather than what the resulting impression is. Try to find the images that make you do something, rather than saying, 'The impression should be,' or 'the result of this should be.' 'I want the audience to know I love Bob' is hard to play. 'I love Bob' is easier to play."<sup>42</sup> "See what happens. Frankly, anything that you do that's real to you will probably work."<sup>43</sup> "Whatever happens right now is OK. What I wish you would not do is interfere with your impulses. . . . Whatever is the real impulse, rather than 'she said,' or 'oh, I'm supposed to feel \_\_\_\_.' If you think, 'I'm supposed to feel something here,' then just wait until you do feel. If you feel nothing, you feel nothing right there; that's good too. This can get overblown in the other direction, melodrama, and I'm not too interested in that. So just wait."<sup>44</sup>

Toward the end of the section, fragments of the "Q" phrase reappear with a different sort of couple

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., foot 1510.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., foot 1570.

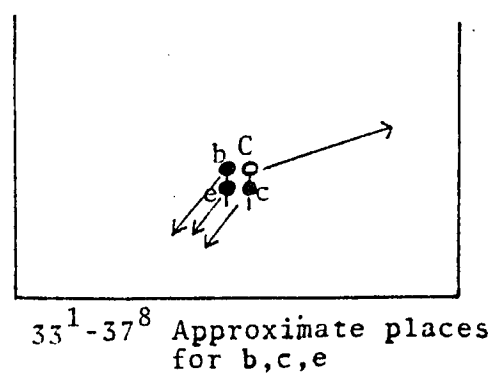
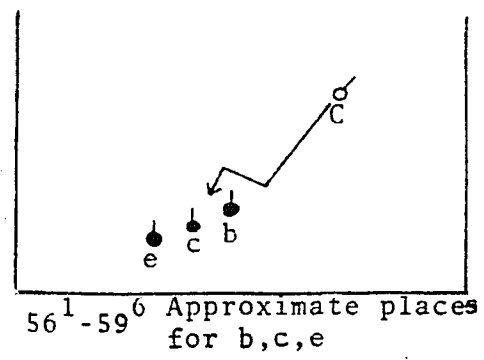
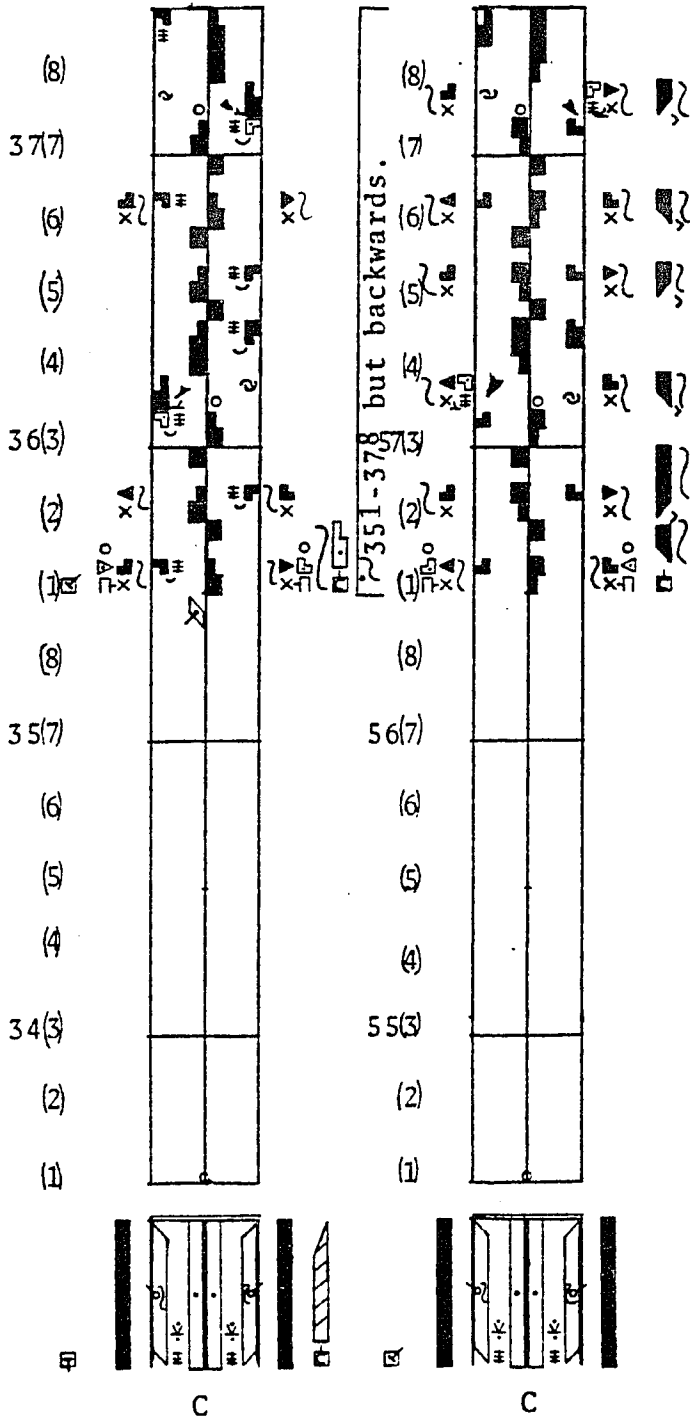
<sup>43</sup>Ibid., foot 1615.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

Illustration 14. Preview of "Fives" phrase in "Drive in the Country" and actual "Fives" phrase

Preview of Fives Phrase

Like skipping rocks. Arms and head move freely. Use arms to balance.





relationship: that of two men. The D couple re-enters with a retrograde version of the rolls that took them offstage as this section began. The A couple enters and assumes the position in which we saw them last: the hug of the "Q" phrase with which they finished the "Duet." All the characters now onstage set the scene for E's solo. The emotions conveyed through her dance will take place in the context of other people; they exist in relation to other people.

### Forget/Remember Solo

There are extensive instructions in the notation score about how to observe, collect and arrange movement materials for this solo. This dance is a good example of the collaborative approach to choreography that characterizes some of Lampert's work. In the collaboration, dancers respond with specific movement ideas to general directions given by the choreographer. Lampert's instructions for this solo, in brief, are:

Choose an acquaintance or friend whose movement habits interest you. Study him or her and find:

- 1 movement you like
- 1 you don't like
- 1 you think is silly, ridiculous or outrageous
- 1 you envy

. . . Put the 4 movements together in any order, to form an honest and realistic portrait. . . . You may or may not repeat movements within the phrase. . . . Don't travel. . . . The completed solo should be a neurotic dance. Repeat it over and over again at a tempo which is faster than you think is possible. When the movement becomes too fast and you can't keep going, allow yourself to be propelled into

a walk which goes in a small circle around yourself. . . . Once or twice during the entire sequence "step out" of the problem. . . . A couple of times during the solo begin the first set of Fives. . . . [This sequence] is about going over the same "territory" again and again.<sup>45</sup>

Lampert coached the solo dancer at Ohio State University by asking to see her original four movements. Since they were quite extended temporally, Lampert cut them into twice as many shorter movements. She then interrupted the movement flow, by:

1. Placing pauses between movements. "You can stop anywhere, and go back into the phrase again."<sup>46</sup>
2. Using the movements in different length series. For example, Lampert asked to see movement 1-4, then 1-6, then 1-8, so that repeating series of movements grew progressively longer.
3. Re-arranging the sequence of movements. Lampert selected the more gestural movements and placed these in an independent series which could be performed separately.
4. Changing the tempo. Lampert asked the dancer to begin by moving twice as fast, and to vary her tempo through the solo.
5. Introducing foreign material into the solo, repeatedly and at different points. Examples of this material are walks in a circle, steps back, previews of the "Fives" phrase from the next section.
6. Asking that the same movements be repeated with different qualities, as if thinking, in frustration, with confusion.
7. Asking the dancer to keep experimenting with these and the instructions in the score.

Lampert referred to the process of working out the solo

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<sup>45</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 162.

<sup>46</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1565.

as movement manipulation. She urged the dancer to continue exploring the varied possibilities present in her movement; for example, to "keep experimenting for yourself where you'd like to make very unusual choices of stops, so that there are no predictable places of stopping. Also, the tempo of the walks can be very fast, or very deliberate, slow; there are lots of possibilities . . . . I think you'll come upon some things if you just improvise it a few times."<sup>47</sup> "I think you should set it [eventually]," Lampert directed, "so that you know what you're doing. But you should also leave the opportunity of improvising if a phrase you've set isn't working."<sup>48</sup>

The "Forget/Remember" solo is accompanied by dialogue in which there is a confusion between an inability to forget and an inability to forgive. This confusion is mirrored in the dance, which starts, stops, jumps content and changes speed abruptly. Repetitions in the dialogue form a loop of "remember, forget, forgive," just as the dancer, in a loop, keeps going over the same movement ground. A lack of communication between the speakers is paralleled by the dancer's not getting anywhere; her movements don't travel. The confusion, repetition and spatial restriction of this section build to the anger which takes the stage in the "Fives."

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., foot 1595.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., foot 1628.

## Fives

"It's the idea of saying 'no.'"<sup>49</sup> The "Fives" is the escape from the "Forget/Remember" solo, and it is anger that breaks the loop. The angry "No" of the "Fives" is delivered with stomping feet, with pugilistic hands, with an upper body that twists from side to side. There is no taped sound accompanying this section of What's Remembered? The movement produces its own sound as the dancers' feet strike the floor with assertion, aggression and power.

Although the "Fives" section is begun by the "Forget/Remember" solo dancer, her movement theme is quickly picked up by the group. This section contrasts with the preceding one in its use of numbers and travel. However, the travel is circular, and still not getting anywhere. The group, a picture of the solo woman's state of mind, goes forward, rewinds, goes forward, rewinds.

The dancers move in a meter of five, and strongly accent each beat for the first 27 measures, driving on in a fast tempo. "It's frustrating to do the circle step so many times. OK. Show that frustration. Use the emotion of not being able to move on to something else."<sup>50</sup> In measures 28 following, Lampert increases the rhythmic complexity in the percussion of the dance, and develops rhythmic interplay among the dancers. In measures 34 following, the driving accents on each of the five beats return.

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<sup>49</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 0100.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., foot 0424.

Rhythmic Interplay

(Numbers 1-5 indicate accented counts within measures)

<u>Dancers:</u>	<u>a, d, e</u>	<u>A, D, E</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>c</u>
Measure: 28	1 5	————	1 2 3 4 5	————
29	1 3 5	————	1 2 3 4 5	————
30	2 4 5	————	1 2 3 4 5	————
31	————	1 5	1 2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
32	————	1 3 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
33	————	2 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

The "Fives" ends abruptly, and on a familiar note: couples do one pose from the "Q" phrase. This helps to re-establish the theme of couple relationships which has been less obvious in the previous sections, and which will occupy only part of the climactic canon section. The audience would be in danger of losing sight of these relationships as the basis for the solo and group phrases without the reminder from "Q."

Canon

The "Canon" phrase does not start off in canon. It begins by compacting the dancers into center stage, pressing them together "like when you press a car into metal."<sup>51</sup> Space collapses, and energy intensity increases. The center of the stage becomes a pressure-cooker. People try to get out of the area and are pulled back. Emotions tied to all

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., foot 0649.

the problems of interpersonal relationships start to boil. The pulsing accompaniment, returning from the beginning of the dance, adds to the atmosphere of tightness, of density. Fission seems inevitable.

It comes with an explosion of former themes, spitting people off to different parts of the stage. Dynamism, the force of bodies in motion, is the choreographic intent here. "All of the canon is very big and full. The emotional quality will take care of itself if the movement is performed as big and as spaciously as possible."<sup>52</sup>

The "quite violent" recapitulation<sup>53</sup> of earlier material does not return the themes intact. Lengthy and brief fragments appear, cross-phrased from group to group. Different groups dance phrases of different length, intersecting with each other at certain points. The "phrase manipulation" of this section is complex; the phrases seem to have been subjected to similar processes as the individual movements in the "Forget/Remember" solo.

The choreographer has made:

1. Interruptions of the movement flow. (See eDd, measure 4.)
2. Use of different length phrases. (See ACc, aCc, measures 3-4.)
3. Rearrangements of sequence, to juxtapose movements previously separated by other material. (See Ce, measure 7: #1 of "Q" and "Flings.")
4. Changes in tempo. (See measure 7 for Aa; "A and a do the same movement as in their duet, but faster.")

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<sup>52</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 179.

<sup>53</sup>Videotape 3 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1234.

5. An introduction of foreign material, including a roll instead of a leap in the "T" phrase (See measure 3, counts 3-4.) and a preview of the actual canon phrase (phrase 1; see measures 5-6.).
6. Movements performed with different qualities. (See measure 7 for c - quality is rougher; see measure 7 for Aa; quality is more brusque.)

The result of the phrase manipulation is charted below.

Measures	Group	Phrasing (Tick marks indicate counts)	
3 - 4	b E A a C c e D d	S1 → 8 → T1 → 4 → Roll → T1 S1 → 2 → T1 → 8 → o →	T1 → 5 → roll → R#1 → 8 → R#1 → R#2 → R#1
5 - 6	b A a E C c e D d	I T S	
7 - 8 (measure 8 is four counts only)	A a E e C c E e C e C c b D d	Duet Car → o Q#1 → F R1 → 8 → Flings (dive over shoulder)	o o o o o o

I = Phrase 1, new material; will be performed by group in canon beginning measure 9

S = SIVA phrase

o = Hold, spread out, adjust facing

T = Traveling phrase

F = Flings (thrust apart)

R = Shape Solos

The phrase actually in canon begins at measure 9. It is labelled phrase I (one), and was previewed in the preceding phrase-manipulation sequence. Three groups engage in canon, each two counts apart. Their movement takes them in long diagonal lines of travel across the stage and readies four couples to act as a chorus for A, who claims the downstage area. This phrase is one of the movement climaxes of the canon section.

In measure 12, the powerful phrase in canon

disintegrates. Replacing it are two activities. One is a solo by A, with movement suggestive of that she did with her partner in the "Duet." She is off-balance and performs falling motifs, without there being someone there to catch her. "Before these movements were comforting and easy, now they have a different quality."<sup>54</sup> A's uneasy phrase crosses downstage and remains a strong visual focus. Behind her, the four couples recapitulate the "U" phrase, with a variation: here it is performed holding on to the other partner and circling around them.

The fragmentation that began in measure 12 continues in measure 15. A process resembling the phrase-manipulation that preceded the climactic movement in canon now recurs subsequent to it. The activity is charted below:

Measure	Group	Phrasing
15 - 16	D c e	SIVA (begin left)
	d b E	SIVA (begin right)
	A a C B	I
17 - 18	D c e	T (begin downstage left)
	d b E	T (begin upstage right)
	A a C B	S 1-8; T 1-4; roll
19 (4 cts. only)	All	Hold, adjust

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., foot 1277.

This activity builds to the primary climax of the section, to movement in unison. Lampert has not choreographed complete unison movement since the "Opening" section. The group performs the "SIVA" phrase and the first four counts of the "T" phrase. The "quality is clipped, short, punched, violent. Throw it!"<sup>55</sup> It seems no accident that the climactic, unison phrase in this dance is called "SIVA." Lampert's choreography always "somewhat autobiographical," was in the case of What's Remembered? an act of creation which followed an episode of destruction in the artist's life.

With a roll to the floor, the unison subsides into a group improvisation on the floor, and acting intent once again assumes importance. "What should happen here emotionally is: it's like lava slowing down, or something that's getting more thick. So when you end up coming up from the ground with your partner, it's not into something really nice, it's some kind of pushing up against that person. It's slowed down to as tight and bound as it can be."<sup>56</sup>

When the dancers stand, the argumentative "U" phrase reappears, performed three times with increasing vehemence. "The first two to your partner are truly nose to nose and truly 'I have had it with you.' When you turn around to the other person, the gestures have to change, and you tell this

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<sup>55</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, p. 201.

<sup>56</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1035.

person what the other one was like."<sup>57</sup> Anger builds in the "U" phrases as it has throughout the dance, and the dancers conclude by telling the story of their anger to other people in the third repeat of "U", as indeed Lampert has done throughout the whole choreography of What's Remembered?

The anger carries the partners away from each other. "Find your own reason for walking away from this person. . . .No one in this piece, and you'll have to find this for yourselves, is a loser. So no one gets intimidated by [their partner]. . . .I don't walk away from that sad. So when you walk away here, the energy of this can't suddenly get into anything like, 'Oh, woe is me; I'm unloved and unwanted,' I've had a terrible fight and can't stand up for myself."<sup>58</sup> On the last strum of the music, couples meet and fall into one of their "Shape Duets" from phrase "Q." The ensuing dialogue is reminiscent of the one that opened the dance. It expresses almost surrealistically ambitious plans for a couple who thought they'd have a lifetime together. This couple "thought they could do a million things . . . that their feelings would carry them along."<sup>59</sup> As the dialogue is spoken, the dancers carry each other back to the positions in which they began What's Remembered? What is remembered most is what follows in the reprise.

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., foot 1070.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., foot 1120.

<sup>59</sup>Videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal, foot 1200.

Reprise (of the Opening "Q" phrase)

The final statement of a dance is always important. It becomes doubly important when it is the same statement with which the dance opened. What is remembered at the beginning and end of Lampert's choreography are the many facets of a couple's life together, as pictured in the "Q" phrase. The couple embraced, supported each other, leaned on each other, shared secrets, showed their partners their best sides. Our firm impression is of two people who were many things to each other.

Despite all the anger that accumulated in the dance and the separation of the couple in the "Canon," What's Remembered? ends on a positive note. It is sounded by the music used to accompany its closing movements, the "Duet" music. Our final view of the couple is colored by sounds remembered from a dance about love. This is Lampert's last and most potent memory, lingering after all the anger is spent.

Clay Taliaferro: Falling Off the Back Porch

I need to see you move with music. It's my whole point. Does it look the way the music sounds? The music has motivated me to do this work. I hear something in that music that's very akin to me. . . . You hear that sound? You have to produce that in your bodies. That should exhaust you. Just to produce that in movement is all the drama you need.<sup>1</sup>

Sensitivity to the drama inherent in Debussy's music was obvious throughout the process of the creation of Falling Off the Back Porch. Taliaferro aligned his dance to the music on the principle that movement can embody the same drama a choreographer perceives in sound, and that drama in dance can be as abstract, as non-specific as drama in music, consisting of opposing dynamics and surges of energy and relaxation. Taliaferro's movement is not subservient to Debussy's music. It enters into full partnership with it, broadening its impact by adding a parallel visual field of interrelationships, reaction and contrast.

While it is true that Falling Off the Back Porch is about Debussy's music, it is also about Taliaferro's youth in the Southern United States, and his family life there. Taliaferro said,

I'm going to throw at you a scenario. It may or not be what you're dancing about. . . . I'm investigating the space offstage. It seems to be a fascination for me; it may have something to do with

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<sup>1</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1685; videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0275, 0290.

me psychologically as well; as to where I am in my life, as Clay Taliaferro. [The porch in the title is offstage.] Porches are very important things to me, having sat on one all my life. . . . I spent a lot of time on the back porch, and I spent a lot of time looking over there [across the way]. A field, poplar trees, rolling Virginia countryside. The family, all twelve of us sometimes, would be on the back porch. . . . And I specifically remember when I was six years old, when my brothers went off to war. I remember how I wanted them to hurry up and leave, because there'd be more attention paid to me. There were too many of us for all that to go around. I remember once my mother standing on the porch, leaning against a column, looking so much into the distance that it was frightening to watch. Little moments. And my brothers, in jest, coming up behind her with their army outfits on and trying to make her laugh. But you could see [he demonstrates a jolt in the torso] that. And I was the silent watcher: I watched everybody and everything. When they left, I was so happy. Then there were eight. More attention was paid to me by my sisters. My sisters are very important to me. I know a lot about the female animal, because I watched, and I was taught; I was instructed. All these things are in the dance.<sup>2</sup>

Taliaferro abstracted from his family situation to make a dance about women left behind, whose strength and longing become the alternating moods of daily life as they wait for their man to return to the family. In the First Movement, "I've tried to set a mood, a unit, a family. And for me, the Second Movement is . . . one incident, and that incident is that the man leaves the space."<sup>3</sup> Taliaferro made the man's movements "virtuosic, for a number of reasons. Primarily because it's heroic."<sup>4</sup> The man, "who will represent men, army, war, goes over there to the void. [He] won't come

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<sup>2</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0475.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., foot 0905.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., foot 0945.

back. [The void is offstage downleft.] Dancer "C" comes back when she exits; everybody else comes back when they exit; the man won't come back."<sup>5</sup> In the Third Movement, "the movement is romanticized and longing."<sup>6</sup> Despite Taliaferro's goal for the piece, in the notated version, the man does reappear on the last notes of the music to catch a solo woman as she leaps at the downleft stage corner into which he had vanished. It appears he has returned safely, and the dance concludes with a feeling of triumph and resolution. That this is not the ideal ending, however, is made clear in Mary Corey's statement in the dance score that "Mr. Taliaferro wishes to change this [final] lift so that the man is not present."<sup>7</sup> That single change would significantly alter the dance, robbing it of resolution and ending it on a pinnacle of longing and despair rather than triumph.

In addition to Debussy's music and Taliaferro's recollections of his youth and family, Falling Off the Back Porch is about Humphrey-Limón modern dance technique and its continuing creative potential. Taliaferro spent much of his rehearsal time and extra class time in coaching his dancers in the principles of the technique and their correct execution. It is a technique in which he feels drama is inherent, in which drama can "all be in bodies, not faces so

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., foot 0955.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., foot 0555.

<sup>7</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey (New York: Dance Notation Bureau, 1984), p. iv.

that you don't have to act."<sup>8</sup>

Use of the Humphrey-Limón technique allowed Taliaferro to communicate drama through movement combinations and juxtapositions, imbedding flow, strength, accent, deflation and other qualities directly in his choreographic structure. His dance is dramatic in itself, as is Debussy's music. Taliaferro movements do not rely on overt expression or acting technique to supply them with intent or story. "Don't ask me what you should be thinking about," he told the dancers at Arizona State University. "There's technique involved," and that accomplishes the drama.<sup>9</sup>

While Taliaferro is interested in the potential of Humphrey-Limón technique to capture and communicate quality, he is conscious of a need to create new sets of movements based on the technique. He does not wish to duplicate familiar Humphrey-Limón vocabulary in his dances. "Damn it!" he said at one moment in rehearsal, "I can't stop doing other movement material!"<sup>10</sup> But Taliaferro did discover his own movements. In an interview at Arizona State University he was asked:

Q: How did you find this movement?

A: Out of my body. I had a fascination with the shoulder. What if I do my shoulder that way [rolling the shoulder forward, up, and back]; oh, that's not interesting. But, hey! [he pushes his shoulder forward and extends his arm, leading with

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<sup>8</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0714.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., foot 1010.

<sup>10</sup>Videotape 2 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0600.

his fingertips and rotating the arm inward as far as possible; (See measure 5 of the score.)] . . . and what does that make the head do? And that began to lead me to a place . . . .<sup>11</sup>

There are no new movements, so to speak, but there's a new way of approaching them. Very often, you may have seen me begin a movement and I immediately say, "What happens if I go the wrong way?" And I try, and the effort needed to do it produces the tension in the body that I need dramatically, to help produce a dramatic situation.<sup>12</sup>

Taliaferro explained the standard Humphrey-Limón principles of rebound, suspension, movement of the center of weight, and the body as an orchestral ensemble of parts, each with its own energies and capabilities. In the process, he made a conscious effort to achieve new results, to discover creative responses to the demands of the technique. He was helped in this by his associations to Debussy's music and to the qualities attached to his remembrances of his family and the universal human problem they represented, of a man leaving for wartime service. His choreography is evidence that there remains creative potential within Humphrey-Limón movement principles.

### Taliaferro's Movement Terminology and Preferences

"Don't think shape." Taliaferro often said. "Yield to your weight" and move with continuity.<sup>13</sup> He asked dancers to allow movement to affect the body; the body should both

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<sup>11</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0320.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., foot 0365.

<sup>13</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0012, 0070.

initiate and respond to movement. This willingness of the dancer to respond to their previous movements is one of the distinguishing features of the Humphrey-Limón technique.<sup>14</sup>

"Accents" in Taliaferro's choreography are obvious performer-initiated movements. He called "impulse!" to dancers to incite them to sudden, accented motion. Accented movements contrast strongly with those which are linked causally with the movements preceding and following them. They depart from the movement flow and introduce punctuations of energy that exceed normal "responsive" movement.<sup>15</sup>

The Limón concept of the body as an orchestra, composed of various instruments with their own characters and abilities, pervaded Taliaferro's class teaching. "Don't muscle your way through dance. Think inside the body. Get your concentration as close as you can to your spine."<sup>16</sup> When dancers were working with movements, such as that in illustration 1, Taliaferro directed them to think of the overall concept of "deflation." "'Deflation' suggests activity, things are ongoing, rather than 'shape-hold.' The whole body harmoniously breathing, moving through space with the greatest control."<sup>17</sup> His class combinations included tremendous detail, involved the use of all body parts, of parts initiating or leading movement in other body parts.

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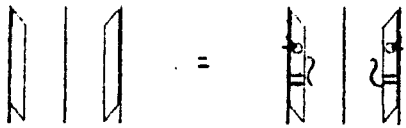
<sup>14</sup>Ibid., foot 0130.


<sup>15</sup>Ibid., foot 0195.


<sup>16</sup>Ibid., foot 0200.



<sup>17</sup>Ibid., foot 0240.

Glossary for all illustrations

 Modern dance turnout. Varies with performer

 = Weighty; giving in to gravity

 = Uplifted and buoyant; used in this score to mean suspension

 followed by  is a drop, followed by a suspension, or a fall and a recovery.


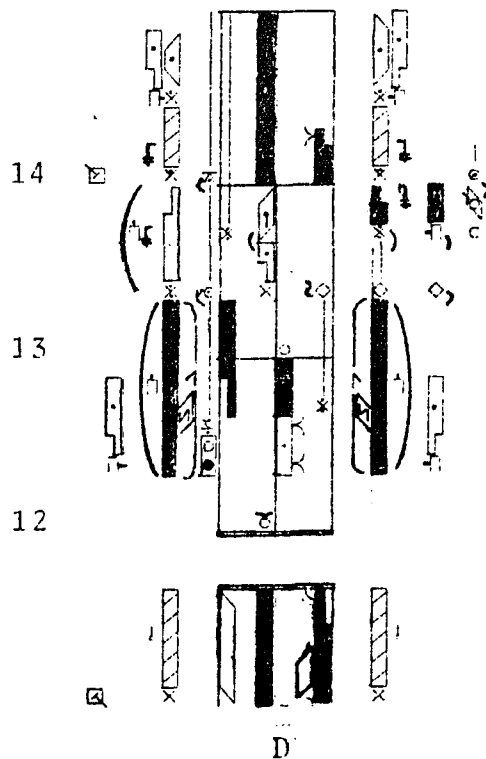
 = Modified hold weight sign. Transfer of weight is completed, but there is some outward flow of movement, which continues.

Illustration 1. Deflation movement in First Section



"The chest is alive; the fingertips; reach and stretch the arms. Lead with the rib . . . Suggest where the movement is being motivated from. . . Follow the weight of the hips."<sup>18</sup> He asked that dancers "take an inventory" and "find out what all the parts of your body are doing."<sup>19</sup> If, for example, "There's nothing happening [in a particular movement] for the thighs, don't superimpose anything onto the movement for the thighs [to do]."<sup>20</sup> Taliaferro asked dancers to be aware of what each movement required from the ensemble of their body parts, and to conduct their bodies through movements with the required energy or relaxation in each part.

The level of concentration this entry into movement requirements demands is high, and Taliaferro expected the dancers to be totally involved in working towards the technical mastery of their bodies that would allow the artistry of the movement design to speak. It is very important to coach Taliaferro's dance from a technical point of view. The movements themselves are what the choreographer wants to express. If they are clouded in performance, the identity of the dance is obscured.

Taliaferro views the space around the dancer as active. The offstage space at upstage right is made to seem comforting, a shelter; the offstage space at downstage left

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., foot 0440, 0525.

<sup>19</sup>Videotape 2 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0975.

<sup>20</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0860.

seems both alluring and dangerous. In classwork, Taliaferro tried to make space seem alive to the dancers, so that they would relate to it actively. "Push the space," he urged them. "Push it out of the way."<sup>21</sup> "Register" your focuses, he coached. Space is one of the dancer's media, and consciousness of how one is using space, resisting space, indulging in space, is an important component of performance of Falling Off the Back Porch.

The dancers at Arizona State University were so anxious to please the choreographer that they began to perform all movements with energy. Taliaferro tried to clarify the principle of "relaxation," which can also accomplish movement, and which can eliminate the appearance of "undue stress."<sup>22</sup> "Get rid of the energy necessary to do that movement," he advised, and the next movement will happen very naturally. In the "deflation" movement shown in illustration 1, Taliaferro explained that the arm recovers from a previous movement. Not every movement requires energy. Some movements are accomplished by the relaxation, the removal of energy. Again, Taliaferro was asking for an awareness of the requirements of movements and concentration on the internal workings of the body so that the dancer would know when to energize, and when to relax.<sup>23</sup> "Feel each movement honestly.


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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., foot 0320.

<sup>22</sup>Videotape 2 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0975.

<sup>23</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0418.

Don't do what you've been taught," he directed.<sup>24</sup>

In class at Arizona State University, Taliaferro gave a simple walking combination. (See illustration 2.) The students had difficulty with the exercise, because they introduced "holds" and stoppages of the movement of the center of weight into the forward progress. "Take a chance on going forward," coached Taliaferro, "We're dealing with forward momentum."<sup>25</sup> The principle of continuity, of allowing the body to experience the energy inherent in movement, and to continue within that energy, is central in Taliaferro's choreography. Perhaps the most important symbol glossarized by Mary Corey in her dance notation score of Falling Off the Back Porch is . It is a "modified hold weight symbol. It signifies that transfer of weight is completed but there is some outward flow of movement which continues."<sup>26</sup> Directors and performers of the work should remark where this symbol occurs. In illustration 3, there is an example of its usage in the score. The movement sequence in the illustration would feel and look very differently in performance if "holds" replaced these moments of "continuity."

Discussing the Humphrey-Limón concept of "recovery," Taliaferro explained that downward movements are by nature faster. Upward movements may begin fast, but they by nature

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., foot 0700.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., foot 1170.

<sup>26</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. viii.

Illustration 2. Walking combination given in class

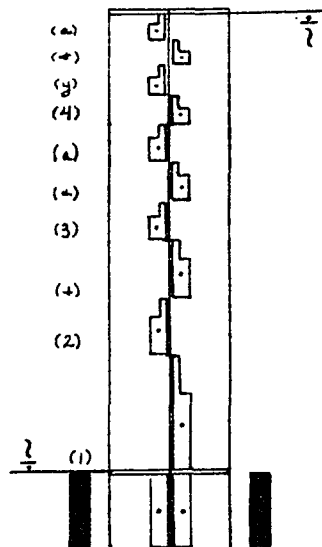
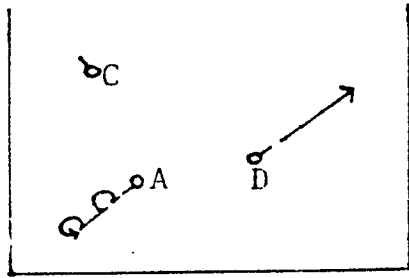
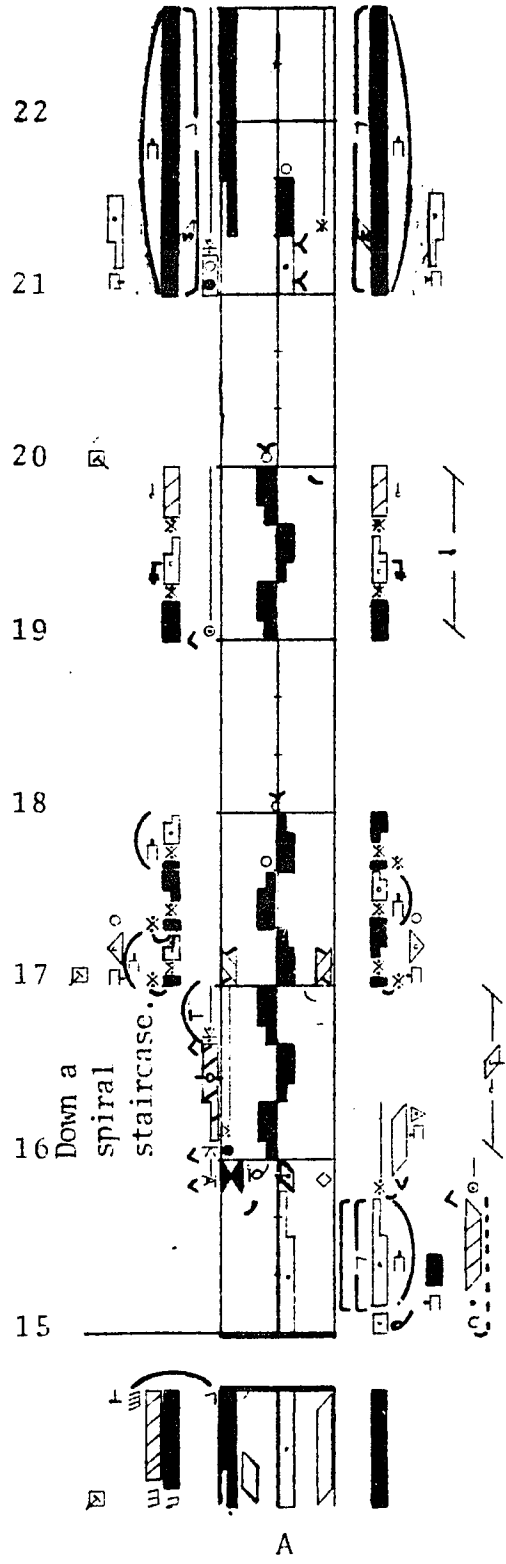




Illustration 3. Usage of modified hold symbol



Measures 15-21



slow as they continue. The process of a body part swinging downward, then recovering upward, is like a car without a motor accelerating as it coasts downhill, then slowing as it moves uphill. The symbol  followed by  in the dance score indicate where in the choreography there are "drops followed by suspensions, or a fall and recovery."<sup>27</sup> Movements notated in this way should be performed with continuity of energy, but with the slackening of momentum<sup>28</sup> that characterizes the transition from falling to rising motion.

Lastly, Taliaferro was concerned that the dancers have "an experience" while dancing, that they not neglect their faculties of empathy and understanding while performing movement."<sup>29</sup> "If you don't wash your hair, it will fall out. If you don't exercise that part of you that needs enriching, it will be non-existent. And let's face it, most of America is like that . . . with nothing inside. If you don't use [those faculties], it's a sin. Nobody else [than dancers] can have such a total experience." "Don't be afraid," he advised the dancers. "Go inside the movement, and be affected."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Videotape 3 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0265.

<sup>29</sup>Videotape 4 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1235.

<sup>30</sup>Videotape 13 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1760.

## Scanning the Score

There are a number of things about Taliaferro's choreography that can be understood by scanning the Labanotation score of Falling Off the Back Porch. Some are:



1. The sheer density of symbols in the score is impressive, demonstrating the choreographer's concern for movement by many body parts, and his incorporation of considerable detail in his movement motifs. Many of Taliaferro's movements are not global in the sense of the body progressing through space as a unit; they are orchestrated for clusters of body parts working complementarily. Illustration 4 offers an example of this from each of the three Movements of Falling Off the Back Porch.
2. Dancers change the direction of their stage facing frequently. This may indicate uncertainty, search, being alive to the problem of the man's displacement. Two facings recur most often,  (upstage right) and  (downstageleft). It is along this diagonal that much of the energy of the choreography concentrates. See illustration 5.
3. There are repeating motifs of turning, circling, rotating inward and outward. These circular movements afford an impression of closure, perhaps also of withdrawal, introspection, womanliness, the family circle. For example, in measures 15-22 of the First Section (See illustration 6a.), there are

Illustration 4. Detailed movement phrases from the three sections of Falling Off the Back Porch

a. From the First Movement

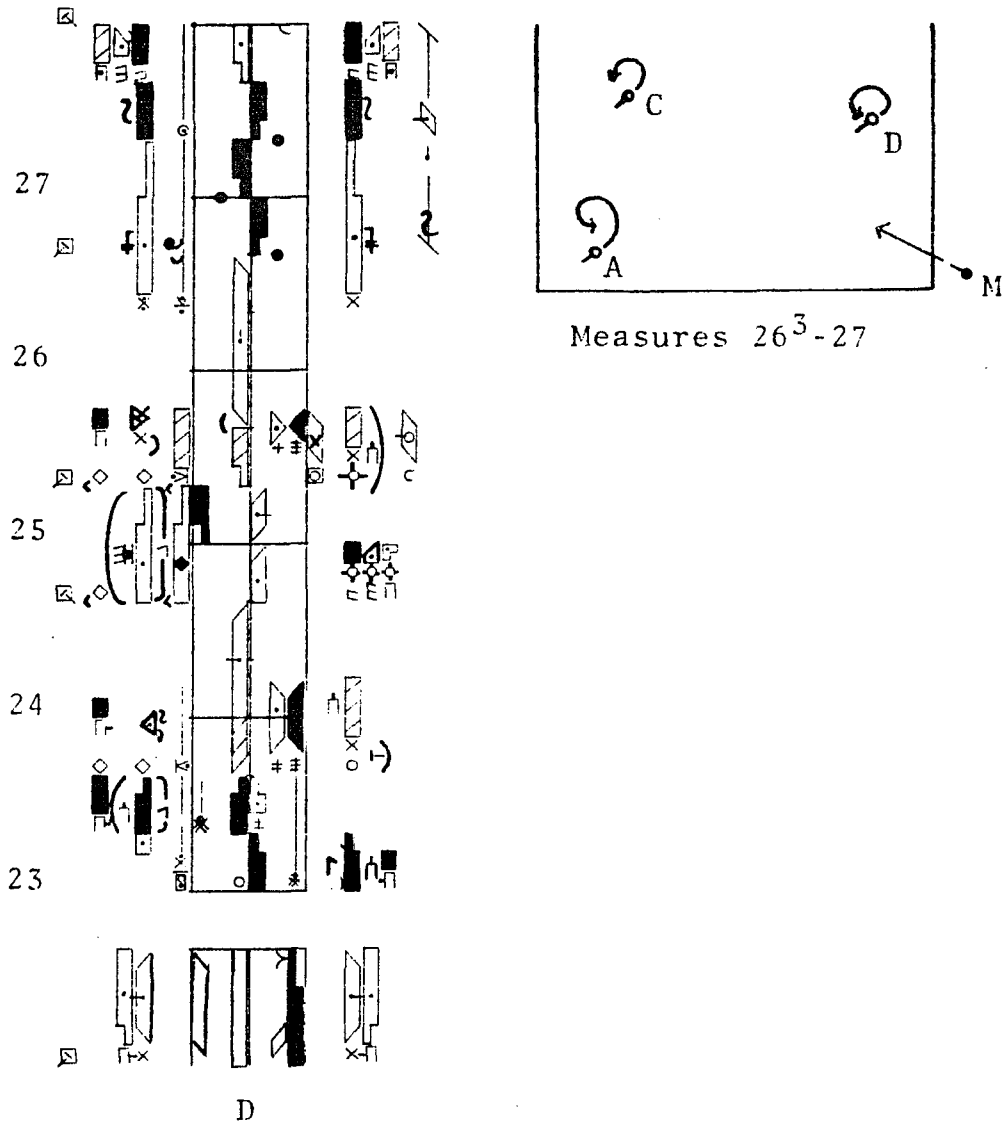


Illustration 4, continued.

b. From the Second Movement

103

102

101

Meno Mosso  
(piano)

re-  
bound

Full out

Down home. Like a strut

Largo

A

DE

B

A

B

E

D

Measures 103-104

Measures 101-102

Illustration 4, continued.

c. From the Third Movement

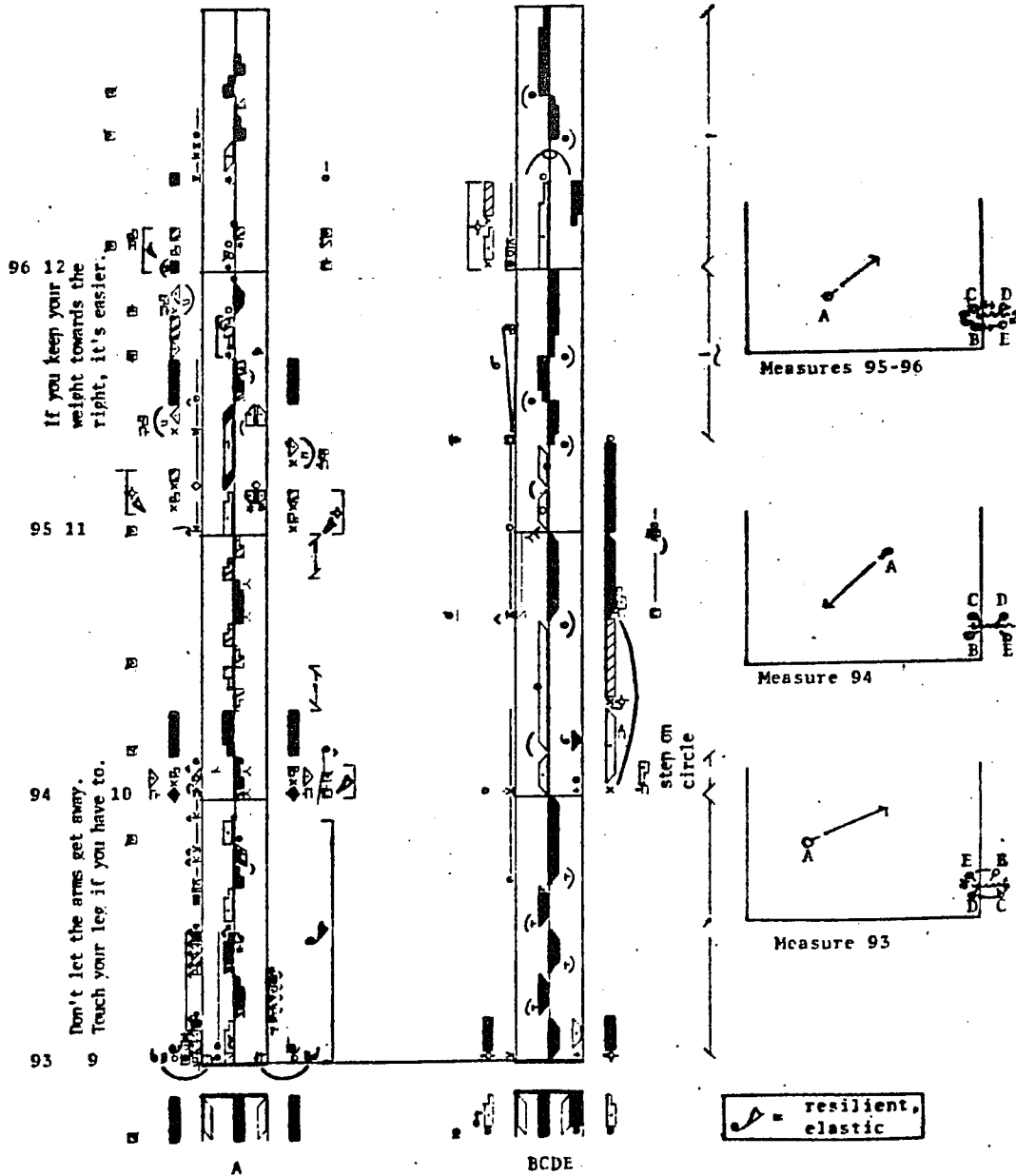


Illustration 5. Orientation of movement along the stage diagonal

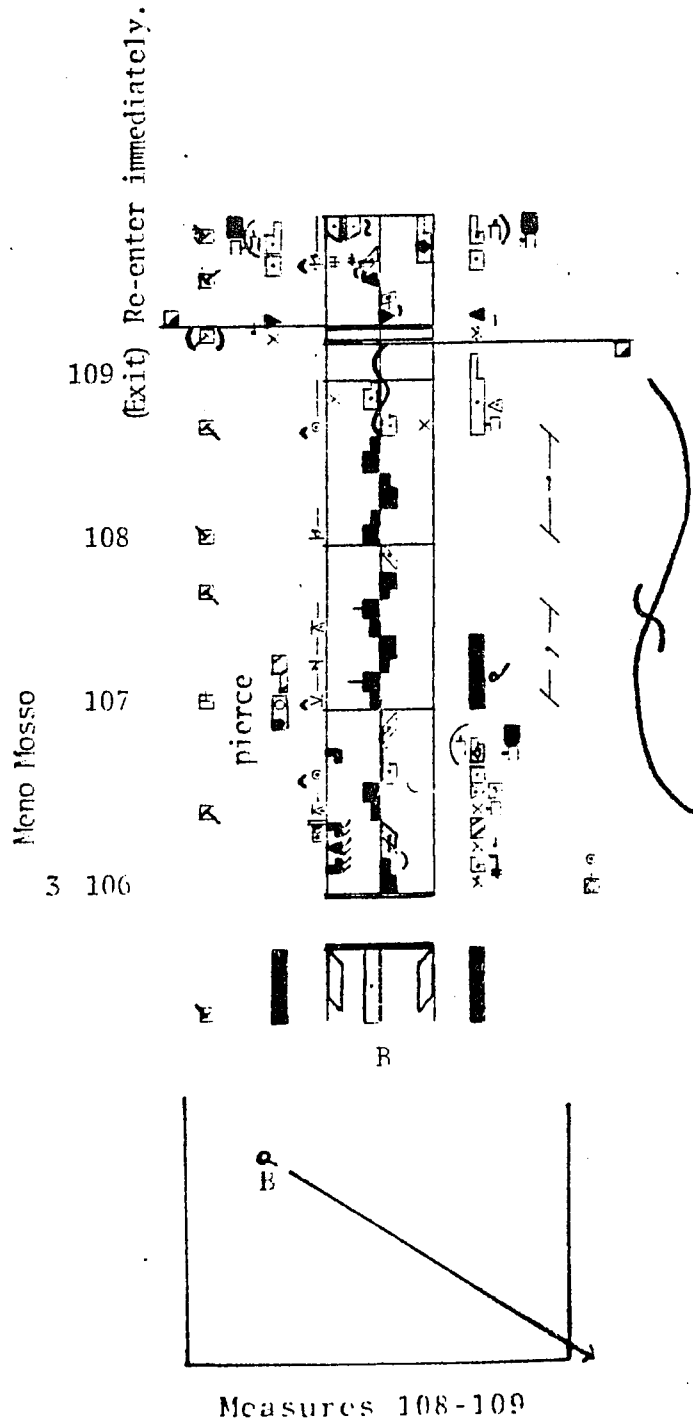


Illustration 6. Repeating motifs of turning, circling, rotating

a. From the First Movement

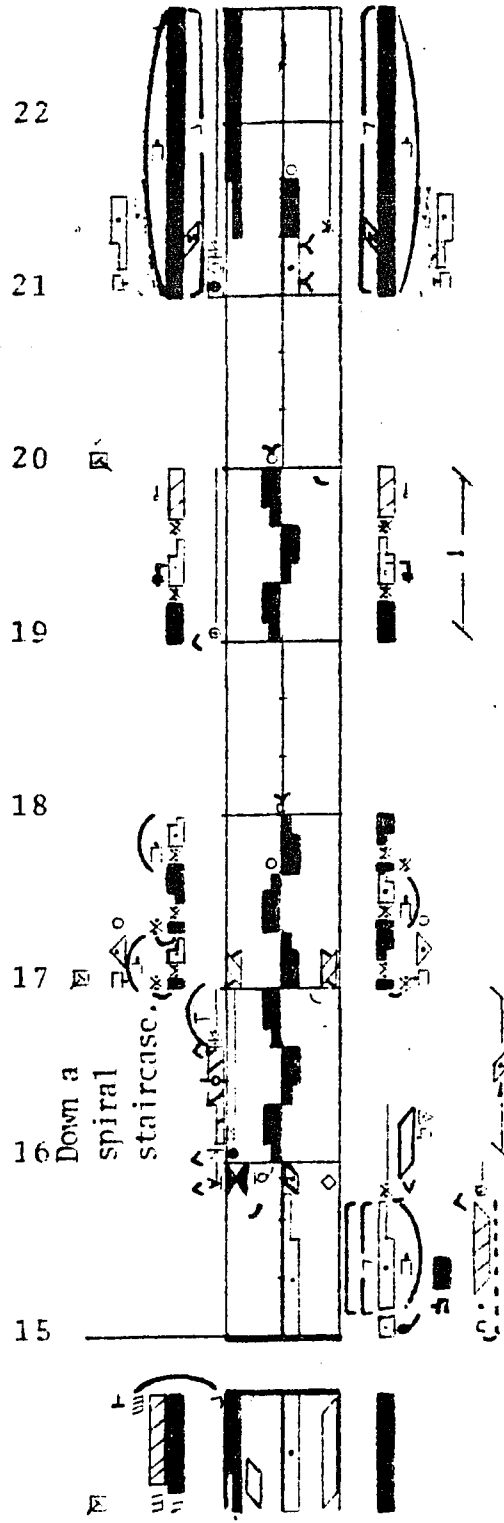
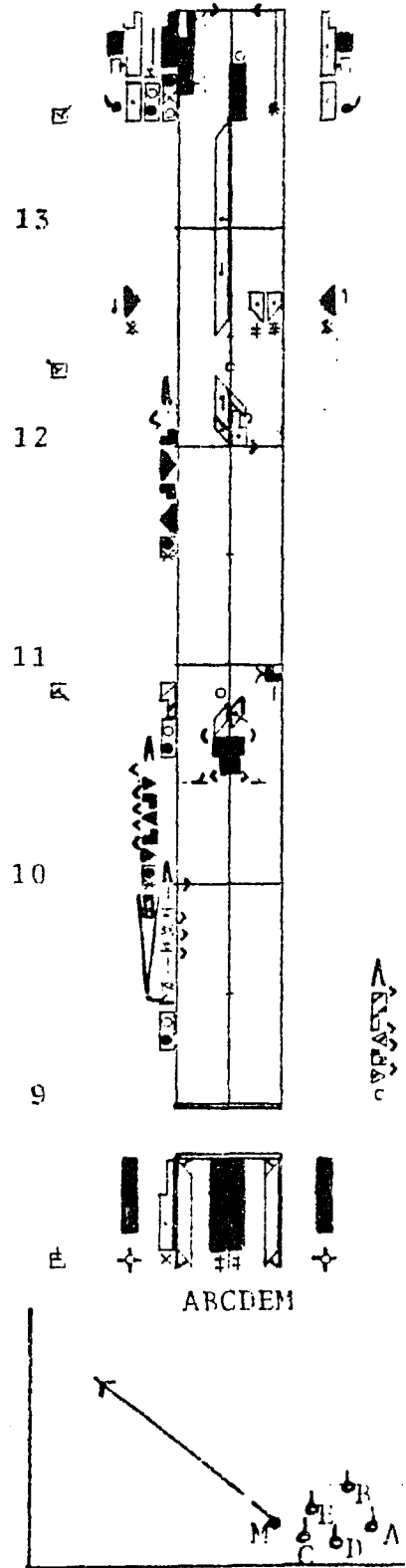


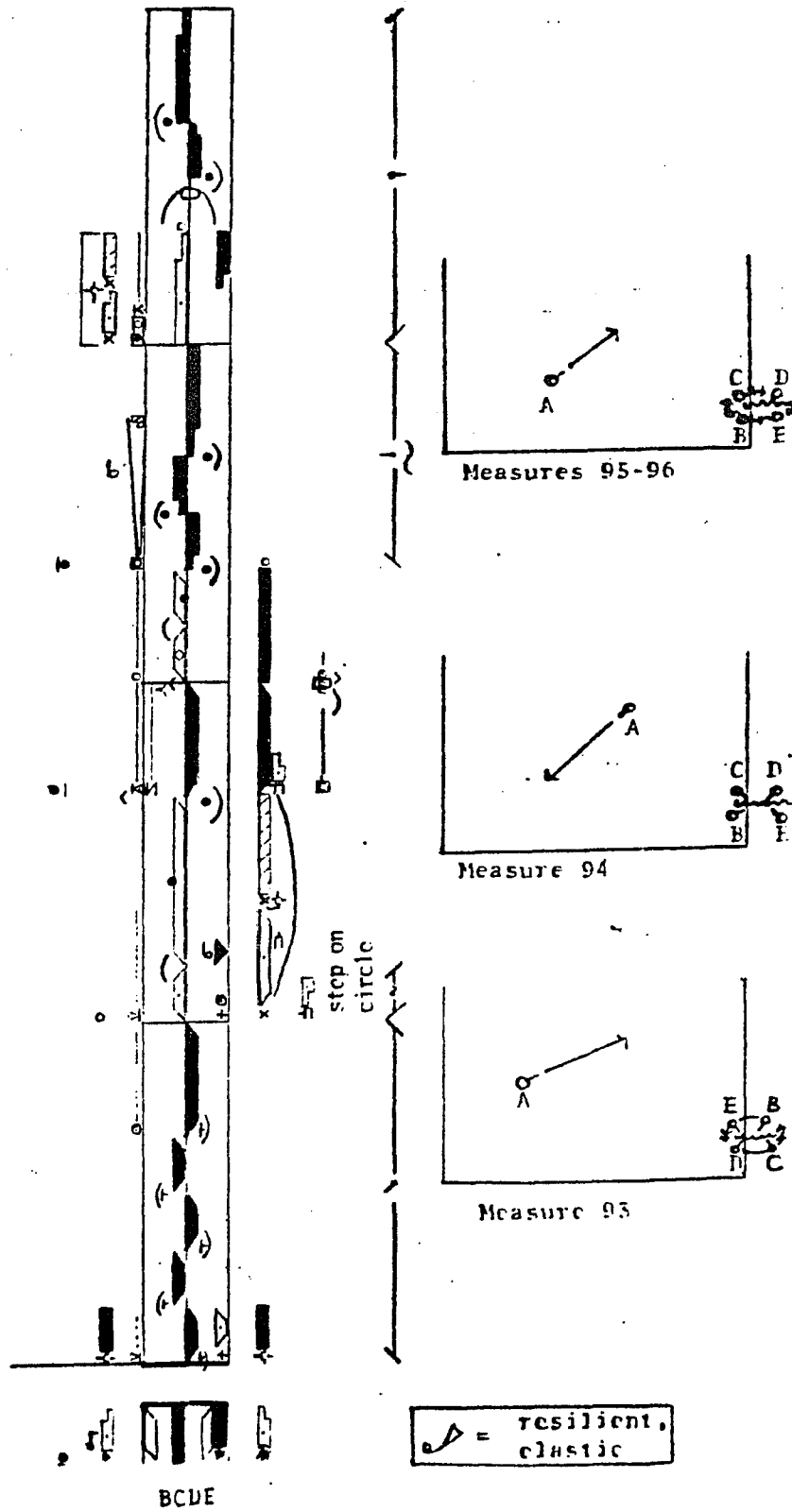
Illustration 6, continued.

b. From the Second and Third Movements



Measures 10-13

Illustration 6, continued.



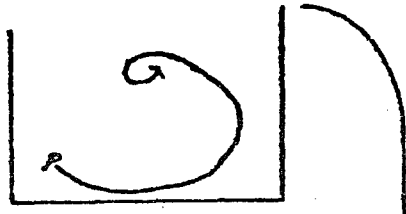
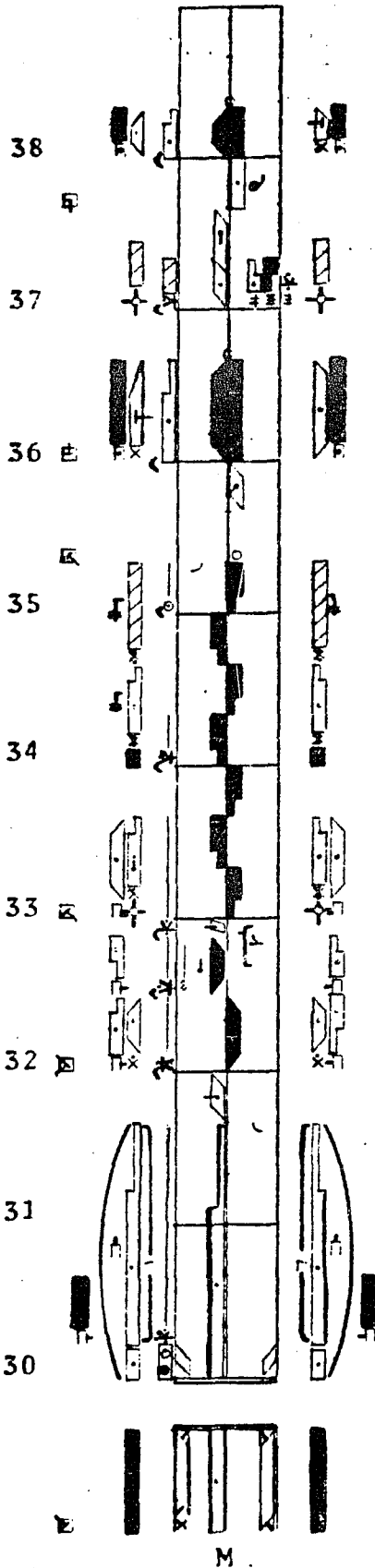
friction and frictionless turns, arm rotations, circling, and a friction turn within a circle. These curving motifs are reinforced by the rounding actions in the dancers' torsos, in arm gestures that are rounded and led by the elbows (as in measures 21-22 for dancer D). The use of the track pins (as in measure 19 for dancer A) signals another instance of closure, since they describe movement in which the dancer's arms wrap across the body. In seeming contrast to this are the linear arm gestures that A does in measure 15 and D does in measures 17, 19, 20. These movements, however, include the shoulder and turn the arm so that its thumb-side is down: they involve rotation. Illustration 6b shows examples of the turning and circling motifs from the second and third sections of the dance. These motifs recur throughout the score.

4. Folding movements ( $\sphericalangle$ ,  $\pi$ ,  $\sphericalangle$ , etc.) are prevalent. In rehearsal, Taliaferro had trouble with dancers who tilted rather than curled the torso and chest. They thought they saw him tilting and copied that. The intent of his torso movements, however, is clearly more rounded, perhaps communicating greater vulnerability. ("Be vulnerable enough to let the chest sink.")<sup>31</sup>(See illustration 7.)

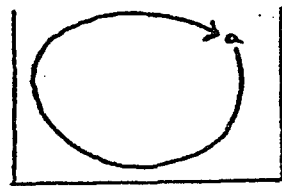
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<sup>31</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0785.

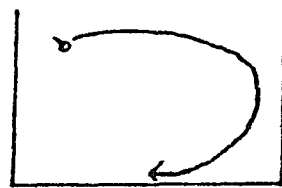
Illustration 7. Folding movements are prevalent in the score



A Inside of C

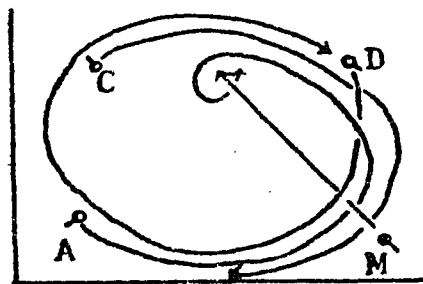


D Cross down-stage of A



C

Individual plans:  
 Measures 29-37



Measures 29-37

5. Several types of bows heavily populate the score. In illustration 6a, there are initiation bows ( ) , inclusion bows ( [ ) and bows describing a movement led by a specific body part ( ) ). Clearly, the choreographer is not presenting movements in isolation, but rather in relation: to a source of motivation in the body; to adjacent areas of the body which they affect; to parts of the body which lead them to their full realization. Movements are less "articulated" than they are "integrated."

6. Effort symbols are abundant, indicating that a range of dynamics is integral to the choreography. Illustration 8 shows the scope of quality in Taliaferro's movement by juxtaposing measures from the strong, direct, quick, accented close of the First Movement with a relaxed, unemphasized, alternately buoyant and weighty phrase from the Second Movement.

### A Closer Reading of the Score or Viewing of the Dance

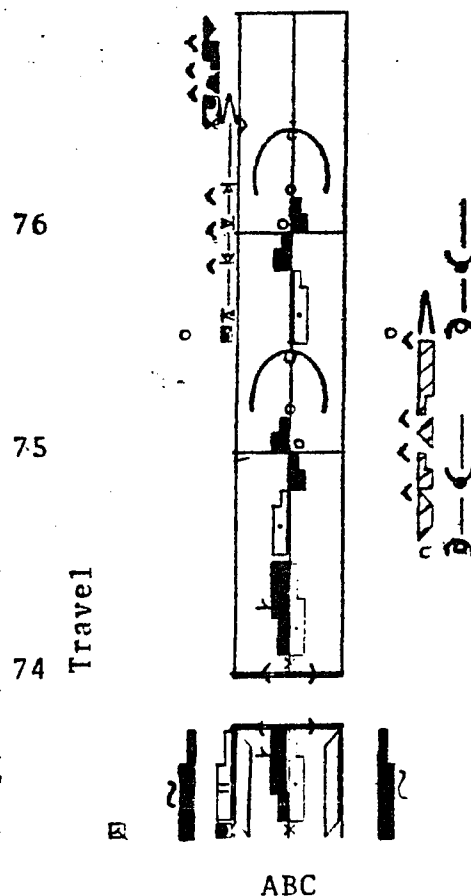
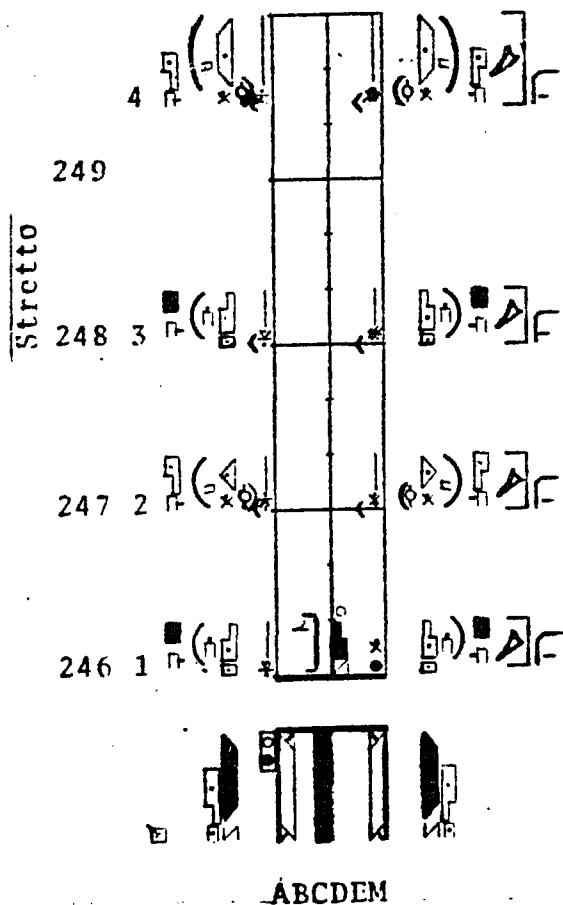
#### I. First Movement

The opening of Falling Off the Back Porch is pensive. The thoughtful attitude of the standing dancer creates a mood of introspection and introversion. The self-contact in her position, touching one's own body, will be seen

**Illustration 8. A range of dynamics is integral to the choreography**

**a. From the First Movement**

**b. From the Second Movement**



repeatedly in the dance, in a theme of relating to oneself and one's preoccupations. The dancer who enters backs in, signalling a moving away from something offstage and, more psychologically, an entry into the past. Taliaferro said, "You're coming in from a very important place offstage, and you start to reflect."<sup>32</sup>

The movements which begin in measure 5 bespeak searching, probing. Fingertips lead a forward reach; a dancer walks with digging, scraping arm gestures that seem both indicative of the farming South and a metaphor for continuing introspection. Her movement phrase alternates turned-in, introverted actions of some tension with opening, releasing actions which allow the upper body to ventilate. There is an immediate choreographic vacillation between direct, bound movement giving way to movement that is more indirect and free, and the reverse. This fluctuating dynamic instills breath in the opening phrase: it is organic and respiring.

When the third dancer enters the stage, her movement establishes a relationship with the other two dancers. Her self-contact relates to the ruminative pose of one; she shares in the movement material of the other. While she executes similar movement, however, she shows a different use of time and level of energy. Taliaferro said, "I have purposely pitted three very different people together."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., foot 0425.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., foot 0915.

". . . You're yourself, but you're willing to share the time." Earlier he had mentioned, "My sisters are of the same blood, but they're very different."<sup>34</sup>

The dance of the three women which precedes the man's entrance should, in the words of the choreographer, "set the mood for all the movement."<sup>35</sup> It contains many of the "movement words" the choreographer will assemble in different combinations and contexts to form the remainder of his composition. Probing, circling, shared activities revealing both interrelationships and individual traits, closing and opening motifs, the gathering and release of tension, backwards movement, continuous progress through lengthy passages, leading movement by the center of weight, diagonal stage facings and travel, are some of the vocabulary the choreographer introduces at the beginning of the dance. The closing and opening motif with its accompanying gathering and release of tension is one of the choreographer's most general ideas and will appear in many guises and on many scales. For example, before the man's entrance, the women move in unison in small, tight circles. The bound energy in this circling is released as the man appears, and the women run and leap in circles of much larger scale. From the first to the second unison circle, time becomes more suspended, less precise; scale expands; energy is released. This change is built on the same premise as, but is on a much larger scale than, the

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., foot 0700.

<sup>35</sup>Videotape 7 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1600.

reach and deflation off the arms and torso in the introductory phrase. Taliaferro alternated closure and opening, controlled energy and "sending out energy"<sup>36</sup> to achieve the drama of contrast, and he employed the technique on scales ranging from an isolated body part to groups of dancers making an impact on the entire stage space. This technique is an extension of the Humphrey-Limón principle of fall and recovery, in which weighted direct movements contrast with buoyant, suspended ones. The contrast inherent in fall and recovery parallels that in Taliaferro's closure and opening.

The man's bond to the women is stated in his replication of their probing arm gesture and backward circling. His early involvement in the dance, however, is less intense than that of the women; instructions in the score request that the man's opening movements be "marked (i.e. performed at half-energy)."<sup>37</sup> This instruction may be meant to establish a more fragile bond for the man than exists between the rest of the family. It may also relate to Taliaferro's reminiscence that "the men in my family are pretty weak."<sup>38</sup>

The man introduces a wider stance and more linear movements than have been seen previously. (See illustration 9.) As two women exit with movements which recall the choreography's initial motif of circling and probing, the

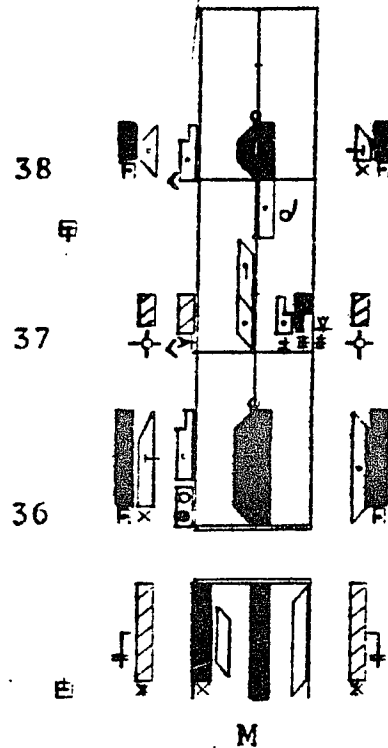
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<sup>36</sup>videotape 2 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1370.

<sup>37</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. 7.

<sup>38</sup>videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0700.

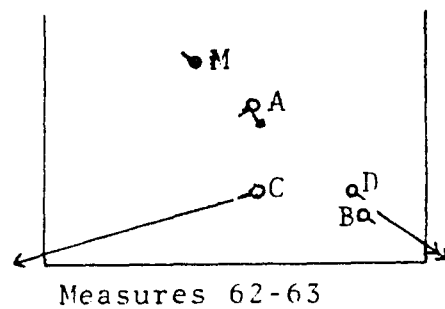
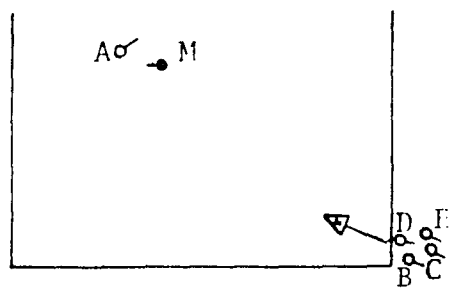
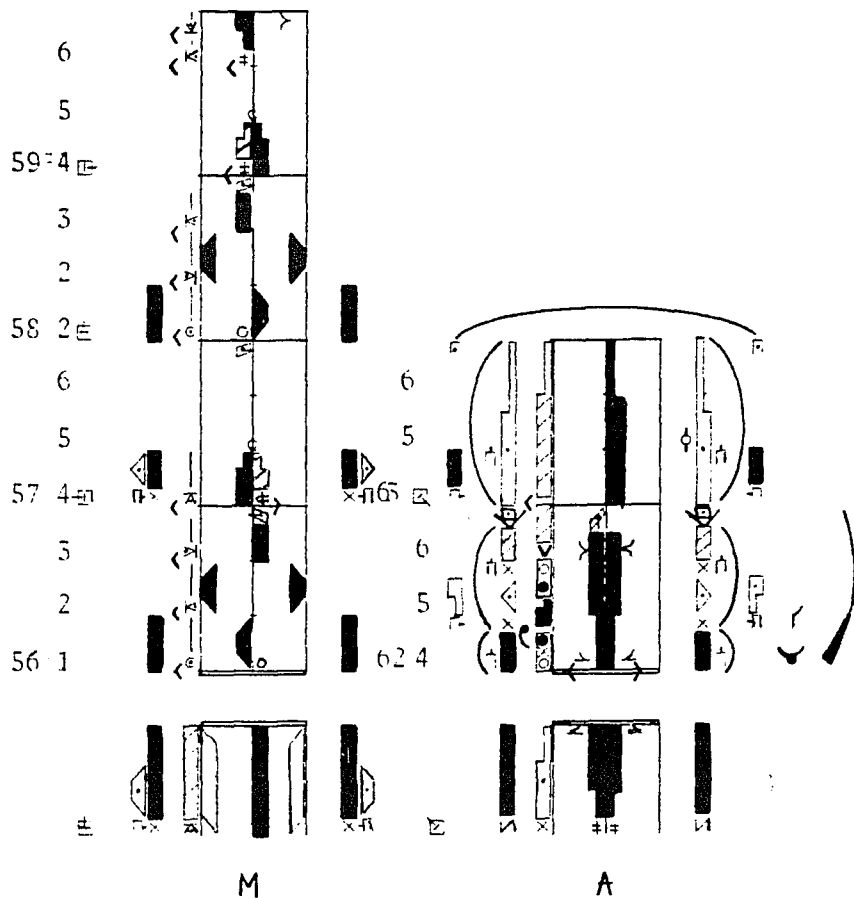
Illustration 9. Man's wider stance and linear movements



third woman leaps onto the man and a duet begins. There are common elements and individual differences in the duet; both dancers turn, sink to a knee, and there is a transfer of images as the woman performs one of the man's jagged leaps. (See illustration 10.) This woman has the most in common with, perhaps has the most understanding for, the male figure. As other members of the group enter and leave their space, these two dance increasingly together. They repeat the probing arm gesture in a less abstract context; they probe each other's space, offering new implications for the movement. The last image of this duet is of the woman walking on air as the man carries her offstage, figuratively "talking to her."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup>Rehearsal with Clay Taliaferro at Arizona State University, February, 1983.

Illustration 10. Common elements and individual differences in the duet



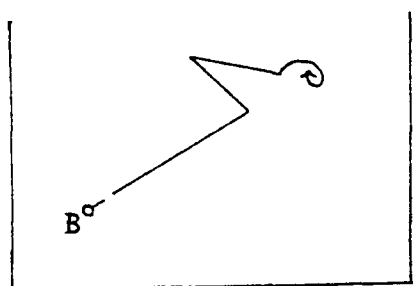
The duet dancers are the only ones who use the downstage left exit other than the single man, and they do return. This seems to compromise Taliaferro's desire to use that stage exit as "the void" into which the man disappears. (See pages 123-124 of this chapter.) One explanation is that the man and woman are exploring the possibility of leaving together, even though ultimately the man will leave alone. Another is that this exit is a foreshadowing. As the man "talks to" the woman, he may be making his first statement about leaving, giving an indication of what is to come. If it is foreshadowing, Taliaferro allows the man to project a return which does not materialize in the choreographer's ideal ending.

A woman's solo follows the duet, beginning with a startling leap as she flies "off the back porch." This solo firmly establishes the conflict between the upstage right and downstage left corners. The woman is drawn toward downstage left, but her movements slacken and become more hesitant as she nears it. "It's all about not going there," said Taliaferro. In contrast, her movements accelerate and positively propel her forward as she addresses the familiarity and comfort of upstage right. The conflict between the two corners of the stage is important enough to be stated twice, and Taliaferro utilizes a reiterated phrase in Debussy's music to repeat the woman's pattern of indecision and conflicting impulses. The repeat of the woman's phrase ends with an erratic path of travel (See

illustration 11.) that abruptly segues into circling for the head, torso and locomotor movements. These circling motifs recall early moments in the dance, and will be intrinsic to the entire choreography.<sup>40</sup>

The circling motif is in fact immediately restated by the couple, who reenters the family space with a spinning movement. It is perhaps suggestive of re-entry into the woman's world. The man nearly exits again immediately, but he recoils abruptly and begins a series of off-balance, tilting movements that seem to knock the women over as they join him. The canon in which this section is performed is a circular composition device that parallels other means of achieving

Illustration 11. Erratic path of travel for solo woman



Measures 128-131

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<sup>40</sup>Videotape 12 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University, March, 1983), foot 0625.

circularity in the dance.

In the next measures, it appears that both women have caught something of the man's movements. Illustration 12 shows dancer "B" referring back to movement from the man's entrance, and dancer "A" assigned "flat" traveling hops, unusually linear movement. The man sinks to the floor in a rapidly changing, indecisive sequence.

Traveling movement again sweeps the stage as all the women come to run and leap with dancer "B" in large circles around the duet couple. They repeat the probing arm gesture seen earlier, and were told to "Accent the arms," by the choreographer.<sup>41</sup> Their velocity effectively encloses, embraces, the returned man and woman.

As the climax in dance and music subsides, all the characters face stage right, and are drawn toward it. Some of them in fact exit. The man, perhaps in another instance of foreshadowing, is the least drawn back toward the symbolic back porch of home.

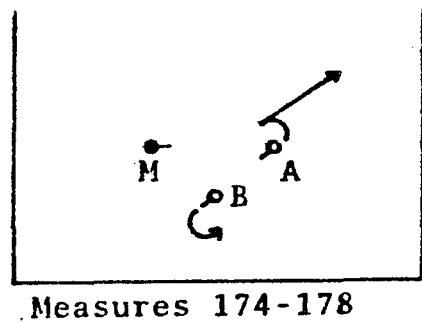
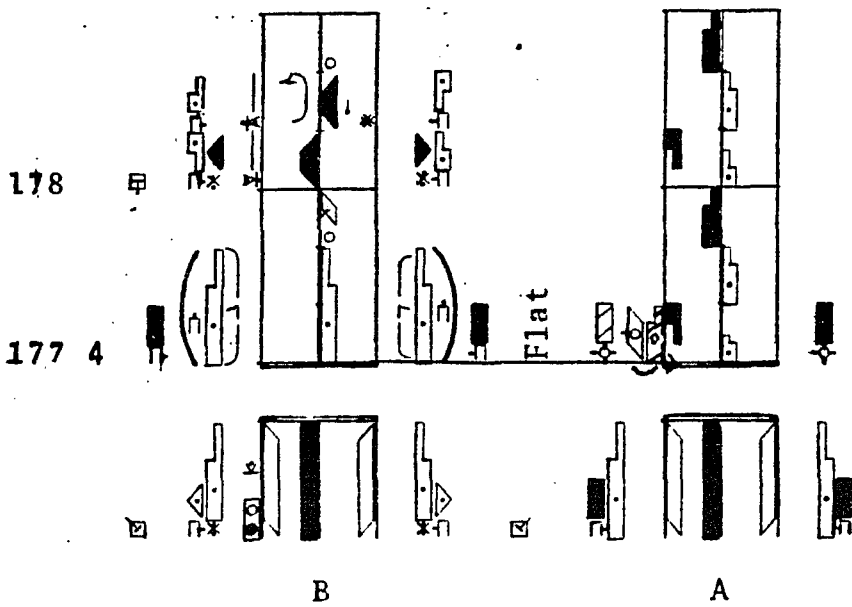
He and the two primary women begin a recapitulation of material from the beginning of the First Movement. The bound quality that will build through to this Movement's close collects visibly in the course of their phrase. Even as the group re-enters and all of the dancers rush forward on the stage diagonal, the movement is "running, but bound."<sup>42</sup> Tightness is also reflected in the closeness of the group.

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<sup>41</sup>Videotape 7 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1030.

<sup>42</sup>Videotape 8 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1700.

Illustration 12. The women have caught something of the man's movements



As they reach upstage left, they approach each other even more closely, increasing the intensity in the visual field.

The final measures of the dance are performed in unison by the tightly impacted group. There are twelve accented movements in the last seventeen measures, and Taliaferro directed that "each accent is like a fist."<sup>43</sup> When these measures were first choreographed, Taliaferro matched Debussy's powerful chords with soaring movements. He decided, however, that rooted movement, incapable of release into the air, more closely approached the blocked precision of the music and the drama of people tied to a place. He accordingly discarded the more airborne version and constructed a concluding statement from the building blocks of plié, emphatic reaching, relatively immobile supports, thrusts in the torso, circling, and a bound, strong, direct quick dynamic. The choreography is "pressed into the floor as one of the climaxes of the piece."<sup>44</sup> The dancers yield to upstage right in their last movement, an accented forward arc of the torso. Their body language at the close of the First Movement expresses subservience to that place.

Taliaferro remarked about the end of the First Movement that "the ensemble must make a single statement. There must be clarity. Otherwise I'd have [the dancers] on different beats . . . . It must be like a synchronised clock."<sup>45</sup> He

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<sup>43</sup>Videotape 12 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1825.

<sup>44</sup>Videotape 16 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University, March, 1983), foot 0580.

<sup>45</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0650.

coached the dancers that "you have to produce these shapes visually with the body. . . . You're doing this because of some outside force. Something is making you run and stop, something is making you do these things instead of you producing it. You have to allow yourself to be a little bit passive in the initiation" without forsaking that "each accent is like a fist."<sup>46</sup> The dancers are pulled and pushed with vehemence by the directionality of the space, by focuses of energy and personal investment within space. Their challenge is to project two competing strengths: of outside forces, and of the limits imposed by their personal and group boundaries. (See illustration 13.)

## II. Second Movement

The dancers make an adjustment in the brief silence between the First and Second Movements, shifting their weight backwards towards the downleft corner. This simple shift of weight establishes that the conflicting pulls of downstage left and upstage right remain active.

Although the dancers begin the Second Movement with circling movements similar to ones seen previously, they are performed with a quite different dynamic. These movements "swing" and are "whipped."<sup>47</sup> They also bring the dancers repeatedly to the floor, introducing a new emphasis on floor

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<sup>46</sup>Videotape 12 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 7835, 1858, 1825.

<sup>47</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. 39.

Illustration 13. Two examples of the power of an outside force

a. the man is drawn downstage left

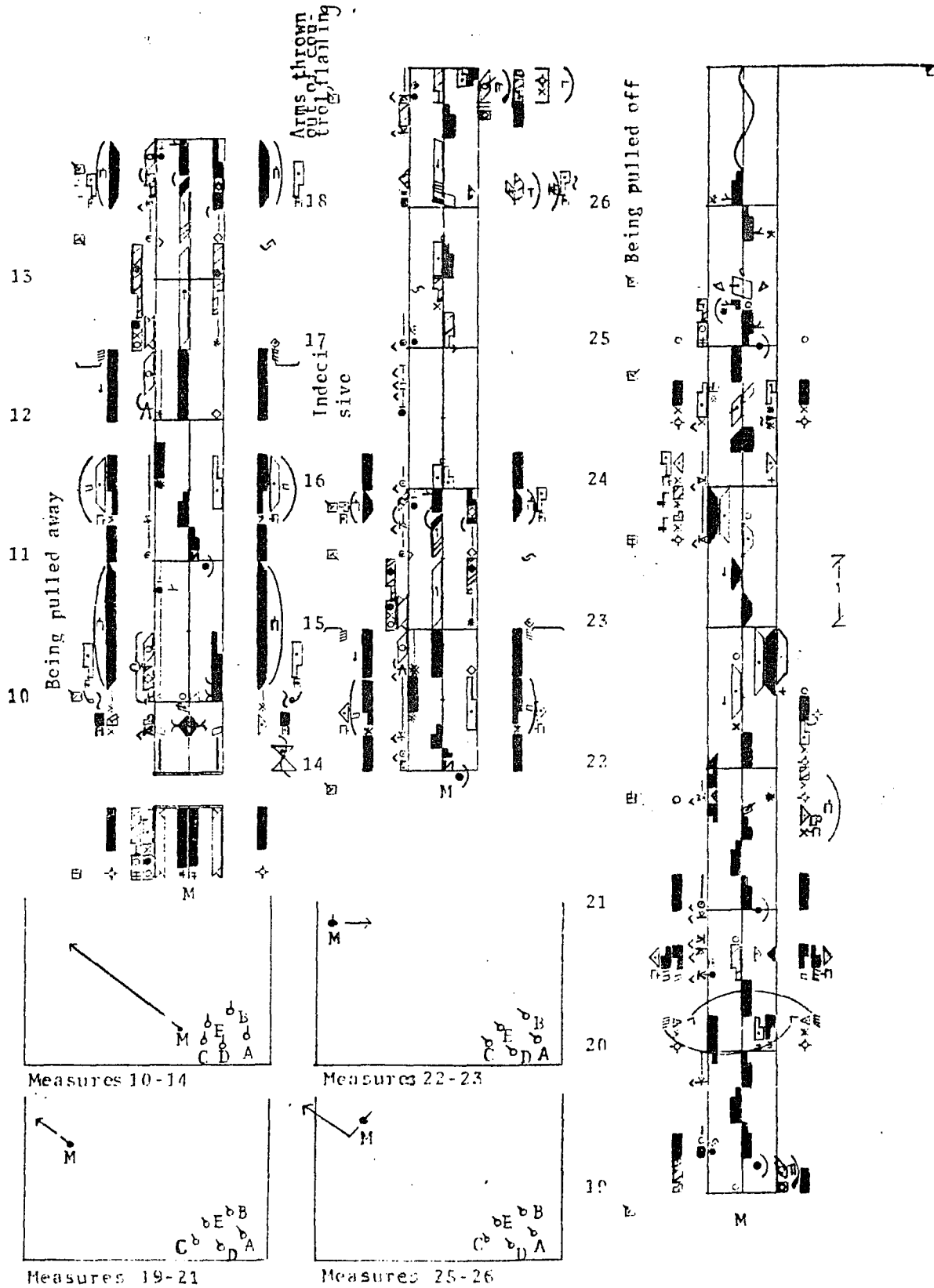
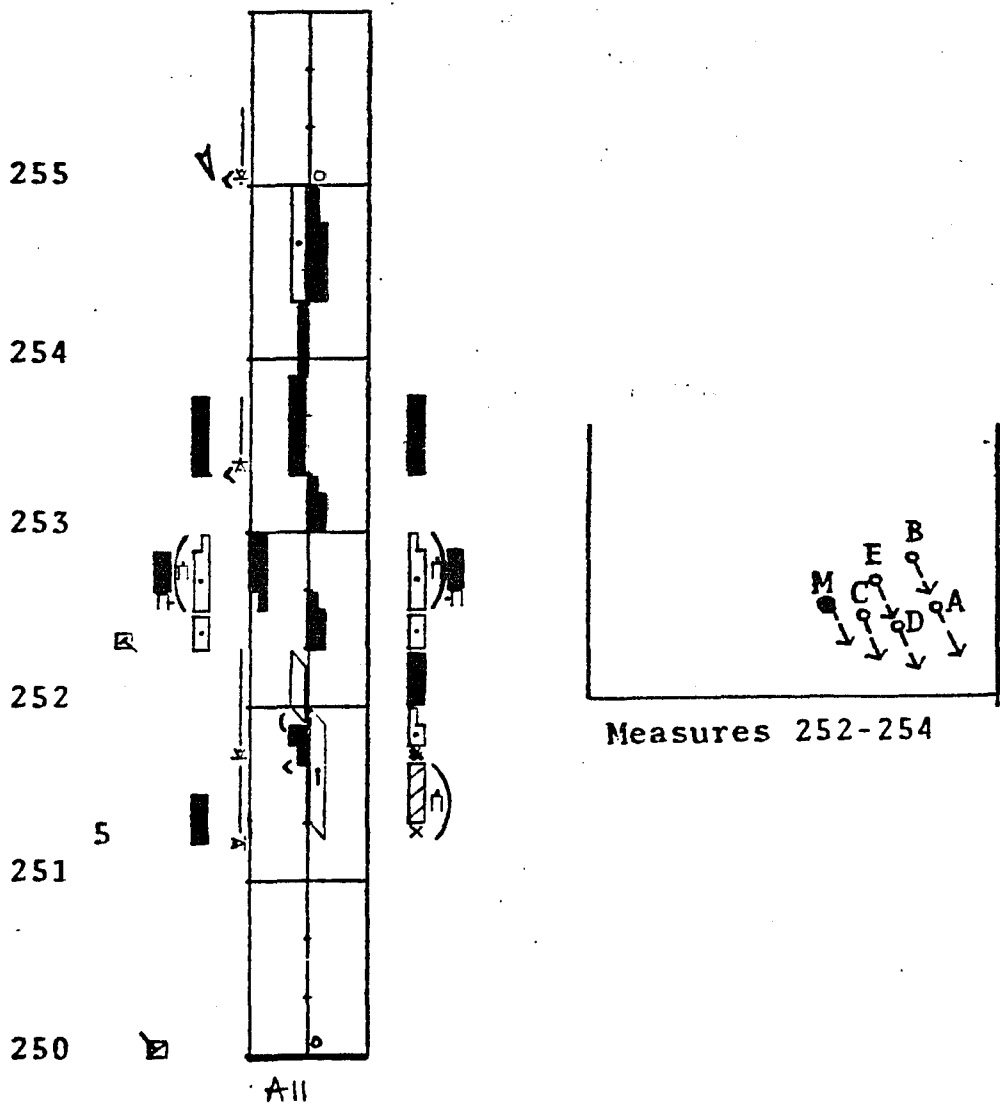


Illustration 13, continued.

b. Reaching toward and pulling back from downstage left



work and sinking levels. The accents in the opening sequence are on downward, dropping movements.

In the midst of the women's unison, choral activity, the man breaks away and dances a phrase whose extreme variations suggest uncertainty and agitation. (See illustration 14.) His weight moves forward toward downstage left but his torso pulls back toward upstage right in measure 10; in measure 11 he hurtles into the air in a tight, rounded shape, but upon landing turns and stretches into a long, linear shape. This sequence is repeated, then the man stops. Only his shifting center of weight communicates that forward and backward momentums continue to conflict within him. He moves backwards and forwards in measure 17, forwards and backwards in measure 18, forwards again in measure 19 into another tight airborne shape in which his arms wrap around himself.

The man's rather aimless travel in the next few measures climaxes with a punctuated turn (measure 25), abruptly bringing him back to face downstage left. He is then "pulled off" with forward runs into "the void" that space represents.<sup>48</sup> Following the indecisive, undirected travel, Taliaferro advised the man, "when you take your turn, surprise us all."<sup>49</sup> The suddenness of the man's departure is highlighted by its coming subsequent to that section of aimless travel. All at once, shockingly, he turns, and is gone.

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>49</sup>Videotape 15 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0692.

Illustration 14. Agitation in the man's movements

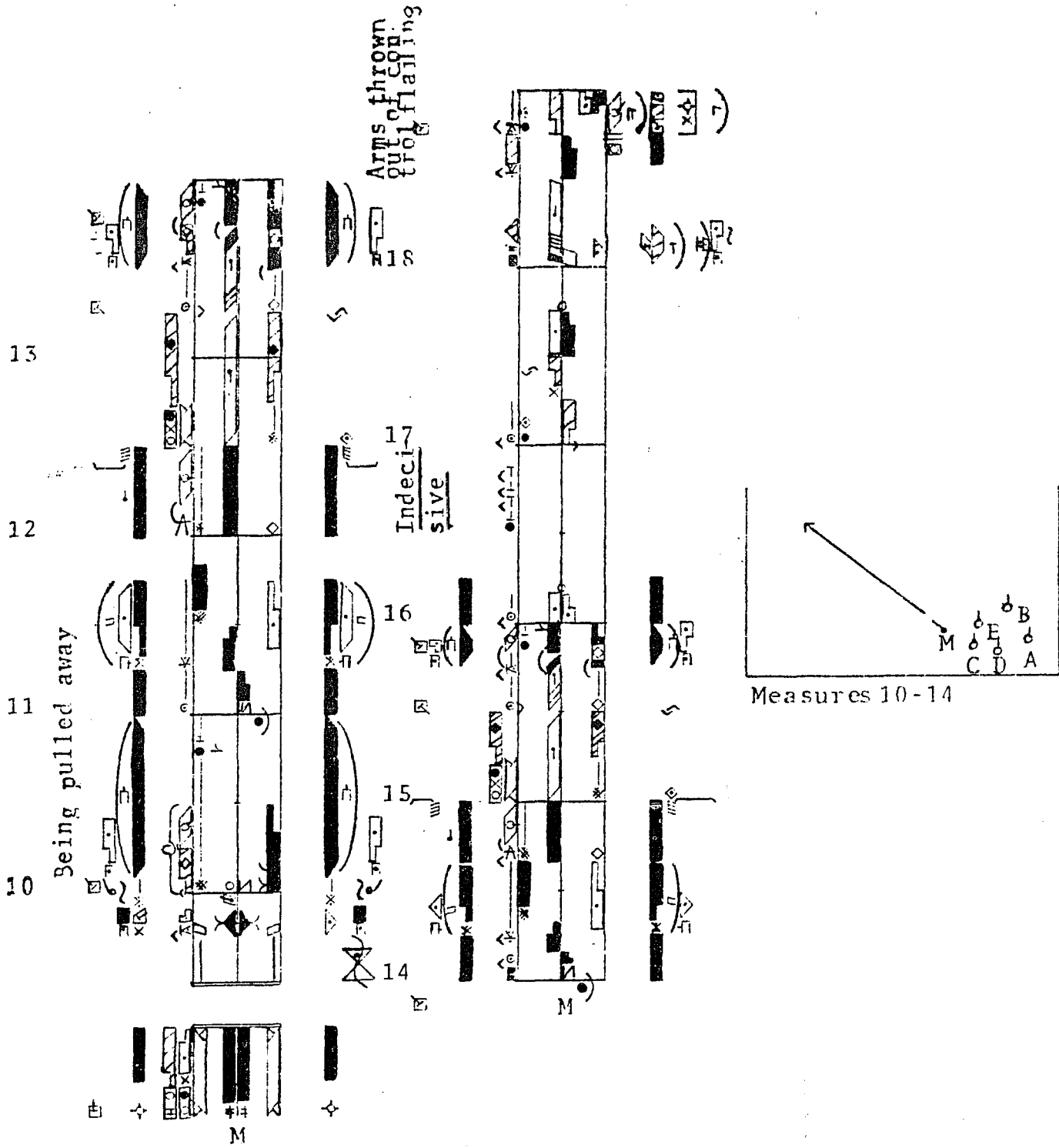
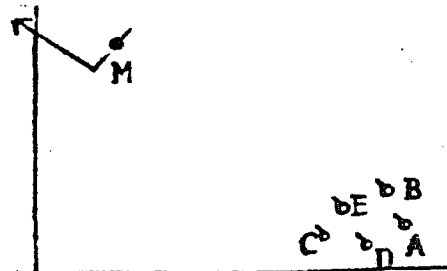
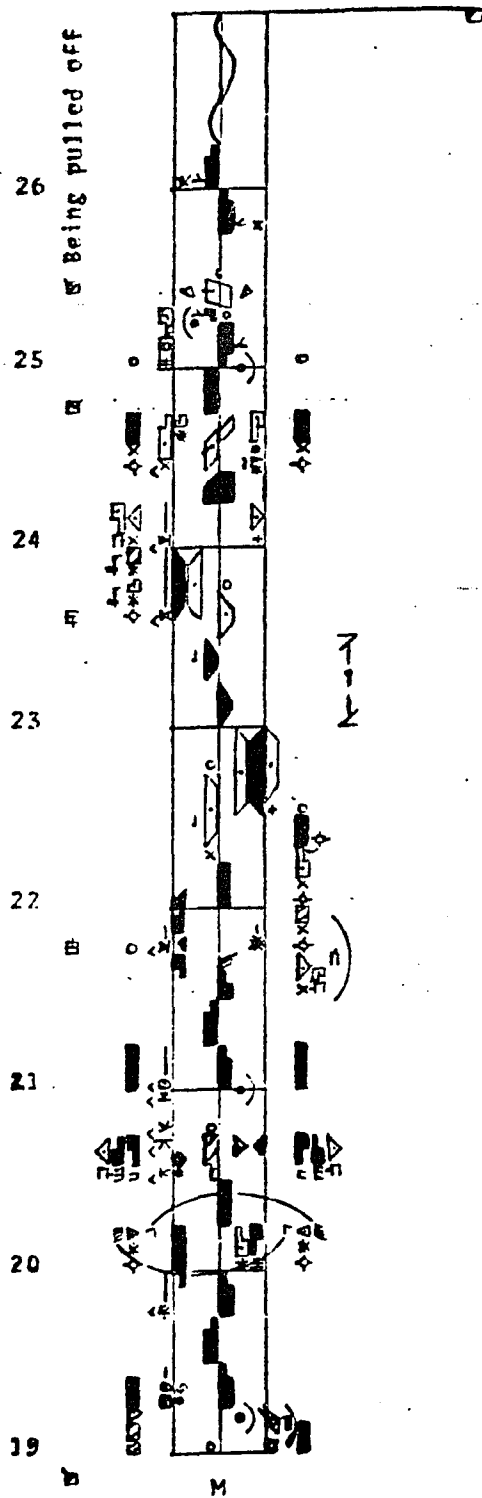
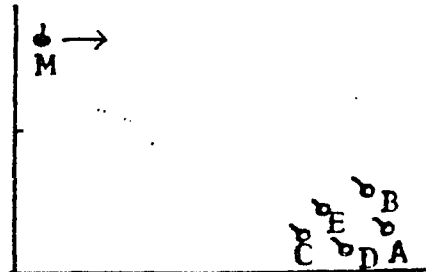


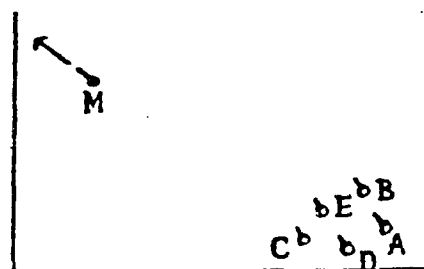
Illustration 14, continued.



Measures 25-26



Measures 22-23



Measures 19-21

It is difficult to say if the choreographer intended the man to leave at this precise point in the dance. In one interview, Taliaferro said, "I was forced into that. The man wasn't here [at rehearsal] yesterday."<sup>50</sup> The fact of the man's departure seems integral to the choreography; its occurrence at this juncture seems the result of accident.

The unity of the women's dance persists after the man's departure. Their movements are rapid, curious, playful. They seem a youthful group, jaunty and "down home."<sup>51</sup> None of the reality of the man's absence seems to have touched them yet. Perhaps this jauntiness relates to Taliaferro's remembrance that "when [my brothers] left, I was so happy." (See p. 123 of this chapter.) Initial reaction to the man's leaving is understated, and one of the ways the passage of time is communicated in the dance is by allowing the drama to affect the participants slowly, for reactions to develop and subside over time.

Reaction to the man's departure seems to set in after the phrase in measures 62 following, movement which is reminiscent of rocking on the back porch with one foot up on the railing. The music and movement slow, and realization seems to strike the dancers. The three women remaining on stage throw their arms open in the first "wailing" movement of the piece. (See also measure 130 of the Second Movement.) This accented thrust into space is followed by a suspension,

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<sup>50</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0555.

<sup>51</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. 46.

then sinks into a "swoon."<sup>52</sup> The dancers here perform a classic Taliaferro "deflationary" movement, giving into their weight and the oppressive force of the dramatic situation. (See illustration 15.) As they exit, their arm gestures are a supplication, referring to both stage right and left, sites of their comfort and loss.

When the other two women re-enter, sprightly music and movement returns. These dancers strike me as younger members of the group, having participated less in choreographic interactions with the man and indeed, with the other women. At this moment in the dance, they re-introduce playfulness and light, quick, indirect energy. The word notes in the Labanotation score question if their entrance is "a laugh?"<sup>53</sup> As they bend forward with folded arms and arc back with arms uplifted, they may be a continuing, innocent echo of pleasure that the man has gone.

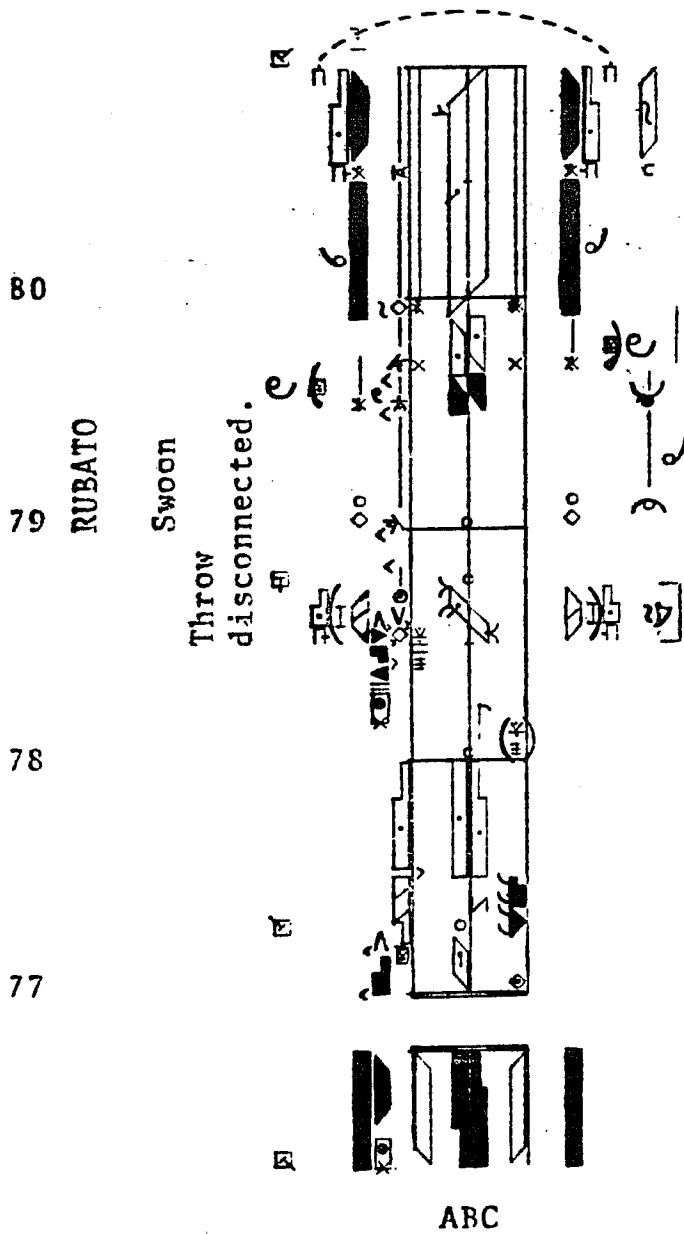
The rhythmic, up-beat movements of the "younger" women are immediately counterbalanced by the re-entry of the other three, one of whom props herself up on her neighbors' shoulders to afford herself the longest possible view of offstage left. As the music slows again, the stage is left to the two dominant women. These two characters make independent statements that close the Second Movement. "Southern" flavor is most obvious in "B's" movements, some of which are described in the score as "down home, like a

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

Illustration 15. Deflationary movement conveying a dramatic situation



strut," and "a cakewalk, but lower in energy."<sup>54</sup> The dancer captures the aura and allure of the locale, perhaps resorting to familiar patterns of behavior as a source of consolation for the loss of the man. Coaching "B's" cakewalk, Taliaferro said this character was "reluctantly going back home,"<sup>55</sup> moving back to the offstage porch.

The other woman's ensuing solo is a fine example of drama imbedded in movement. (See illustration 16.) As she moves downstage left, her whole body and her face focus forward. Taliaferro directed, "the arm stays close to the body,"<sup>56</sup> so that the length of the step, the directional thrust of the torso and focus are visible, unadorned. The woman comes to a full stop twice, leaning forward. "Register your focus!" Taliaferro coached. "Walk 1, 2, 3; register!"<sup>57</sup> The sheer intensity of her longing cannot make the man reappear, however. The woman backs away, a vulnerable, almost prayerful figure. Her swing into her own wailing movement is accented with the vehemence of grief.

The small, quick steps of the woman seem an indication of her longing and frailty. They withdraw her gradually from downstage left, and are interrupted by pauses. She moves away from the space last occupied by the man with reluctance.

As the Movement closes, the woman offers another glimpse

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 52, 56.

<sup>55</sup>Videotape 13 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1405.

<sup>56</sup>Videotape 17 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1490.

<sup>57</sup>Videotape 15 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1610.

Illustration 16. Drama imbedded in movement

128

127

126

125

A cakewalk, but lower in energy. A remembrance of how it felt.

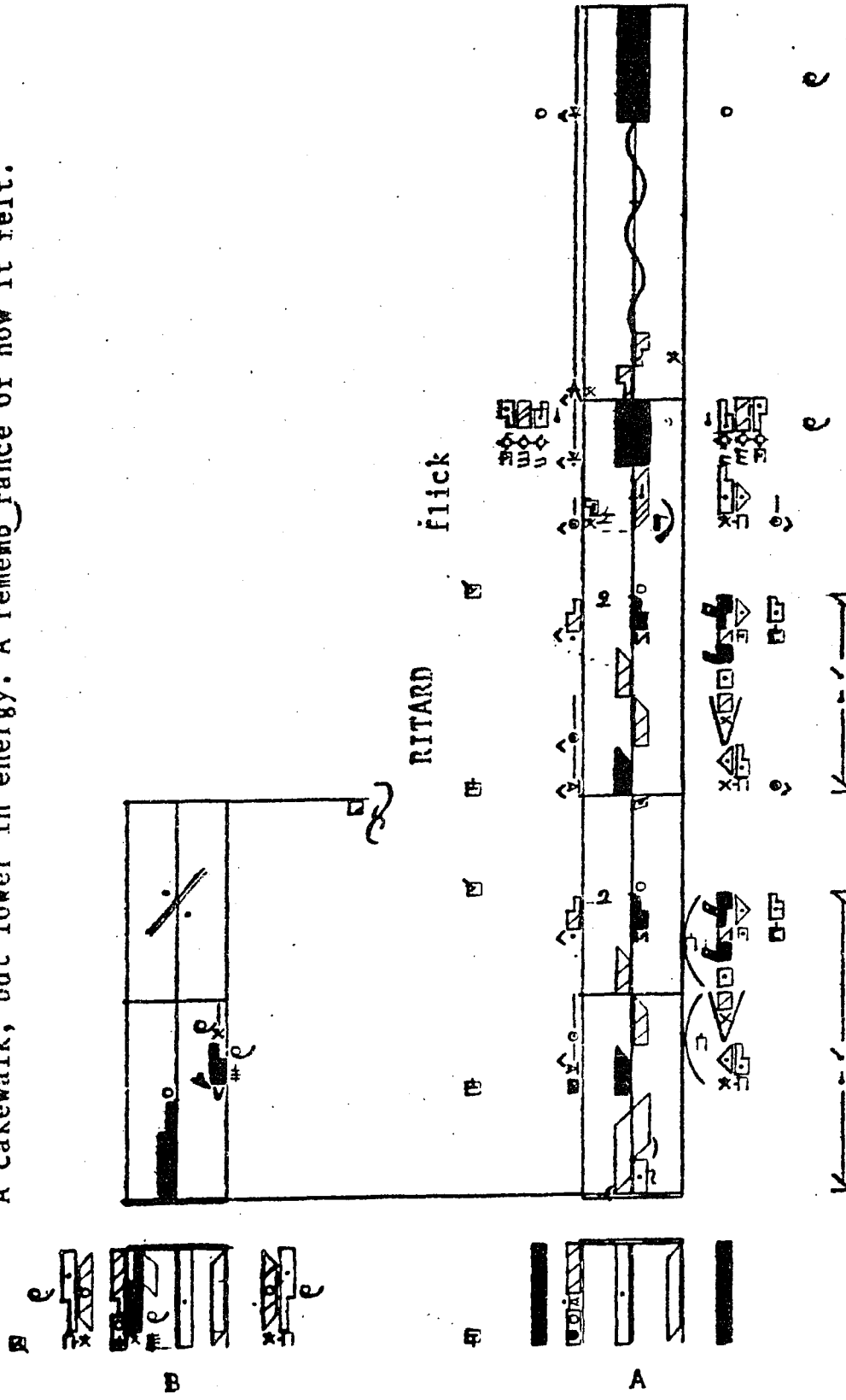
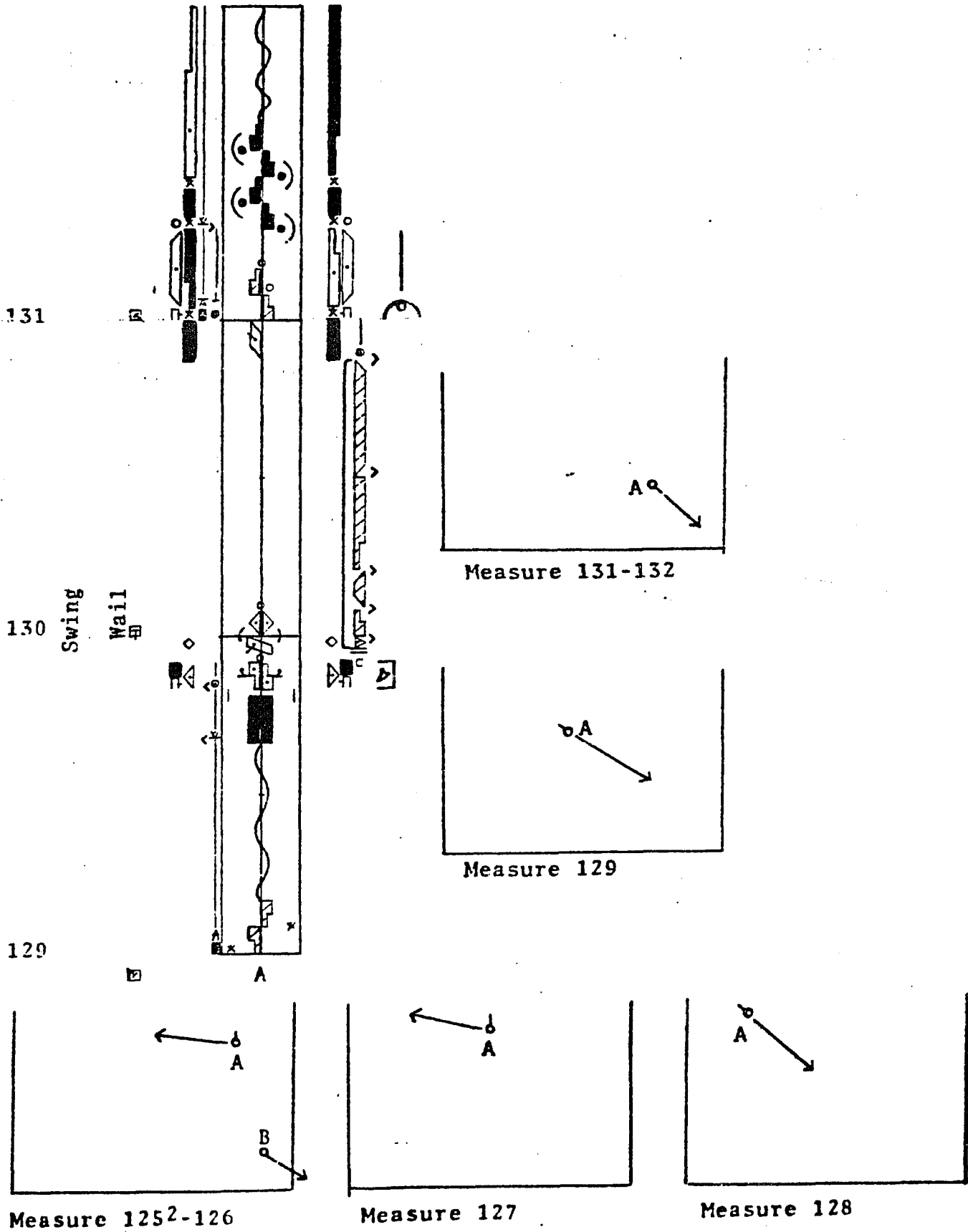


Illustration 16, continued.





of the most salient image of the choreography; the struggle between the force of presence offstage right and of a vacuum offstage left. "Listen!" Taliaferro urged. "The movements can be guided [by], should be part of the music."<sup>58</sup> The woman facing upstage right shifts forward in that direction; then backward toward downstage left; forward again; backward. She is not fully in either place, but caught somewhere between them, fluctuating, divided, concerned. Her final arm gesture toward "the porch" offstage right bespeaks her commitment to the group or family. The fact that she cannot exit like the others, letting downstage left escape from her view, suggests that part of her will always be watching for, be alert to the time of the man's return.

### III. Third Movement

The third major section of Taliaferro's dance immediately strikes a unison chord, as all five women enter and form a chain of connecting links between downstage left and upstage right. (See floor plan in illustration 17.) Their entrances conclude, appropriately, with a suspended rise and reach of the arm to downstage left.

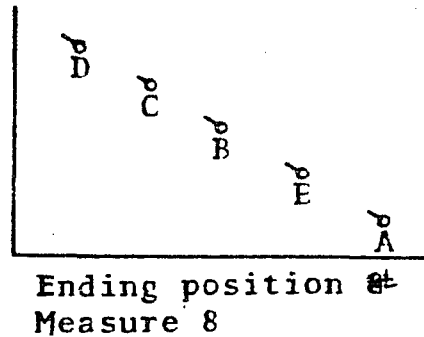
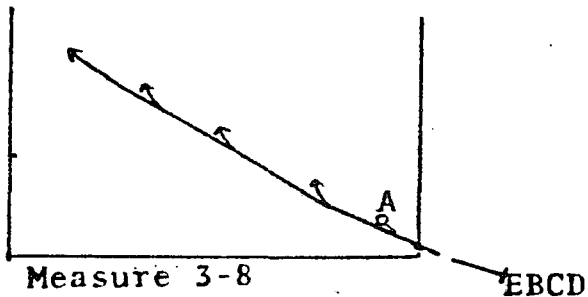
In the initial movements of this section, the women "give in, deflate;" the shapes they make are "a little soft."<sup>59</sup> They sink to the floor with movements reminiscent of the Second Movement, such as the dive to the side in measure

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<sup>58</sup>Videotape 16 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0930.

<sup>59</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. 62.

Illustration 17. Floor plan showing diagonal use of the stage in the Third Movement



13 and the arm gestures of measures 17-18. The Humphrey "arc" of rising and falling movement is clearly visible in the side-to-side drops and suspensions the dancers do when they get to their feet (measures 29-34).

The women soon whirl offstage and begin an interesting sequence of circling around the leg (curtain) in the upstage right corner. Around and around it they go, in what seems a metaphor for the passage of time: day after day passes in the dancers' orbiting of the stage wing. "A's" solo separates itself out from this routine circling, but it continues behind her, underscoring the ongoingness of both daily life and her sorrow.

The solo dance is "an open wound,"<sup>60</sup> revealing the


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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

depth of the woman's hurt and the extent of her yearning. Her high, accented arm and leg extensions seem appeals, or cries. She sinks to her knees several times but recovers quickly, always moving on, only momentarily succumbing to her distress. Taliaferro advised the dancer of this role that "You have to start connecting the dots, as it were, like a puzzle in the newspaper. You have to draw the lines, that's what dancing is."<sup>61</sup> "Try to connect movements."<sup>62</sup>

Following the solo, the women again all circle the upstage right curtain, flow over the stage space, and carry dancers "A" and "B" into a danced "tête-à-tête." The score indicates that the two women left onstage "look at each other; dance with each other."<sup>63</sup> They enter into a movement conversation. Images are presented which suggest empathy, sympathy, understanding between the two women. Their dance is a sharing of space, time, ideas.

As the other women re-enter, the movement acquires a marked, urgent character. Soon, the score says, "step on the piano notes."<sup>64</sup> Rhythmic patterning drives both music and movement onward in an increasingly relentless way.

The climax of the dance begins building strenuously at measure 172. The rhythmic pattern  becomes entrenched

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<sup>61</sup>Videotape 13 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 1307.

<sup>62</sup>Videotape 15 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0945.

<sup>63</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score by Mary Corey, p. 76.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

in sound and movement. The music instructions read "Peu à peu; très animé" ("Little by little: very animated), and the movement subscribes to the same direction. Word notes state precisely to "keep the arms by the sides"<sup>65</sup> so that the climactic development can begin in the dancers' centers of weight. "Feel yourself falling. Everything [is] motivated by the center of weight."<sup>66</sup> Little by little the velocity produced by the falling actions increases, until the dancers burst into the air in three forceful springs. Taliaferro was wise to change the ending of his First Movement, which would have competed with and stolen some of the thunder from this airborne finale. (See p. 156 of this chapter.) At the height of this activity, four of the women drop quickly to the floor, focusing on the downstage left corner. The fifth woman, "A," leaps at that corner, the source of all the conflict in the dance. As she is in the air, the man returns in time to catch her. The concluding movement of the piece had a pronounced drama because it is, literally, the highest point of the choreography. The woman, caught at the summit of her leap, has risen higher than any other character in the dance. The position of the other dancers on the floor enhances the sense of a zenith achieved by the man and woman.

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

### That Troublesome Ending!

What if, as the choreographer desired, the man does not return for the final lift of the dance? What are the choreographic options to replace the final movement? The leaping woman could be caught by the other women, supported in her despair by her "family." Or, she could actually leap offstage, disappearing into the void herself. This solution, however, does not seem in character for this particular woman. The lights could go out and catch the woman in mid-air, but that ending would probably not resolve the drama of the dance satisfactorily.

It seems to me there are two possibilities: either the man returns, catches the woman, and the dance ends in triumph; or, the man fails to return, and the woman throws herself toward "the void " in a last potent image of despair. I agree with Taliaferro--she should be alone in this latter ending without the support of the family network. What if two different men, strangers, entered to catch the woman, as symbolic messengers confirming the loss of the other man? Taliaferro didn't have the personnel to accomplish this at Arizona State University. And this might suit the theme of the man's having died in war, a death which is announced by other men. I think that ending deserves a try; I also think the ending now in place works, although it defuses the dramatic tension the choreographer wishes to sustain.

Moses Pendleton: Children on the Hill

I get involved [with my macro-lens camera] with close-up pictures of all the patterns in the cinnamon in my cappuccino. And by the time I'm finished, the coffee is cold. Poor starving artists, that's what happens to them. They get so involved with process, they forget to eat.<sup>1</sup>

Moses Pendleton began his career with Pilobolus Dance Theatre, a group of dancers, gymnasts and athletes who joined in 1971 at Dartmouth College to do "collective choreography." Traditionally, choreography is created by one person who is in control of a group of dancers. The dancers are the choreographer's medium, responding to his or her directions about movement, timing, and dynamics. Pilobolus rejected this approach, and functioned as a group voice that experimented with movement and selected the most successful efforts for performance. The company was highly acclaimed for its work with "body sculptures" and movements for groups that worked together as "nonhuman creatures." These were the sorts of movements that probably could not have been devised by a single choreographer; their discovery might not have been possible without the improvisations of a group whose members trusted each other and who came from diverse movement backgrounds.

By the end of the decade, Pendleton formed a company,

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<sup>1</sup>Moses Pendleton at public forum entitled "What is a Dance?," University of Hawaii at Manoa, October 29, 1983.

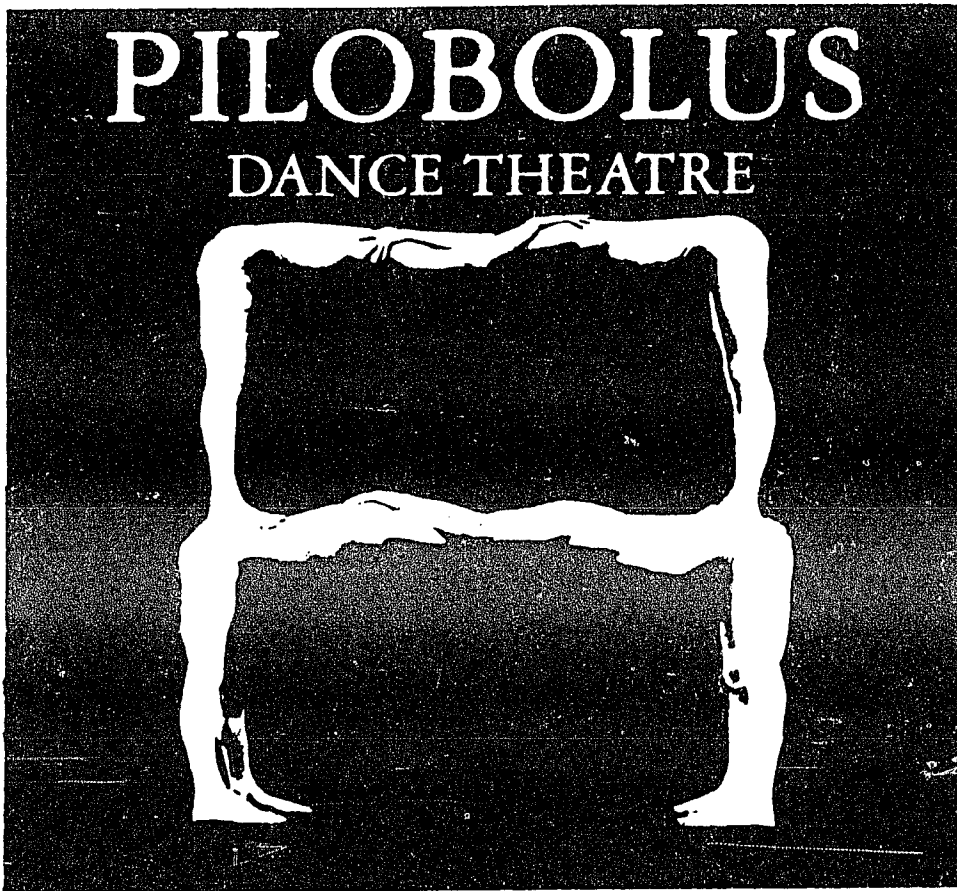


Illustration 1. Program cover, Pilobolus Dance Theatre  
at the Shubert Performing Arts Center, New Haven,  
Connecticut, March 27, 1984.

"Momix," of which he is the head. However, Pendleton still does not function as a traditional "choreographer" because he does not compose movements in advance to teach to other dancers. He initiates improvisation exercises through which he elicits his dancers' strongest abilities and movement preferences. His choreographies emerge as blends of his own ideas and those of the people with whom he works. The process of making a dance has become as important as the final product and increased involvement in the process is

stressed as the means of achieving better results. Pendleton has described himself as a "catalyst," who designs sets of improvisatory experiences through which a group moves, and the culmination of their work is a performance piece. The "choreography" is an arrangement of movements which comes both from Pendleton and the dancers, with his being the final voice in the selection and sequencing of the movements.

This technique is a very popular one in contemporary choreography. Pendleton was not the first to use it, but he uses it extremely successfully. The results are dances that are about the people in them, and not merely about the dance director. Practical problems arise, however, with this philosophy. Pendleton may alter choreography rather than make substitutions for dancers who leave a company. He feels that new dancers who have not been through the experience of making the dance can not always enter it successfully. This can create problems for companies with Pendleton works in their repertoires.

The scale of Pendleton works varies greatly. One of his first pieces was Black and White Cows on a Green Field, in which he led a herd of cows on a variety of paths through a field before stampeding them toward the audience. In contrast, the version of Children on the Hill created in 1982 for the City College of New York is a suite of four fragments. The last consists only of a man smoking on stage, his hat levitating off his head. It is an anti-finale, shrinking down to focus on this individual with whom the piece "goes up in smoke."

Pendleton has moved beyond the restrictions of the medium of the choreographer in another way. He choreographs movement as he sees it in life: for things as well as for people. In Children on the Hill, movement is designed for the stage curtains, for pools of light, for props like "Casper," which is a long rope of cloth. The dancers in this piece are only one part of the moving environment on stage. Pendleton has taken his cue here from Alwin Nikolais, who precedes Pendleton's work by thirty years. But it could be said that Nikolais' inspiration was Loie Fuller, who fascinated the Futurists at the beginning of the century with her dances manipulating vast yardages of cloth and using advanced lighting techniques. There are certainly precedents for Pendleton, but this does not detract from his methods, which are an innovative blend of original and borrowed techniques.

Pendleton resents the physical limitations imposed upon

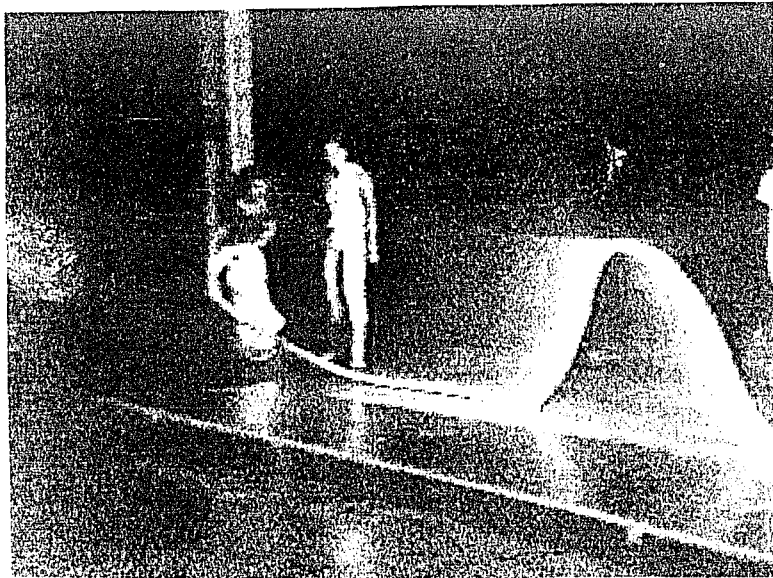


Illustration 2. Pendleton rehearsing with "Casper" at the University of Hawaii

the choreographer in terms of the medium he must use, i.e. people. Bodies with two arms and two legs have a range of movement possibilities that Pendleton finds restricted. His work with group movement in Pilobolus was one way of freeing himself. Two or more dancers working as a unit can create changing kaleidoscopes of design with the lines of their movement and the spaces between them. Pendleton's work with "organisms" of two or more dancers and with projections of dancers' shadows result in "abstract" works that are to be viewed as shapes, planes and flow rather than as people in motion.



Illustration 3. Shadowplay from "E.C." in the Momix repertoire

Another way Pendleton has liberated himself from the human form is to reshape it through costuming. In Children on the Hill, one costume is padded and hooded. The result is a figure that is non-human in appearance, and that moves in a particular way. The costume was worn in rehearsal, and improvisations with it yielded a walk on all fours that is in slow-motion, and a walk on the hands with the feet dragging ineptly behind.

Pendleton represents the "New" dancer whose background is not ballet or modern dance. Pendleton was a skier and swimmer, and his sports gave him strength, stamina, rhythmic ability and fluid ease of movement. These characteristics appear in his choreography, rather than the traditional "look" of established methods of training. This appreciation for natural and athletic ways of moving has been a current in choreographic experimentation in recent years, expanding the vocabulary of movements that can be viable performance material.

It is recommended that performers and directors of Pendleton's work watch "Moses Pendleton presents Moses Pendleton," a videotape program made by the artist on the occasion of his thirty-third birthday. Amanda Smith in Dancemagazine, noting the propensity of today's avant-garde toward autobiography, chose Pendleton's program as a foremost example.<sup>2</sup> The tape is interesting for many reasons. For one, it introduces a new medium to Pendleton's choreography

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<sup>2</sup>Amanda Smith, "Autobiography and the Avant-Garde," Dancemagazine, January, 1985, pp. 50-54.

(the video camera), which offers multiple perspectives unavailable in a traditional theatre setting. His birthday dance is designed to be viewed from many different points of view, and the movement of the camera adds one more "dancer" to the dance.

Pendleton produced the work in his own home. The house is, as he says, his "best costume." It is a summary of his life's activities, full of memories and records of what was. Pendleton is a curious combination of a Romantic to whom the past is inexpressibly precious, and an innovator who is shaping the future. The distinction that is essential to make is that he is a Romantic as concerns his own past, his personal history, and an innovator as regards his approach to his art.

In fact, Pendleton's Romanticism about his life and family led to his avant-garde approach to choreography. His preoccupation with his father's suicide helped to propel him into a career of "major motion" as a denial of death. It led Pendleton to believe that dance can be any movement, that life and dance are interchangeable; only death brings absolute stillness. Pendleton's life seems to be one continuing reaffirmation of the movement of living as opposed to the stillness of death, and all life for him has become a dance.

Much of the movement in Pendleton's choreography is taken from his own life. Pendleton believes that once a person becomes self-conscious about his movement, he is "performing." Any material from life can be dance simply by

raising our consciousness of it.

The fifty-minute Pendleton video program is entirely a dance, from the movement of clocks to the breezes in the trees to getting out of bed in the morning to performing on a stage. Some parts of the program are more recognizable as dance in the traditional sense. Much of the rest of the tape is about a man's life, the rural environment which is alive and growing around him, and the things he sets in motion. If the viewer can see this day in Pendleton's life as a self-conscious dance, we can share his point of view about the omnipresence of the "art" of movement. Pendleton lives his art: his self-consciousness of the activities of his daily life make him an eternal dancer. This is a distinctly alternative approach to the traditional one in which professional dancers are in a class apart from regular people. For Pendleton, dancers are everywhere, if they would only realize it.

I. Introduction to Children on the Hill, a process of creation and revision during 1982-83

The title Children on the Hill is revealing of both Pendleton's approach to choreography and his lifestyle. The "children" are the students of the City College of New York, with whom Pendleton worked in the creation of this piece in 1982. The title acknowledges the young dancers who helped determine the shape of this dance, by direct input of movement ideas and by the bodies, abilities, and personalities they presented to the choreographer.

The "hill" is Bell Hill, on which Pendleton lives in Washington, Connecticut. The choreographer preferred to begin work on the dance at his home base, which includes a large Victorian house and a carriage-house converted into a video-equipped dance studio. Accordingly, the twelve students assigned to Pendleton's piece hopped on the bus to Connecticut, lived with the choreographer for a week, conversed, ate, danced and walked in the country together, and came back to Manhattan with the beginnings of their dance. The title Children on the Hill describes a choreography with and for college kids, who visited Pendleton's hilltop home and workplace to allow the choreographer to become acquainted with them and their movement styles.

Pendleton's process of tailoring the new dance specifically to City College students continued after the return to New York. The choreographer visited the theatre in which the dance was to be performed in December, 1982, Aaron Davis Hall, and became enamored of its computerized lighting board. The lighting effects possible in this particular theatre began to find their way into Pendleton's dance. One example of lighting that shaped choreography is the "dialogue" at the end of the piece between dancers labelled M and A.<sup>3</sup> They stand in two pools of light that bump up and out alternately in diagonal corners of the stage. Pendleton

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<sup>3</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards (New York: Dance Notation Bureau, 1982), pp. 86-96.

perceived during onstage improvisations that the fluctuating areas of light created a dualistic environment, and he decided to use that as a context for a set of brief movements. Basically, he used the lighting to shape those movements into a conversation between a man and a woman. Fragmentary movements, gestures, surprising props and costume manipulation all find their way into this closing "dialogue." The result is an exchange that is full of imagery, surrealistic, funny, beguiling. It would be less so without the game of lights that reveals the two people's actions in counterpoint. Pendleton exploited the technology he had at hand. Just as he tapped the movement styles and vocabulary of these particular dancers to design a dance for them, he tapped the capabilities of their theatre to create a dance that suited it equally well.

Not everything in the dance was newly devised or based on Pendleton's experiences with the City College dancers and theatre. Pendleton tapped himself as well, drawing on his past and personality to mark the choreography clearly with his own stamp. There are several references to previous Pendleton works in Children on the Hill, which will be discussed in detail in a later section of this chapter. The point to establish here is that Pendleton drew from both the moment and the past to make this dance. Part of the experience he offered to City College students was training in his personal movement techniques and vocabulary, having them experiment with selections from a variety of his previous works. A good deal of this retrospective vocabulary

found its way into Children on the Hill, to the extent that the work can be interesting to study and perform as a Pendleton anthology.

The result of Pendleton's receptive, responsive choreographic approach was an initial work that was highly personalized. Children on the Hill 1982 reflected the capabilities of its premiere cast and locale, as well as its choreographer. Care must be taken in the study of the 1982 work by other dancers. Pendleton's tenet that a work should belong concretely to a particular group of dancers mandates some creativity in restaging, specifically in sections 3 and 4.

The problem of transferring choreography from one group of dancers to another is certainly not unique to Children on the Hill. The original members of Pilobolus have been plagued by an inability to move on and leave old roles to new dancers. Anna Kisselgoff has written of the company:

In 1970-71, Mr. Pendleton and Jonathan Wolken invited two fellow Dartmouth graduates, Lee Harris and Robby Barnett, to form Pilobolus (Michael Tracy soon replaced Mr. Harris), which was shortly expanded to include Alison Becker Chase and Martha Clarke. Pilobolus has since undergone changes of personnel and style, but that first style was exactly what defined it. Short on standard dance technique, the men evolved their own way of moving--creating shapes and images devoid of steps but based on linked, cantilevered and gymnastically-based body formations. Their scenarios became more complex. And as time went on, it became clear that Pilobolus was not just a dance company but a communal group whose results depended upon the personal interaction within it.

When the company appeared in New York last year, its new, conventionally-trained dancers were unable to project the spirit of the roles created by the original members. It was obvious that the pieces had

worked because the first Pilobolus members had been themselves on stage. The personalities and chemistry involved could not be transferred to surrogates. It was more than a matter of choreography.<sup>4</sup>

The desirability and necessity of choreographic alterations in Children on the Hill became apparent when the work was restaged at the University of Hawaii in 1983. The dance was reconstructed faithfully from the Labanotation score, and Pendleton went to Hawaii to view the work. He was not pleased with a revival of the 1982 version; the movements that had suited the "street kids" of Harlem looked forced in Oahu, and the University of Hawaii's theatre was hard pressed to achieve the required lighting effects. Pendleton adjusted the dance, and a second Labanotation score was produced of this revised 1983 version.

There are now two scores of two dances called Children on the Hill. Pendleton considered the 1983 score a more definitive version. Study of Children on the Hill can be made using the 1982 score; formal restagings should be of the 1983 score. Although Pendleton was happy with the 1982 version when it was done at the City College of New York, he understood that it "hadn't traveled well" because of the extensive ad libbing and movements designed for particular dancers. In 1983, therefore, he formalized the choreography to a greater extent. He remarked in Hawaii, "I think when you begin to notate, and begin to want to transfer it to another company, you have to be much more specific. You have

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<sup>4</sup>Anna Kisselgoff, "When Confession is All," New York Times, October 3, 1982, section H, p. 16.

to choreograph. I didn't even choreograph that piece. I tried to act as a catalyst for action on the stage."<sup>5</sup>

Care should be taken to remark the passages Pendleton retained unaltered in both versions of Children on the Hill. These passages are those which depend more on Pendleton's ideas than on the contributions of student participants, those which do not require a particular technical skill for their proper execution, and those which do not rely on technical equipment.

## II. Children on the Hill in 1982

Moses said he's there to guide us in our type of movement. He's not trying to make us do his stuff. He's trying to make us do our own stuff, what we feel comfortable with. So that we give a better performance within his type of structure and his guidelines.<sup>6</sup>

Pendleton began work with the City College dancers by giving them improvisatory warm-ups. Pendleton used some of the students' responses in these improvisations in Children on the Hill. Illustration 4 shows a selection of the movement frameworks which students helped create and within which Pendleton asked them to improvise. Underneath each notation is an explanation of where it was used in Children on the Hill.

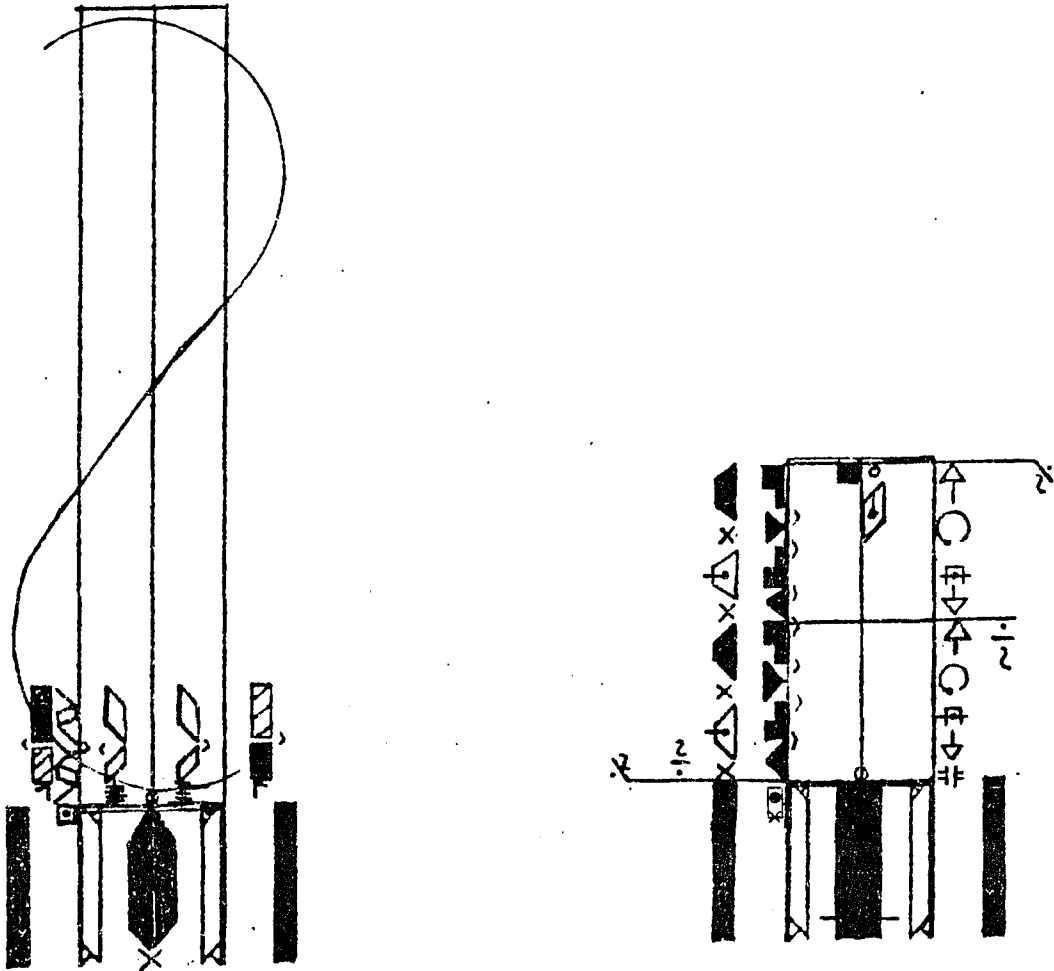
It can be seen from Illustration 4 that student input into Children on the Hill was largely confined to sections 3

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<sup>5</sup>Moses Pendleton at public forum, October 29, 1983.

<sup>6</sup>Leslie Meyers, dance major at the City College of New York, in a conversation in Pendleton's kitchen, September, 1982.

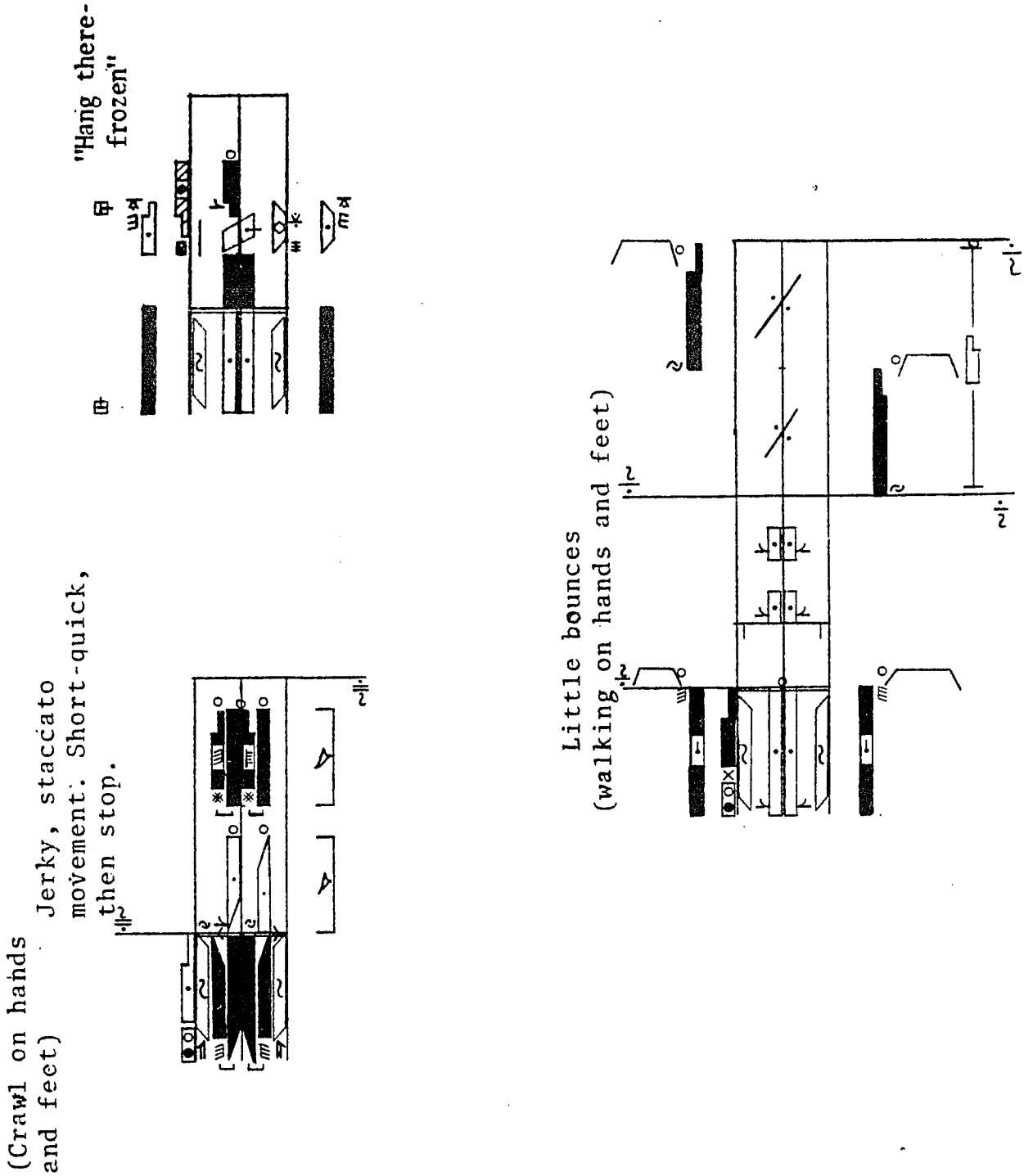
Illustration 4: Improved movement frameworks developed  
in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill



Third Section, measures 10-18 ff.

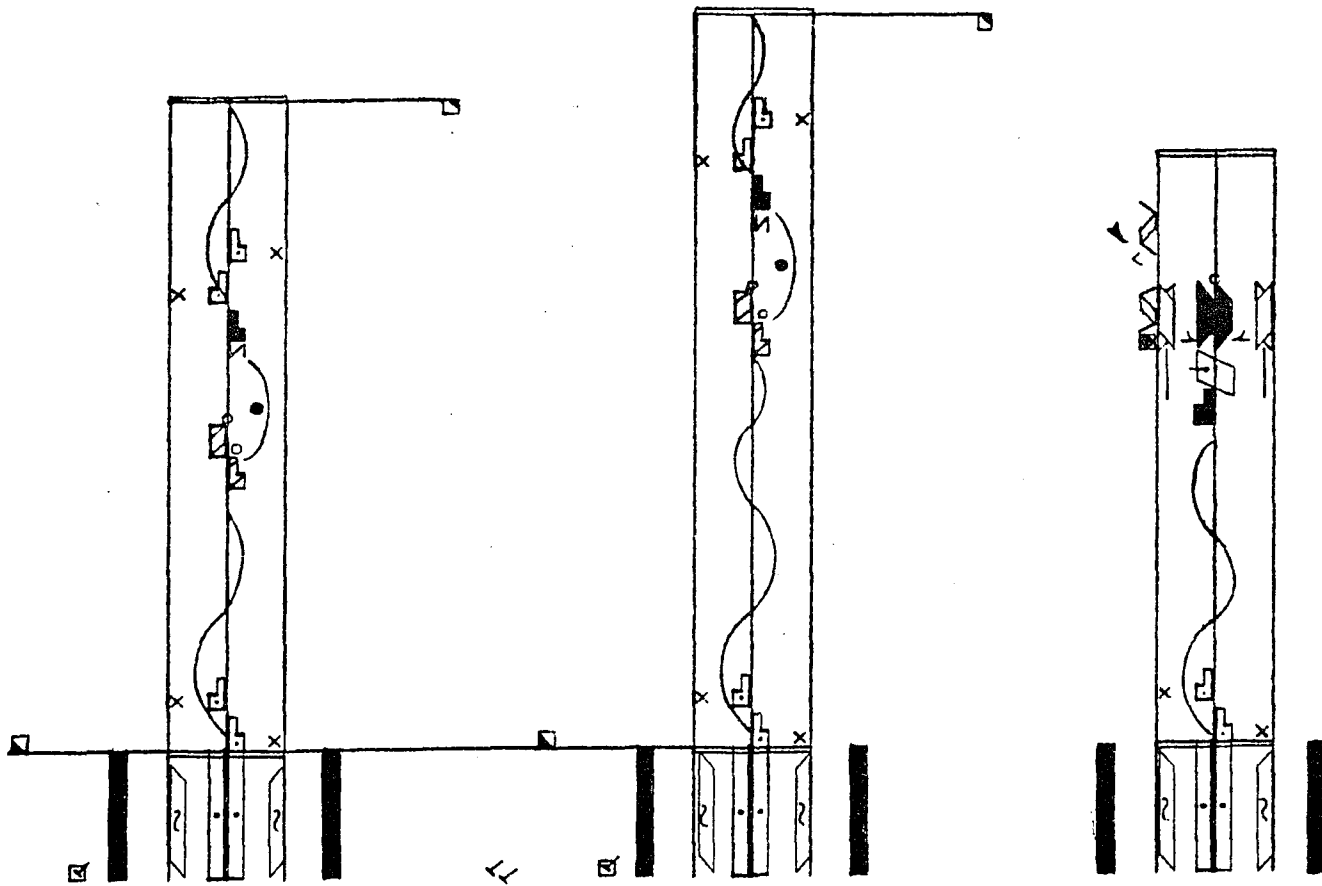
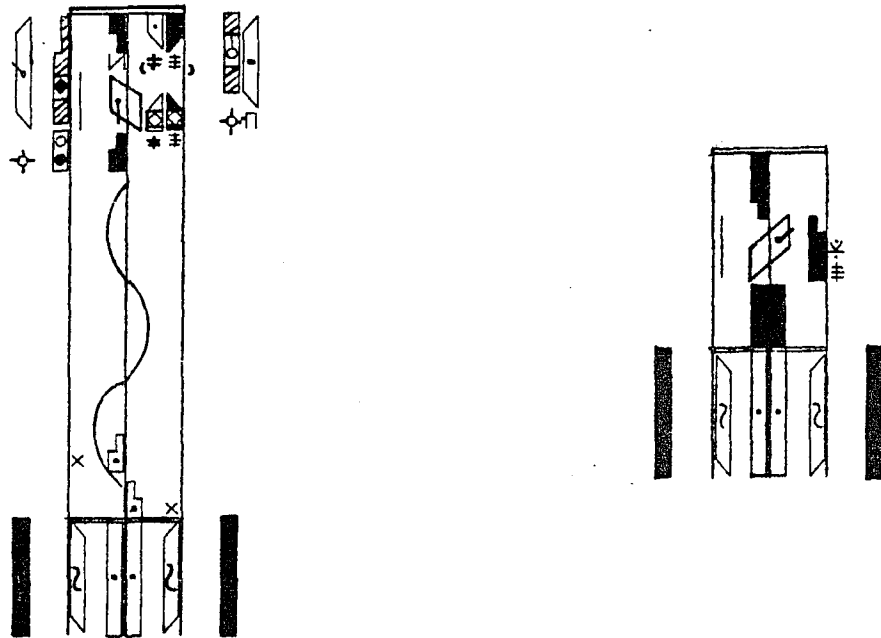
Used in Third Section, measures 36-37 for A-H

Illustration 4, continued: Improved movement frameworks developed in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill



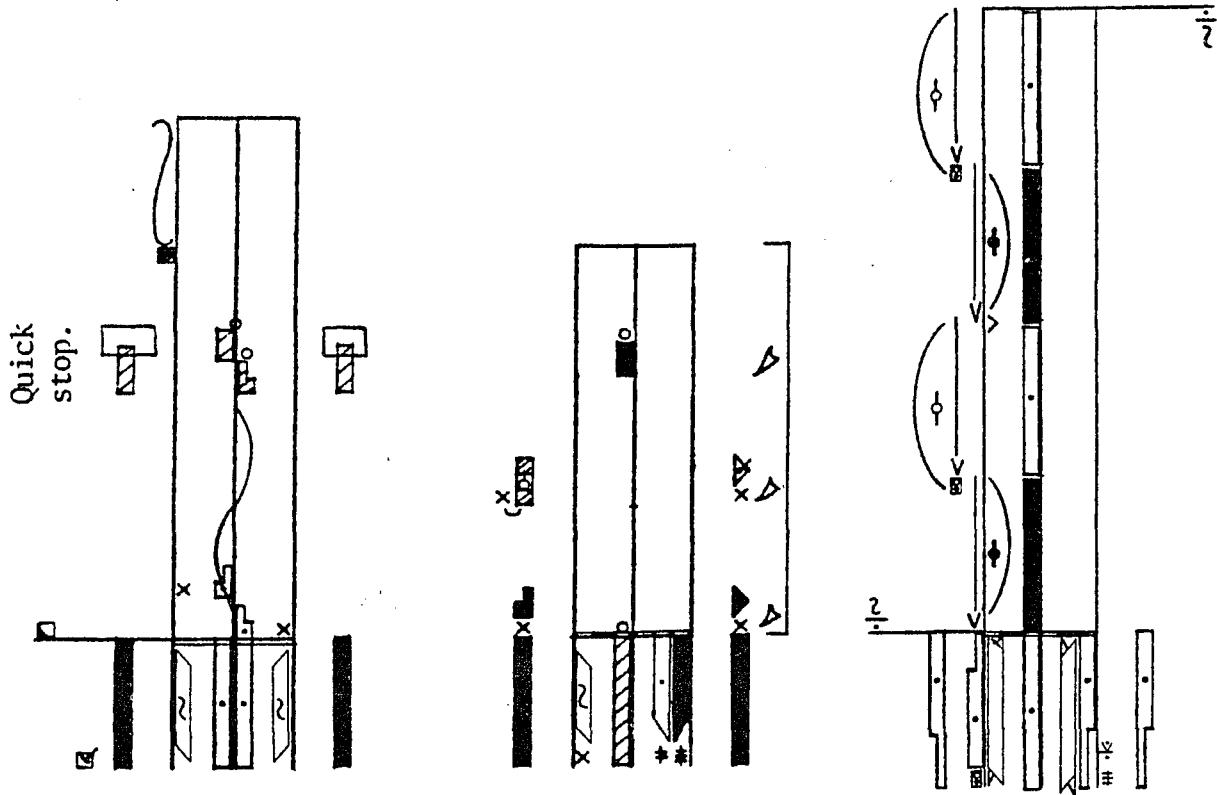
Used in Third Section; "some possibilities for moving through the center spot" (pp. 58-61)

Illustration 4, continued: Improved movement frameworks developed in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill



Used in Third Section, measures 88-106

Illustration 4, continued: Improvised movement frameworks developed in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill



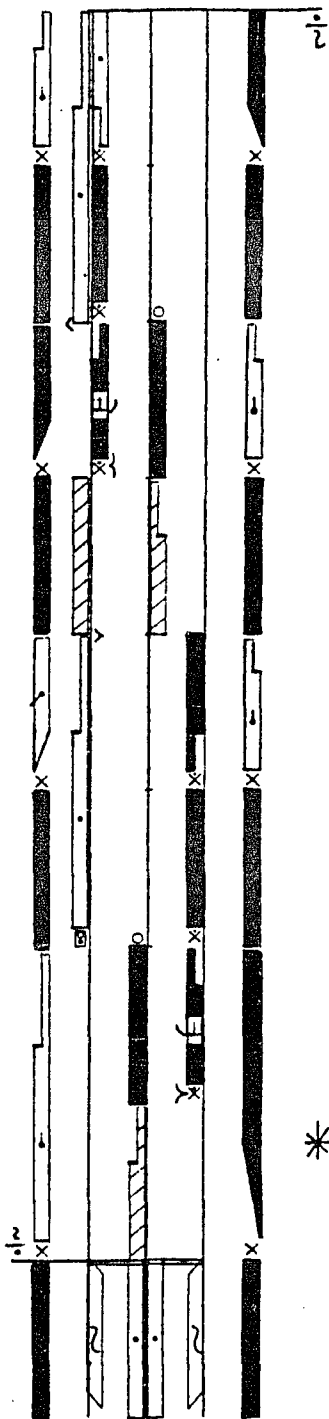
-Used in Third Section, measures 88-106

Used in Fourth section, measures 166 ff.

Used in Third Section, measures 107 ff.

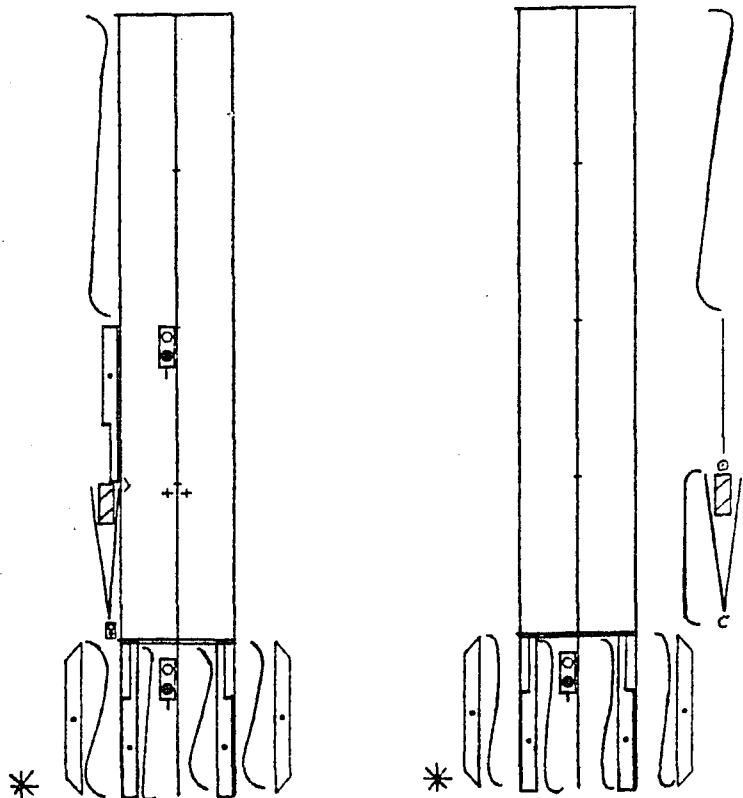
Illustration 4, continued: Improved movement frameworks developed in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill

Used in Fourth section, ca. 36 sec. after lighting cue #33



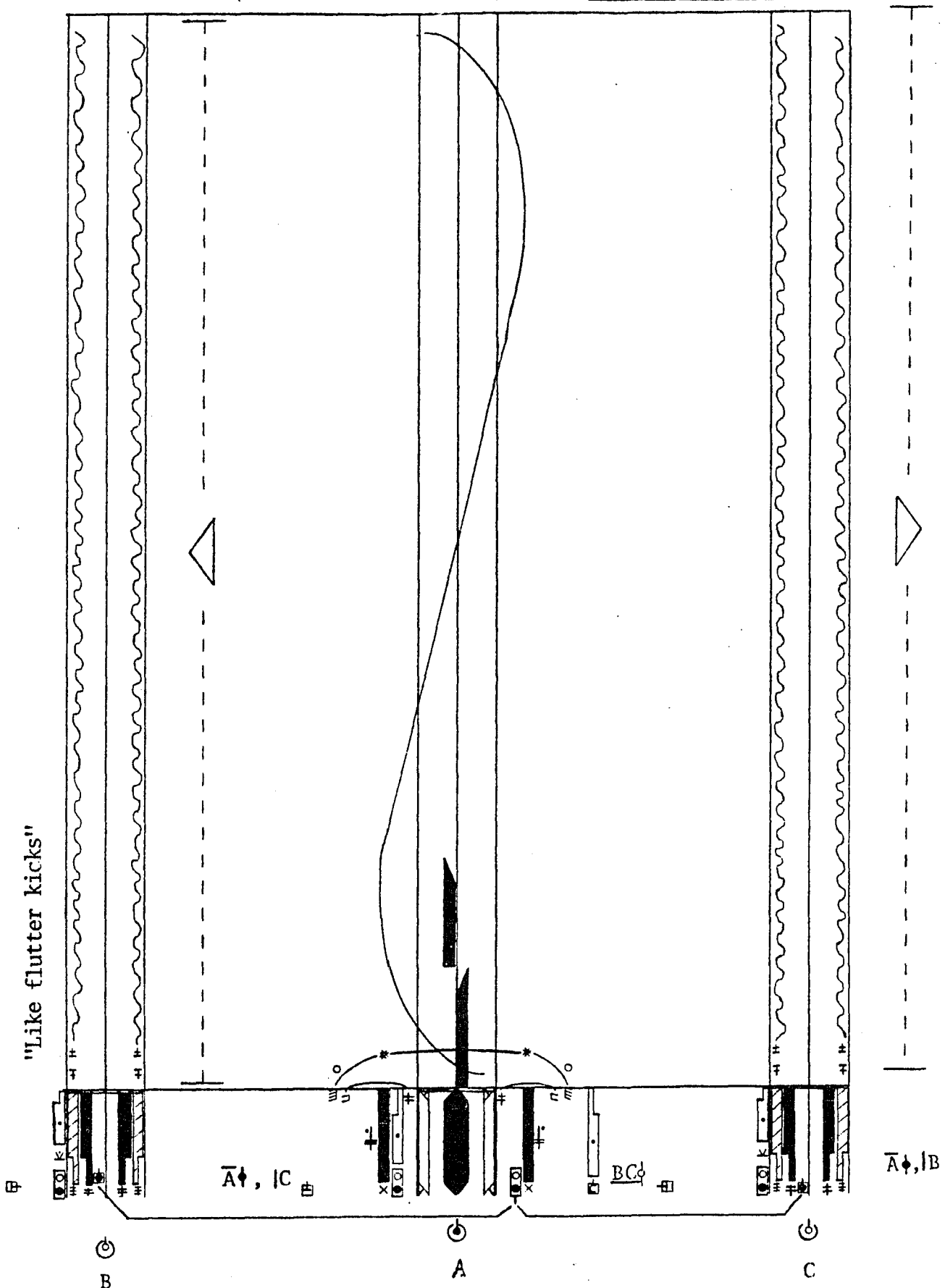
\* Starting position- Arms and legs had no specific instructions as to placement on the floor. In general they were somewhere close to what is notated. All that was asked for was to "start lying flat in your back".

The same instructions as those for the head are applied to the lifting and lowering of the torso here.



The basic movement is lifting and lowering the head. From there, experiment with different paths, qualities, add twists, tilts, twilts.

Illustration 4, continued: Improved movement frameworks developed in rehearsal and used in Children on the Hill



Unusual carries and supports used in curtain call  
194

and 4, which were comprised of a series of their movement designs and preferences from improvisatory work. In fact, all of section 3 for performers A, B, C, D, E, F, H, J was derived from classwork that Pendleton and the students explored together. The movements of "M" derive from another source. Much of section 4 also evolved from collective experiments in the studio. These two sections are the most obvious products of Pendleton's philosophy that "I don't want to go in and try to teach the moves until we see what the moves are. It's like finding what everybody has, so [the dance can be] really theirs."<sup>7</sup>

At the start of the 1982 Children on the Hill, there is approximately a minute and a half of "environmental movement." The stage is empty; a black traveler (curtain) is down. Dancers behind the curtain make it move without their being seen. It may seem to the audience as though wind is billowing the curtain. With the musical accompaniment, the initial impression is of a stark, mysterious space, behind which a storm is brewing. The opening stirs anticipation.

The first character on stage is "M," a dancer who is a stand-in for Moses Pendleton. The dancer crosses the stage in slow-motion, tilted at a precarious angle he can sustain only because he is tied by a long, white cord to something offstage. The offstage anchor is actually a stagehand or strong dancer, who prohibits "M" from moving quickly by exerting counteractive pressure. The stagehand's pulling

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<sup>7</sup>Moses Pendleton in rehearsal at the City College of New York, September 15, 1982.

back makes it possible for "M" to lean forward at a 45° angle to the floor, and to wade slowly onward in this position.

The angle of this stage cross is a foreshadowing of a Momix choreography called Skiva, in which two dancers, with the aid of skis and ski boots, lean at extraordinary forward angles. In their dance they resemble airborne ski jumpers. Pendleton's use of gravity-defying movement in Children on the Hill pre-dates Skiva by two years.

When "M" finally exits, the cord that held him trails across the stage floor, and it becomes the next "dancer." In waves of different sizes and speeds, it ripples and responds to "M's" offstage jerks. The patterns the cord makes are attractive, amusing, and continue the impression of an animistic environment. The curtains move; the cord moves;

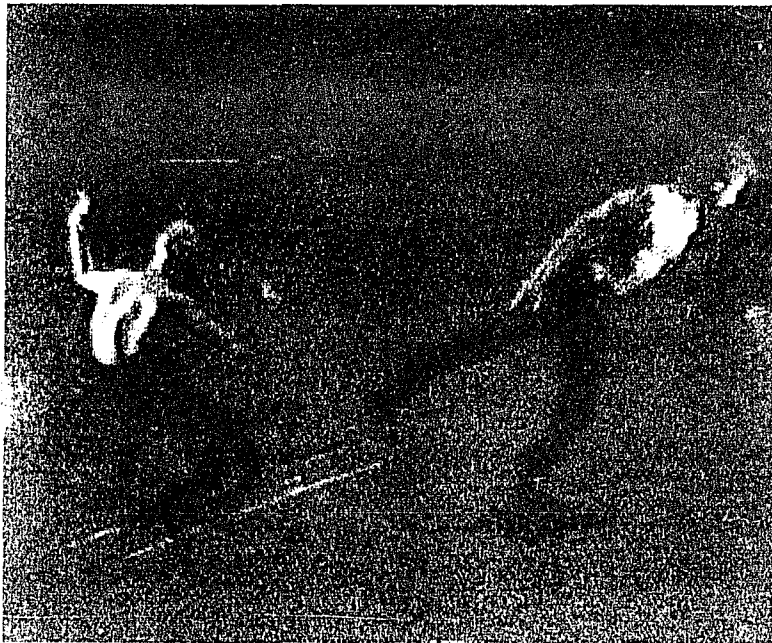


Illustration 5. Momix dancers in "Skiva"

the world onstage is alive.

"M" continues to draw the cord across the stage, and as the other end of it emerges, we see there is something attached to it, wrapped up in it as if in a cocoon. It is a "grub," a stuffed, hooded and masked creature whose green form is not particularly human-looking. Pendleton taught the dancers that "when you get a different kind of costume, you move a little differently. Your body's different."<sup>8</sup> The grub does move differently, clumsily, hesitantly, like something half-formed. The dancer "M" teases it offstage, threatening to beat it, circling round it with a stick. "M" drives the beast back into the darkness of the offstage caverns.

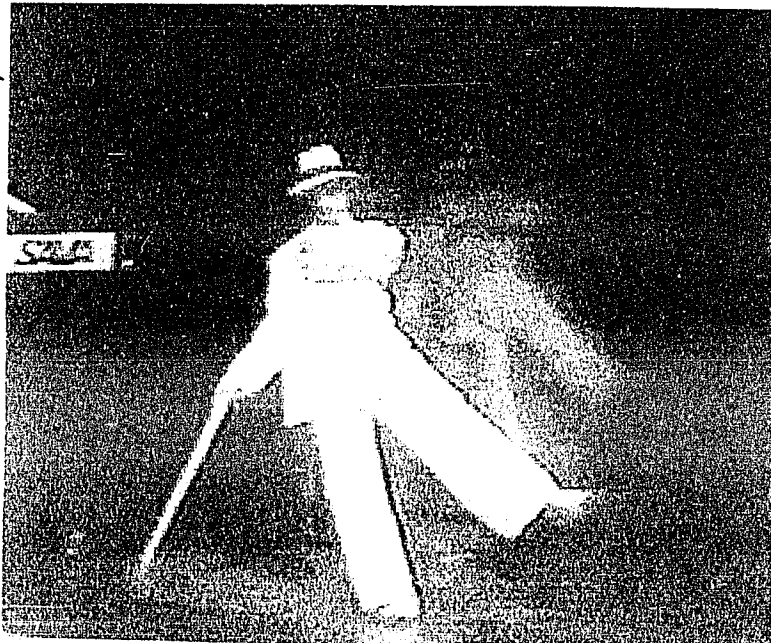
When "M" returned to the stage to tease the grub, he sailed in, using a rubber-tipped cane as a support over which he could take long, floating strides. The cane is a familiar prop to Momix audiences; Pendleton dances with it as "the man in the white suit." The choreography for "M" in this first section was originally made for Moses Pendleton, and is taken over by the stand-in, who tries to replicate Pendleton's style.

The first section is dream-like, and, to put it plainly, weird. What is this wind-swept place? Who is the man struggling to cross the stage? Is the cord that holds him alive? Is it making brain waves, the picture of an EKG or an EEG? Is it an umbilical cord? Is Moses pulling his

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<sup>8</sup>Patrick Mathieu, City College of New York dance major, conversation at Pendleton's home, September, 1982.

Illustration 6. Moses Pendleton as  
"the man in the white suit"



Checking the watch



Floating over the cane



Running around the cane

unborn child behind him? (He was in fact an expectant father in 1982.) Is the grub an embryo? Is it deformed? Is Pendleton beating a nightmare back into his subconscious as he forces the grub to retreat? Pendleton here offered the equivalent of a surrealist painting, and interpretations of this section could be endless.

The second section of Children on the Hill seems to have very little to do with the first. It brings to mind a remark Pendleton made in a City College rehearsal, "There are a lot of possible beginnings. We'll just be working on that [in this rehearsal]. We'll do a whole series of openings. Maybe if you put all those openings together you'll have a piece."<sup>9</sup> This may describe Children on the Hill. The dance makes four statements in four sections, all nonsequiturs.

In the second section, eight dancers lie on their backs across the upstage area. They are covered by "Casper," the white cord of the first section, unrecognizable since it is unwound and spread over them. As the lights rise, they lift their knees, and slowly open and spread them. The effect the choreographer is looking for here is of abstract shapes in motion. The audience should not immediately recognize the moving objects as knees. Following this angular image, the dancers rise and, holding Casper by hands and feet, hobble to center stage. Their movement gives the effect of an eerie white wall approaching, since Casper is at this moment lit so as to appear opaque. The lighting changes to reveal the

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<sup>9</sup>Rehearsal, City College of New York, September 16, 1982.

dancers in shadow. As they plié, tilt, and twist, their forms seem to stretch like rubber bands. Shadow tricks make their legs seem too short, their torsos too long, their arms impossibly distanced from their bodies. This section ends with the dancers toddling back upstage, reclining, and with a seemingly animate Casper slithering offstage, drawn by unseen hands.

Section 3 represents another new beginning. "M" opens it with a bit of light play. Using two flashlights, he illuminates sides of his face one at a time, in quick succession. The result is a schizophrenic portrait of one man made up of two distinct halves.

Next, nine pools of light rise for dancers who gyrate in me-generation self-absorption. They act as a chorus for "M," who accosts the women in the spots with more Moses Pendleton, "Momix" choreography, flirting, socializing, leaving. The section ends on a "high," with dancers darting through a center pool of light in improvised sequences. They "laugh" themselves back to place with a jolly fragmented movement, and the section ends.

The fourth section begins with the snapping of three fluoro-luminescent tubes which are thrown into the audience, tracing arcs of light through the auditorium. Light continues to play an important role, as pools snap on in various areas of the stage. Creatures lie within these pools, and when the light comes on, they respond by rising toward it. Over and over again, lights come on and life responds; lights dim and life fades. At last, all the pools

light simultaneously, and the dancers rise to their feet. One is the grub, who makes his way slowly offstage. All the others perform slow-motion successional movements, and exit on tip-toe in a bent-over, Martian hunch.

This leaves the stage to an old man in a topcoat and hat, whose pool of light appears alternately with that of a beautiful woman across the stage. It is "M" again. "Because of the long, wide coat "M" wears, the fact that he is in plié is not visible to the audience. He looks like a 'little man.'<sup>10</sup> As the lights pulse on and off, the little man offers the beauty a huge sunflower that he has hidden inside his coat, throws magic dust into the air, flashes a mirror in the light. The woman improvises responses, or improvises her own movements oblivious to him. The little man acquires a cigarette in the darkness, and expels smoke from his lungs in the light, moving his head as though the smoke were jet exhaust propelling it away. After the woman's last action, the little man's hat levitates off his head, pushed up by his cane unseen behind his back.

And that is the end.

Except for the curtain call. It is an exuberant recapitulation of section three's improvisations through a central pool of light, accompanied by slides of the dancers taken in rehearsal as they planned the dance and "hung out" together. The curtain call for Children on the Hill 1982 celebrates the process that made it: the choreographer

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<sup>10</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score by Terri Richards, p. 87.

getting to know the students, the trip to Connecticut, brainstorming about the dance, trying things out. The slides showed the past behind the dance, and the audience was asked to applaud the past and the present simultaneously.

### III. Re-making Children on the Hill in 1983

At the University of Hawaii, Pendleton made a series of changes which has made Children on the Hill more standardized, more capable of reconstruction "as is" by other companies of dancers. These changes are:

1. The introductory movements of the stage curtain last for less time and there is no slow motion walk across the stage by "M" with a 45° forward tilt.
2. The ripples of the cord "Casper" last a longer time.
3. The "man in the white suit" (M) does not pretend to strike at the grub nor does his cane behave sometimes as a golf club, as it did in 1982.
4. A canon introduces section 3.
5. A different selection of Pendleton's "man in the white suit" Momix movements are done by "M" in section 3.
6. The "laughing step" which concludes section 3 is less random, more formalized.
7. There is a new movement for the women before they rise for the successional movements, which are also now preceded by a turn.
8. One dancer departs from the "Martian tiptoe" exit to climb onto the grub's back, and he carries her from the stage.
9. The "little man" smokes upstage, completely bypassing his surreal interaction with the woman.
10. Bows for the piece are taken "straight," without a recapitulation of section 3 or slide show.

Some of the changes (#1, #2, #7) were made because the

choreographer wanted to change the pace of the work, which he found too slow. The Momix movement vocabulary was switched (#1, #3, #5) to suit the technical abilities of a dancer who offered different, perhaps more average possibilities as a "stand-in for Moses." The female dancers in Hawaii in general were less demonstrative in ad lib movements. This led to the formalization of section 3 in canon (#4), a more precise "laughing step" (#6) and the elimination of the improvisatory dialogue at the end of the dance (#9). Change #10 was strategic: the process of making Children on the Hill 1983 had not been documented photographically. Pendleton also found the device too indulgent.

#### **IV. Locating Pendleton's basic structure**

The sections of the dance Pendleton did not cut in 1983 are important to note:

1. The choreography for objects (curtains and cord) and for a figure distorted by costuming (the grub)
2. The shadow-play of Casper
3. References to "the man in the white suit"

These three elements represent basic Pendleton beliefs: in dance extending to movement other than human movement in order to expand the medium of the choreographer; in the desirability of re-grouping and shadowing the human form in order to achieve abstract shapes, plastic art; in marking his choreography with idiosyncratic, trademark movements of his own.

V. Children on the Hill as an Anthology of Pendleton Excerpts

There are numerous references to Pendleton works in Children on the Hill, some direct and others subtle. The Momix "man in the white suit" has already been mentioned. He was created in 1980, and Pendleton says of him, "I've always pictured him as someone who walks onstage and finds a certain amount of freedom. He finally has arrived. He is with his audience. He is not just a dancer, he's a performer."<sup>11</sup> Specific movements of the man from Momix that appear in Children on the Hill are in illustration 7.

The umbilical cord and grub appear in Momix repertory, although linked to much more extensive choreography. The shadowplay whose potential is merely hinted at in Children on the Hill is also developed more fully in a 1984 Momix work, E.C. One reviewer wrote that:

E.C., a Chinese shadow dance set to the other worldly music of New York composer Laraaji, could give Hollywood a few lessons in the special-effects department. Here a white sheet is stretched across the proscenium. Male and female forms appear, backlit as black shapes. At first they are separate, like individual genies in bottles of light. Gradually they merge, then break away again, and reconvene in uncanny ways -- creating a flying superhero, a flock of birds, and other figures familiar and fantastic. Sustaining the illusion requires split-second synchronicity and top-flight technique -- which Momix's members have down flat.<sup>12</sup>

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

<sup>11</sup>"Moses Pendleton presents Moses Pendleton," video program produced by Mitchell Johnson for the ARTS cable television service (Hearst/ABC), 1982.

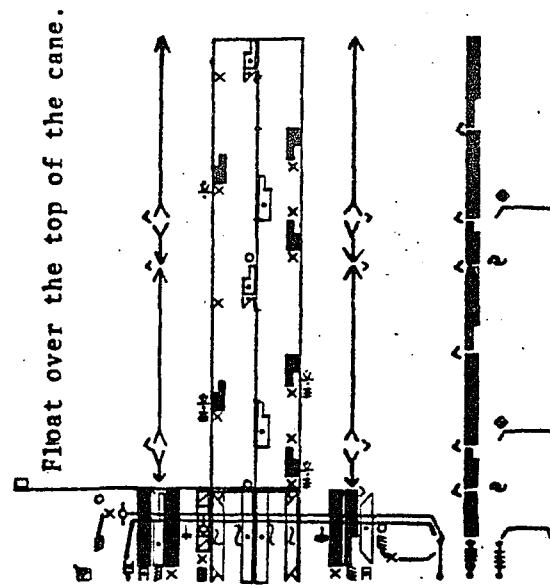
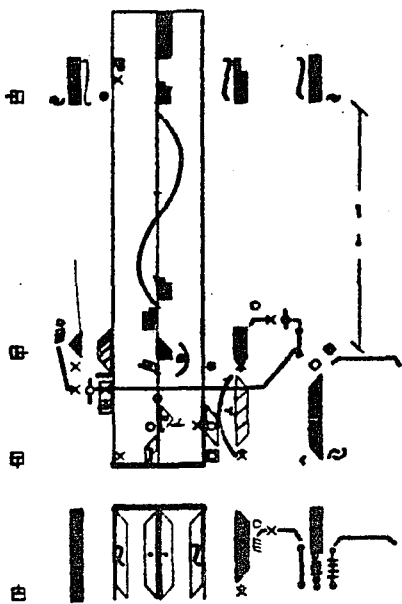
<sup>12</sup>Meryl Natchez, "Momix Magic," New Age Journal, October, 1984, p. 62.

Illustration 7: Specific movements of the man from Momix

a. Running around the cane


b. Floating over the cane


Note: pull against cane with  and push with .




Note:


1. M's entrance- "It's like a huge curtain in a window. The wind blows and someone just gets blown in."

 = The cane

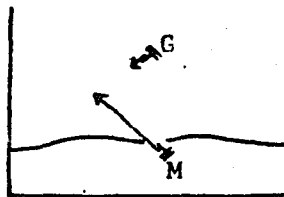
 ← The stick's head

 ← The stick's foot

 = The cane's inverted torso

 = The cane's foot

Contact- where contact is shown, the dow is drawn to that part of the cane which is actually touched, grasped, etc...



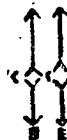
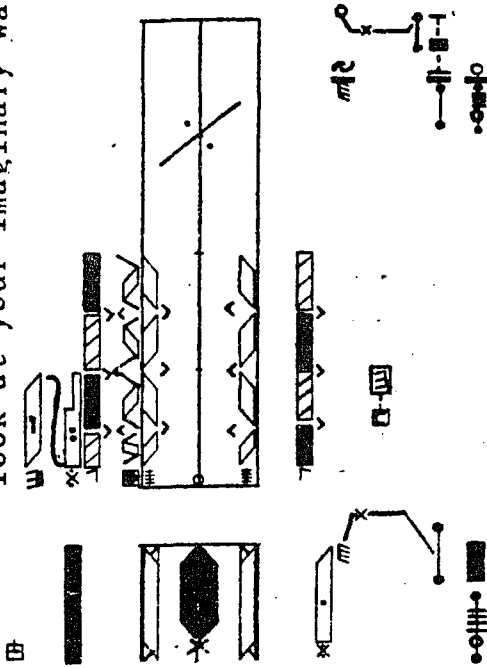
 Hands rotate (somersault) around the lateral axis  $\leftarrow \rightarrow$  passing through the wrists.



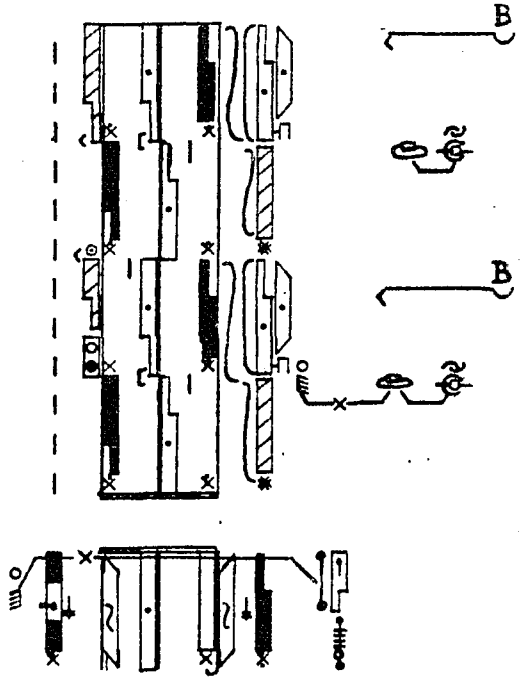
Illustration 7, continued: Specific movements of the man from Momix

e. Leaning on cane, checking the watch

Check the time. look at your imaginary watch.



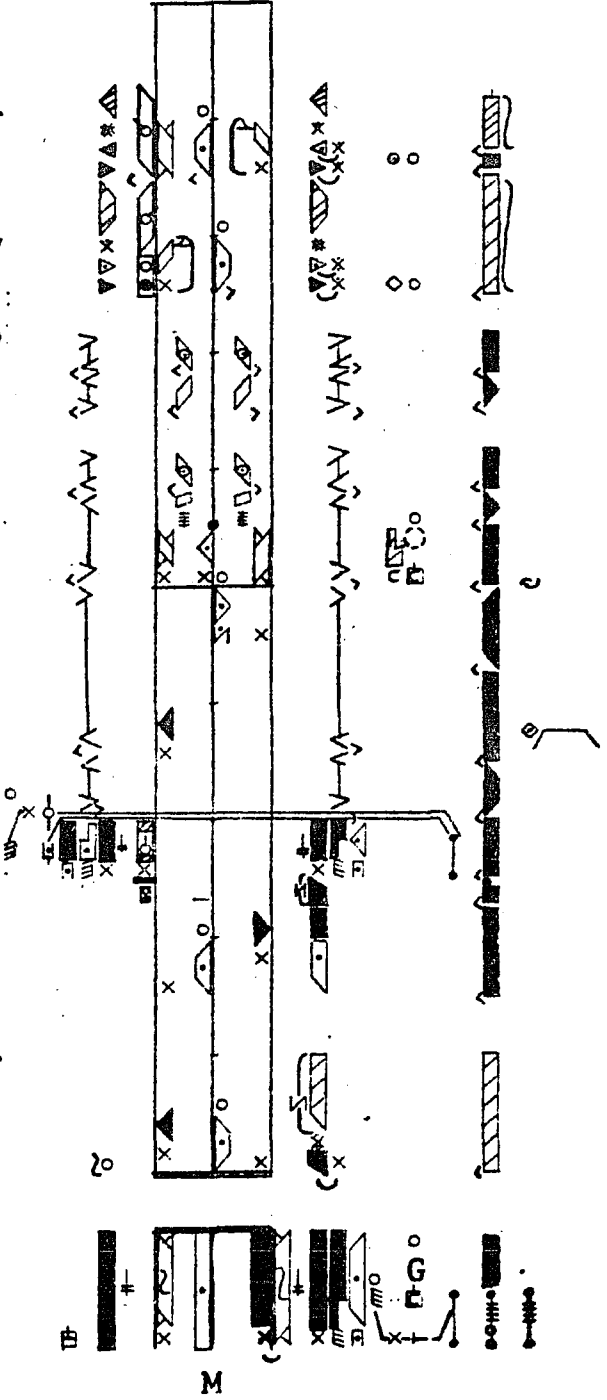
f. Repeating lunges



g. Golfing

The hitting action evolves into golfing. Watch the "ball" fly off.

Hit at the Grub. Float





A performance of Momix at Bennington College in 1984 began with several moments of dancers wafting lengths of fabric attached to umbrellas as characters called "Medusae." A lengthy program opening, it was reminiscent of the movements of the stage curtains in Children on the Hill 1982.

Sports movements appear throughout Pilobolus and Momix repertory, and Children on the Hill has a few of its own. One example is the aborted golf strokes of the man in the white suit. (See illustration 7g.) Another is the cross-country ski strokes, slowed down in section 4. (See illustration 9.) Shadowplay, athletic movements, distortions of the body, and fabric and prop manipulation are recurring themes in Pendleton's work, and all are illustrated in Children on the Hill.

## VI. Lighting Information

Pendleton's choreography is best staged and performed with the lighting effects designed for it. There was a need, therefore, to document Pendleton's lighting to complete the dance score. Thomas Winberry of the City College of New York volunteered to design a "lighting block" into which all lighting requirements could fit clearly and legibly. Jenny Logas, a student at City College, transferred all Pendleton's data onto a series of these lighting blocks, using one block to record each lighting cue. The result is a set of director's plans, located at the back of the score, which detail all of the lighting cues for the piece. An article by Winberry and Beck on how to read the lighting blocks precedes

Illustration 8. Shadow-play from "E.C."

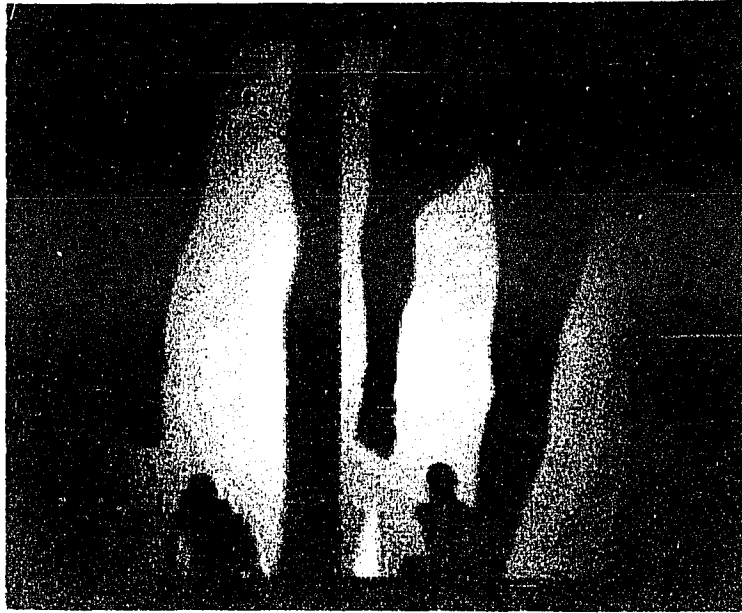


Illustration 8, continued. Shadow-play from "E.C."

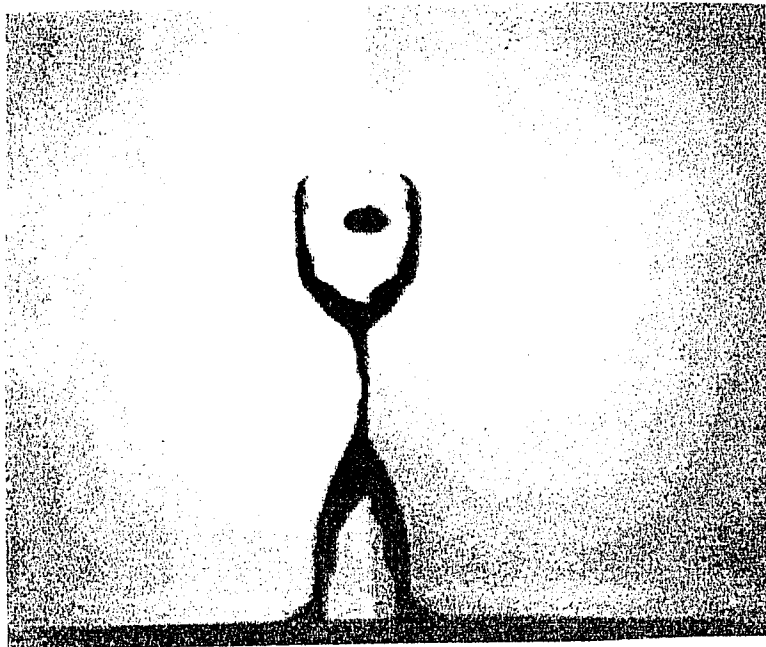
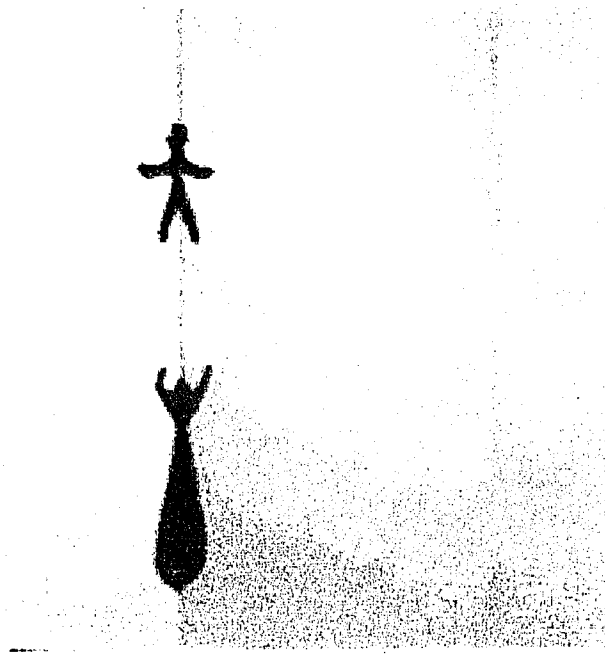


Illustration 8, continued. Shadow-play from "E.C."

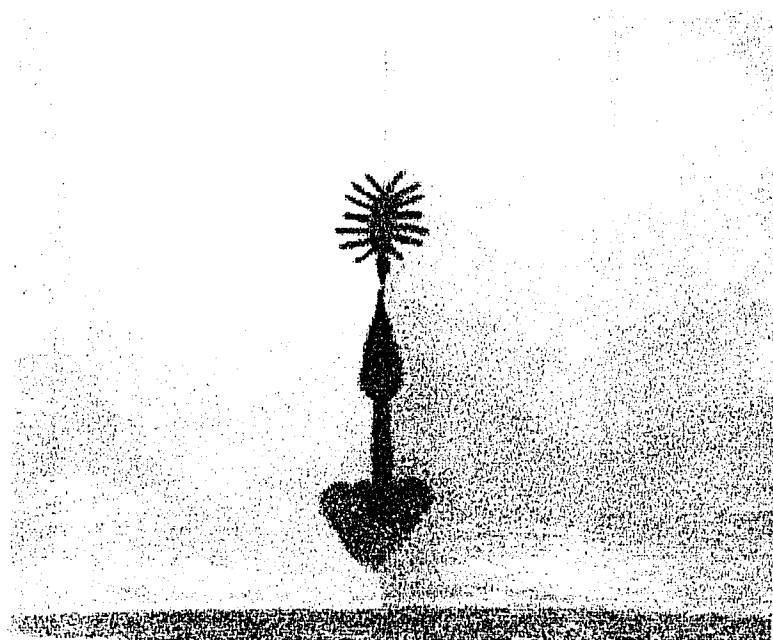
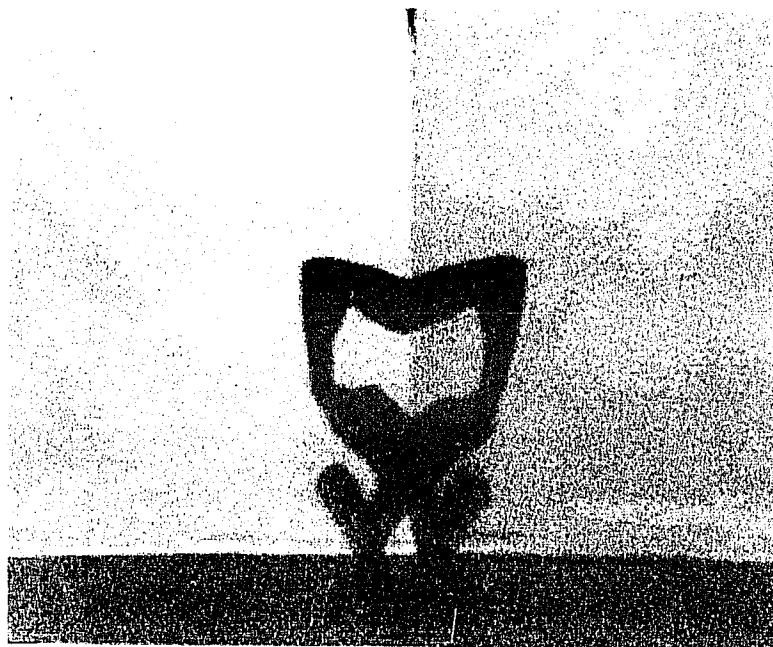
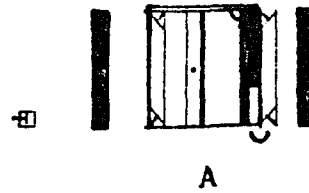
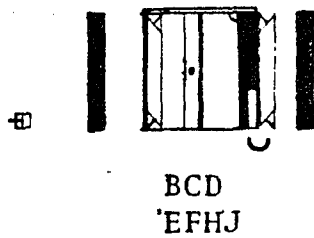
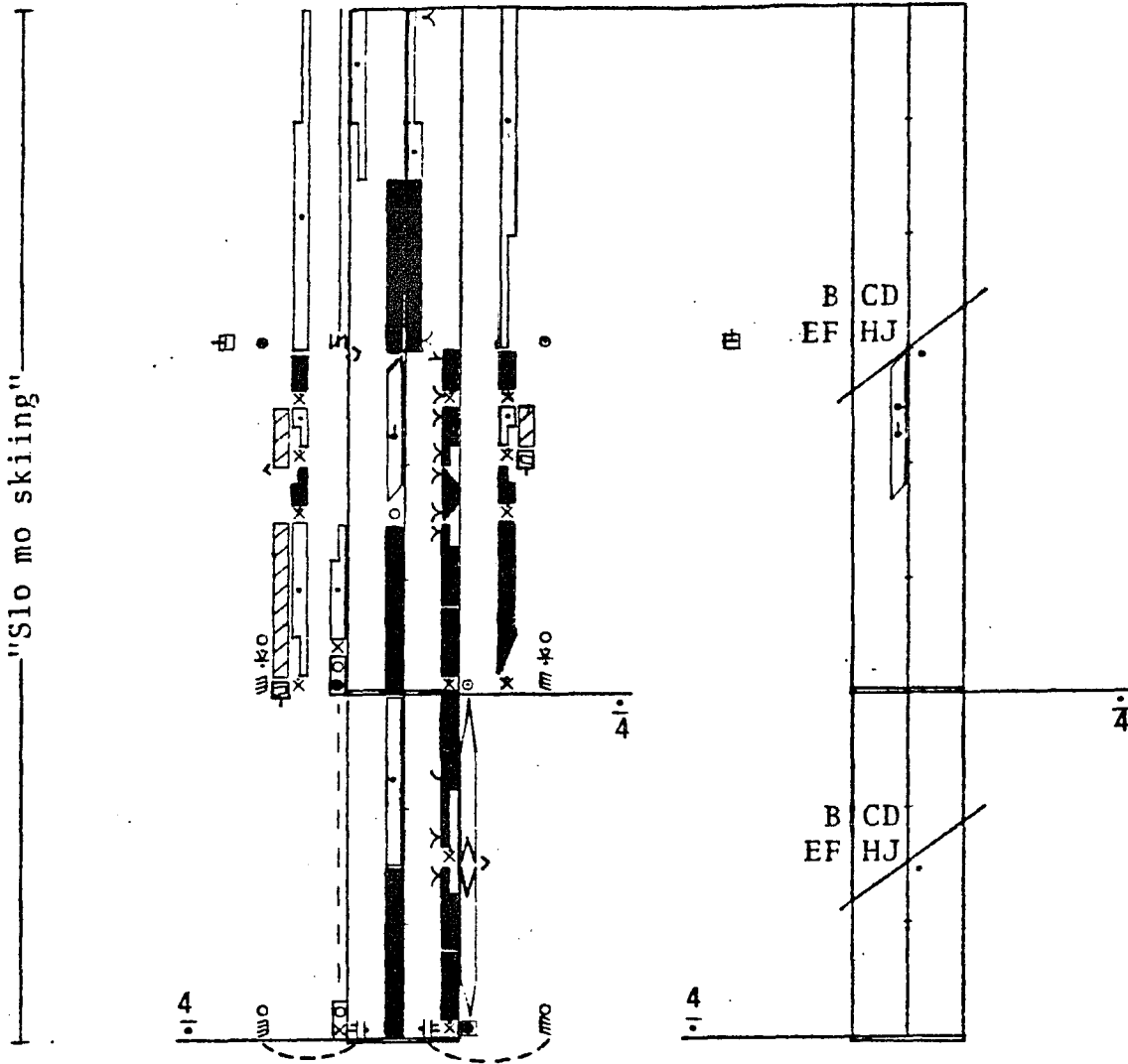


Illustration 9: Cross-country Ski Strokes



the director's plans and has been published in Dance Notation Journal III, 1 (Spring, 1985).

**VII. Future Restagings: Raising Questions on the Nature of Dance and the Process of Notation and Reconstruction**

It would seem reasonable to suggest to future directors of Children on the Hill that they consider both versions of the dance, and evaluate the changes Pendleton made. This comparative work could provoke intriguing philosophical discussions on such topics as:

--Where is the dance?

--What is the identity of Children on the Hill?

--When is Labanotation documentation too precise? When does it capture individual performances rather than choreographic framework?

Professor Judy Van Zile of the University of Hawaii organized a panel discussion of these and other issues during Pendleton's residency in 1983. In her introductory notes to the discussion she wrote:

The process of taking a dance "from page to stage" raises an important question: just what is a dance? Is it the choreographer's original movement plan? Is it the performance of the original cast? Is it the interpretation of any cast? Is it the "after-image" in the mind of the audience? To what extent can a reconstructor take artistic license in recreating a dance from a notated score? Where do the boundaries lie between differing interpretations of the same dance and the creation of a new dance? Are there parallels in the other performing arts? How does a conductor use a music score, and a director a play script?

Where do the boundaries lie between the "personality and chemistry" of the dancers, the individual "moves" of various dancers, and the structure of the piece as

choreographed by a particular choreographer?<sup>13</sup>

Panelist Eliot Deutsch, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hawaii, explained his viewpoint:

The more dance adheres to its ritual origins, the more it lends itself to repetition, the individual performers as individuals being of no particular account. The more dance aspires to art in the modern sense, the more individualistic and unique its performance, with choreographers often designing their works with specific dancers in mind.

Dance lends itself to notational reconstruction to the degree to which it remains true to its [ritual] origins, struggling against the possibility of this to the degree to which individual works are tailored to the limitations and possibilities of individual dancers, and our choreographer choreographed to allow for maximal interpretation by the dancers. It is in the very tension between these two . . . I submit the vitality of contemporary dance resides.<sup>14</sup>

John Unterecker, Professor of English, dance critic and poet, added:

Notation can represent stages in the process of a dance, and variants in the process of a dance. And I want to suggest that it seems to me that there is no good place to stop [notating]. Because there are so many individual variants in a performance, and in what the choreographer does with a particular company he's working with, and what the dancers do with what they're working with, that any of the stopping points can be both good and bad.

. . . I think the word 'final' is an extremely dirty word as regards the arts.

All the ways of reproducing dance are useful, video, film, dance notation of various kinds, and the memories of dancers, and the revisions of choreographers and people who are transcribing dance. All of those are useful, and all of them lean to

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<sup>13</sup>Judy Van Zile, notes for public forum entitled "What is a Dance?," University of Hawaii at Manoa, October 29, 1983.

<sup>14</sup>Eliot Deutsch at public forum entitled "What is a Dance?," University of Hawaii at Manoa, October 29, 1983.

peculiar distortions and peculiar excellences.<sup>15</sup>

Moses Pendleton spoke at length during the panel discussion. His major points were:

The original intent of this piece . . . it was done at City College in Harlem in New York, and they were kids I had no problem with. I had more of a problem telling them what to do than telling them how to do it. They had something that they'd like to do, which was breaking in the middle. They liked to improvise. They'd go in the snack bar at City College and the beat was on, and these people were always dancing. And so I was very influenced by that. The way I go about making a piece is not to go sit in my living room and go over a score of music. . . . I tend to try to make something from whatever mental and physical interaction is in front of me. And in this case I had a very limited amount of time, with about fifteen City College kids who wanted and were very good at going out under a down-light and showing off for their friends. They had this kind of breaking; it was like street-dancing. And that was something I let go, because they had the kind of personality to handle that kind of thing. And when you come here [to University of Hawaii] to try to say that in the score there's quite a bit of ad libbing or improvisation. . . . I think when you begin to notate, and begin to want to transfer it to another company, you have to be much more specific. You have to choreograph. I didn't even choreograph that piece. I tried to act as a catalyst for action on the stage. And I'm all for this kind of spontaneous behavior. If the people are good at doing it. . . . I'm not so interested in just throwing it about the world and saying "Go to it. . . ."

The way I worked at City College was going in, turning on any kind of music, and having people just get up and handle it in front of an audience. Handle it with their own musical phrasing, developing a series of images that were done once and were thrown away. And then they did it again, differently each night, according to how they felt. . . .

If you're trying to teach it, you can catch those kids leaping through the down-light and then film it, run it back on stop-action. . . . One way of finding material I have is not to go in with any specific idea but to set up a kind of force-field in

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<sup>15</sup>John Unterecker at public forum entitled "What is a Dance?," University of Hawaii at Manoa, October 29, 1983.

the studio and to involve the dancers in the very process and very ritual of what's being done, and record that somehow, through videotape, maybe even dance notation, record those spontaneous moments. Go back and watch them again; watch them in slow motion. Edit them.

I would love to change the piece from top to bottom. When I saw the piece, I said to myself, that's not what I think should be done at all. So there's a bit of pressure in this particular project to go ahead and say that this is not a new piece of choreography, it's a reconstruction. I was working with the Joffrey, and Massine was there just before he died, and he was reconstructing Parade. And he was telling Bob Joffrey, "It's not that way, it used to be that way in the 30's or whatever, but I don't think it should be that way now." And he [Joffrey] said, "No! no, no, this is a reconstruction."

This piece has a kind of 'cine-dance' form to it: there's stop action and slow-motion. I know a lot of it seems simple, but the grub, the extra-terrestrial character, has a whole movement in slow-motion, with each step progressively slower. . . . And there are dissolves, using the same kind of [film] technique for the stage.

The more information you have about a piece, the more likely it is that you're going to reconstruct to whatever it was originally.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Moses Pendleton at public forum, October 29, 1983.

Buzz Miller: Not For Love Alone

Jack Cole was a very hard worker. We rehearsed all day and danced in theatres and clubs all night, and that's where I learned to dance. He always had a Cecchetti ballet teacher he sent us off to, and he encouraged us to study East Indian dance with La Meri. It was non-stop dance.<sup>1</sup>

The approach to dance as entertainment Buzz Miller inherited from the musical comedy theatre of Broadway, nightclubs, and film is evident in Not for Love Alone. Miller believes that audiences watch dance for pleasurable effect, and that dance has almost unparalleled potential to engage viewers and to provoke many kinds of emotional response.<sup>2</sup> His choreography demonstrates his belief that audiences will be well-pleased if they see technically strong performance, varied uses of space, if they are asked to respond in a variety of ways to changing content on the stage or screen.<sup>3</sup> Not for Love Alone, aiming to be entertaining, includes diverting patterns of movement, a range of emotional expression, changes in subject matter to keep the audience attentive, and the possibility for virtuosic dancing.

Miller's heritage in the movement vocabulary of American musical comedy and jazz dance is particularly allied to the composition techniques and movement style of Jack Cole, with

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<sup>1</sup>Buzz Miller, student forum at Ohio State University, January 13, 1983.

<sup>2</sup>Buzz Miller, rehearsal comments at Arizona State University, April, 1984.

<sup>3</sup>Buzz Miller, conversation in New York City, December 31, 1984.

whom Miller danced for several years. Some "old jazz steps" crop up in Not for Love Alone, as well as movements flavored by various forms of ethnic dance. Following the Jack Cole philosophy of absorbing movements from other cultures into the melting-pot of American jazz, Miller included Spanish hand positions, Balinese-looking raised shoulders and elbows, and Japanese Kabuki walks in his choreography. (See illustration 1.)

Miller notes that American jazz dance frequently stereotypes men and women into certain roles and ways of moving.<sup>5</sup> This tradition is reflected in Not For Love Alone, in which the men's sections include the most examples of virtuosic dancing. A selection of these movements is highlighted in illustration 2. Despite their array of technically stunning moves, the men in Not For Love Alone are fairly one-dimensional. It is the women who present sections of differing content, changing chameleon-like from slow-motion lyricism to saucy jazz to movement in parody to movement of simplicity and grace. It is the women's sections that offer the audience a range of emotional expression and that ask the audience to respond in a variety of ways to changing content on stage.

In order to increase the visual pleasure of watching Not For Love Alone, Miller used an assortment of "traffic

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<sup>4</sup>Videotape 3 of Miller rehearsal (Arizona State University: April, 1984), foot 0370.

<sup>5</sup>Buzz Miller, student forum at Ohio State University, January 13, 1983.

Illustration 1. Movements from other cultures in Not For Love Alone

a. "Old jazz" step

b. Balinese-like shoulders

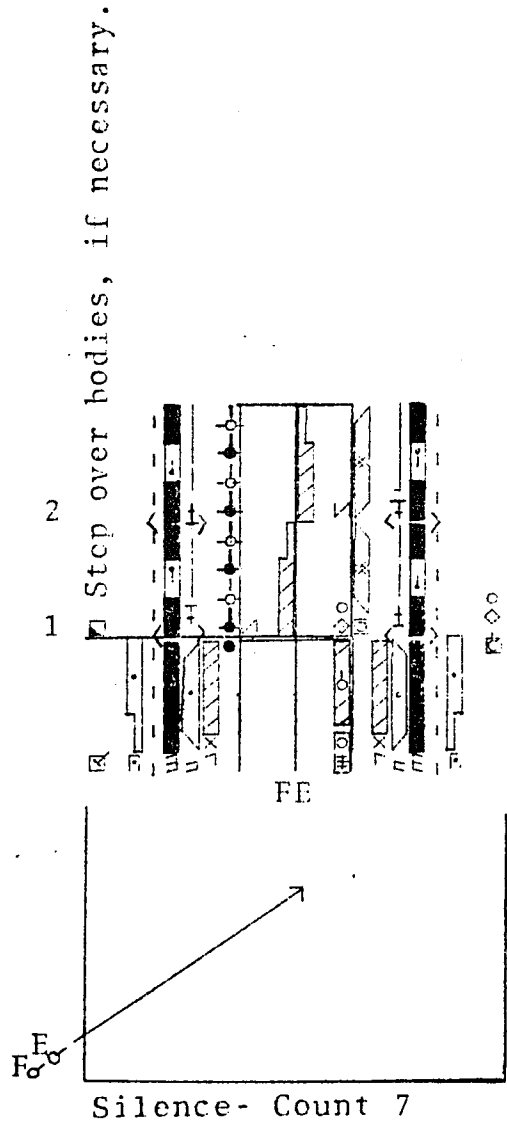
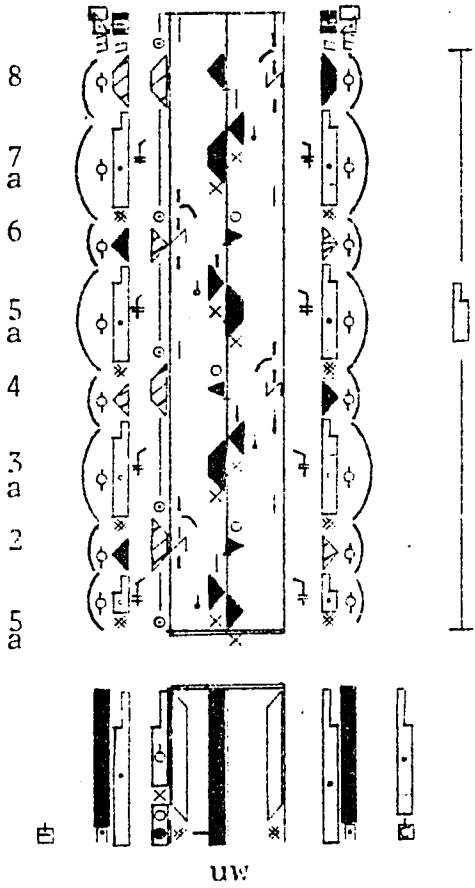
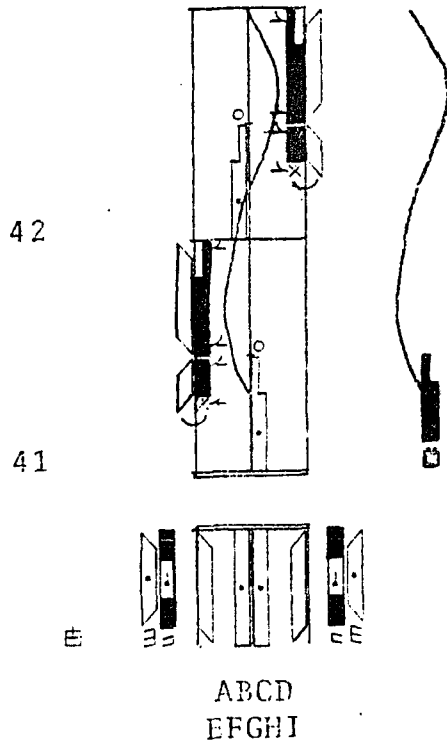


Illustration 1, continued.

c. Kabuki walk



d. Eastern bow

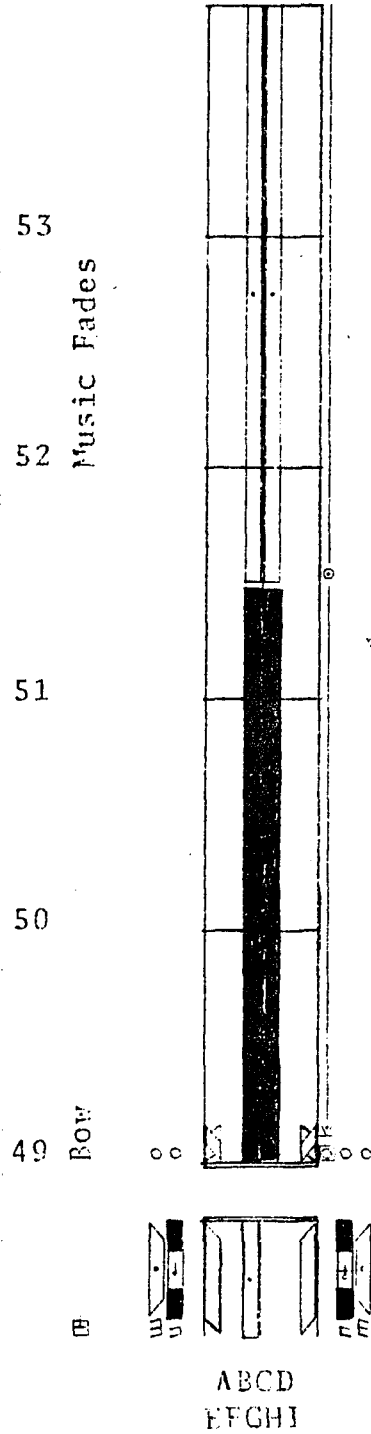
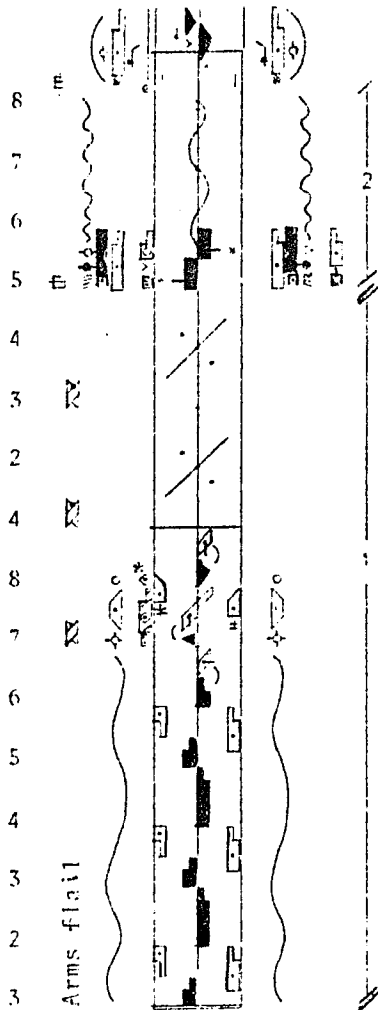
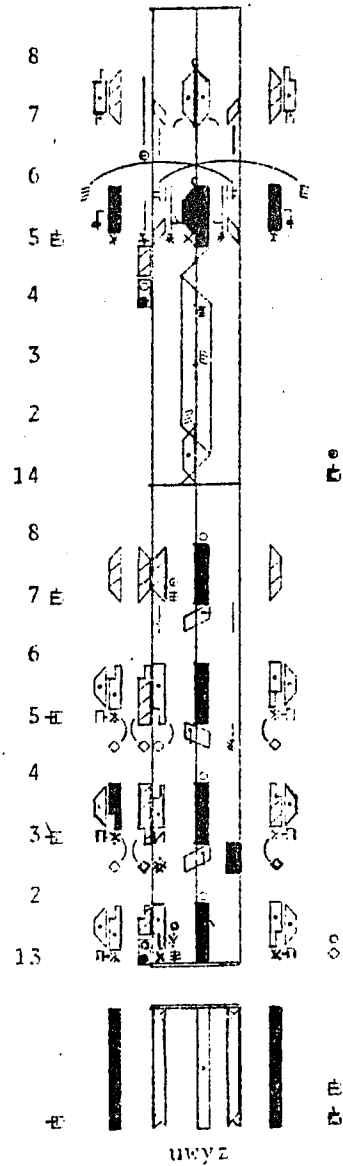


Illustration 2. Virtuosoic dancing from the Men's Section

- a. Leaps and barrel turns      b. Held extensions and cartwheel



Measures 3-4



\* Hold towards the center of the circle.

patterns," moving dancers around the stage on changing paths. Illustration 3 shows a set of floor plans from the section "Fast Scriabin" that demonstrates Miller's sense of design for movement over the stage space.

Another belief of the choreographer relevant to Not for Love Alone is that dance performances should relate to contemporary society, to the thoughts and trends of audiences.<sup>6</sup> Much of American society is urban, and Miller's upbeat, jazz dance vocabulary can capture the posturing, tempo, and vehemence of street life. It can also picture the distinct roles men and women continue to play, and investigate the character of each. Miller's jazz is based on American lifestyles, and it highlights foibles and eccentricities in manners, movement and relationships that characterize our society, people we know, possibly ourselves.

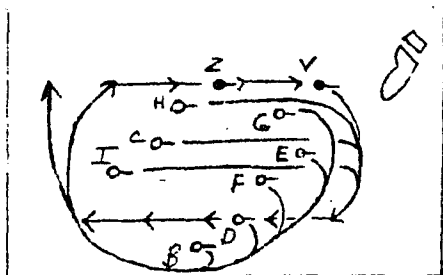
Miller also believes in choreography which makes narrative allusions, in dance that suggests a story.<sup>7</sup> Not for Love Alone has some dramatic content, but the choreography does not enunciate a plot line. Viewers may feel the dance explores a theme rather than tells a story. The dance is about something, but never to the point that it stops being about dancing for its own sake. For Miller, some measure of content serves to enhance the appeal of a dance; too much content would force the focus of choreography from movement to drama, pressing dance into the service of ideas

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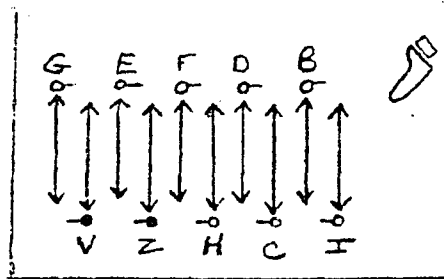
<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Buzz Miller, conversation in New York City, December 31, 1984.

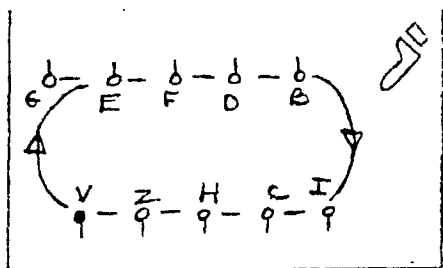
Illustration 3. Plans of travel for dancers in "Fast Scriabin"



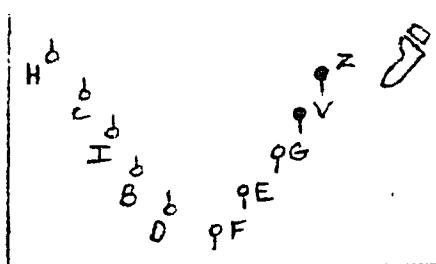
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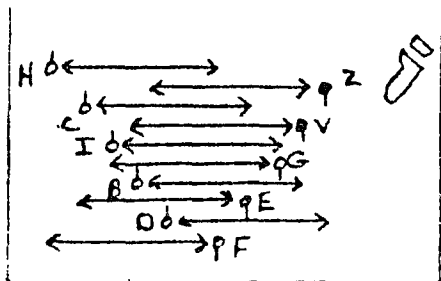
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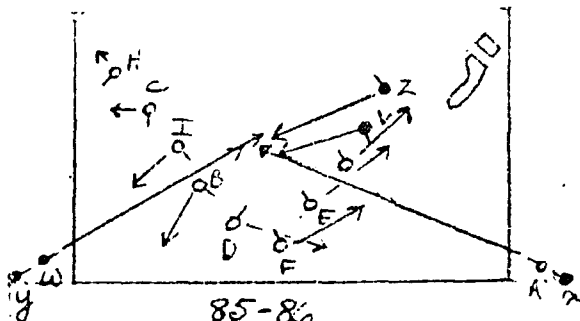
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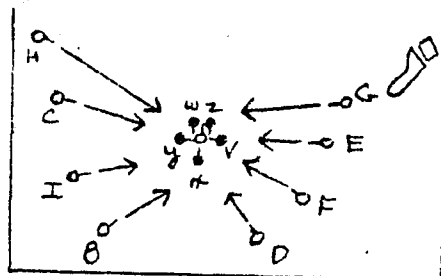
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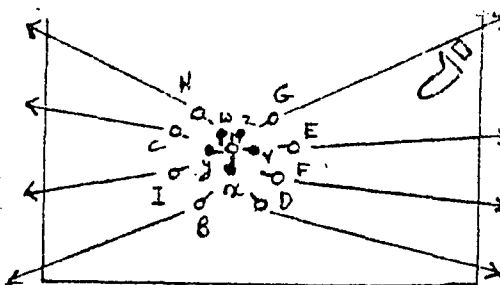
77-84



85-86



88-89



90-104

which should serve it.

To forestall tedium, Miller introduced musical variety into his piece through a number of devices. Foremost was his choice of music by a range of composers, from John Cage to Scriabin, Conlan Nancarrow, David Rose. The music styles of these composers are obviously highly divergent, and distinctions between them are highlighted by their choices of instrumentation: piano, toy piano, player piano, voice, band. Each section of Not for Love Alone has its own sound.

Another device is the changes of meter through the piece, from 4/4 to 3/8 to 3/4. Most of the movement, however, is grouped in eight-count phrases. Even in the 3/8 section ("Fast Scriabin"), the movement is counted in eight-measure phrases. This standard musical formula for dance clearly facilitates clean unison dancing, which Miller uses to "make the dance pretty."<sup>8</sup>

Placing movement accents on different musical counts also provides some diversion in Miller's choreographic pattern, which in general accentuates the downbeats (the "ones"). Miller carefully coached movements performed with syncopation, with accents off the downbeat, so that they would visibly punctuate the temporal flow of the piece. Some examples of movements with accents off the downbeat follow in illustration 4.

A final musical device used by Miller involved choreographing sections of Not For Love Alone with imprecise

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<sup>8</sup>Videotape 1 of Miller rehearsal (Arizona State University: April, 1984), foot 1483.

Illustration 4. Movements with accents off the downbeat

a. Accent on "6" in "Me and My Shadow"

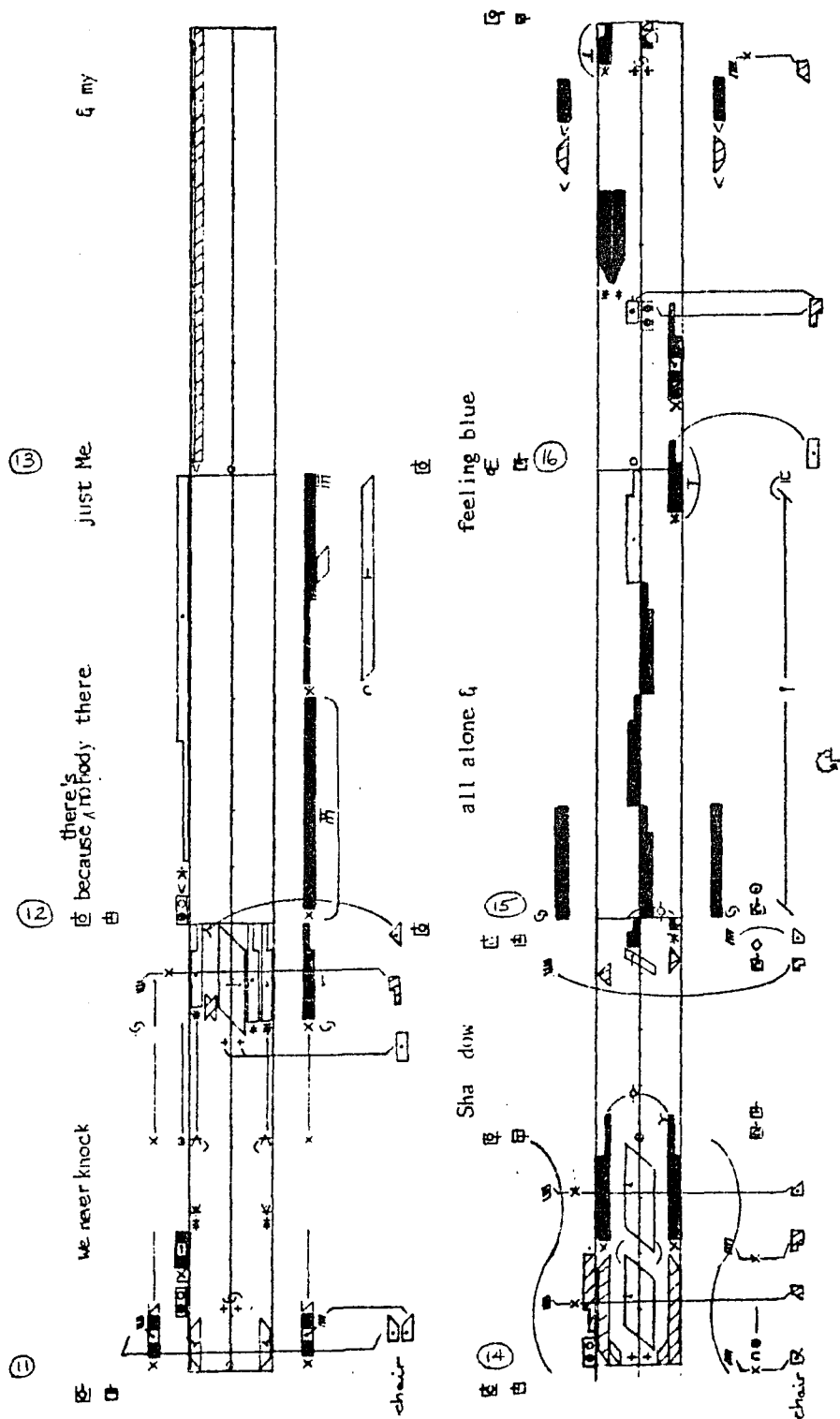


Illustration 4, continued.

b. Accent on "and 7" in Men's Section

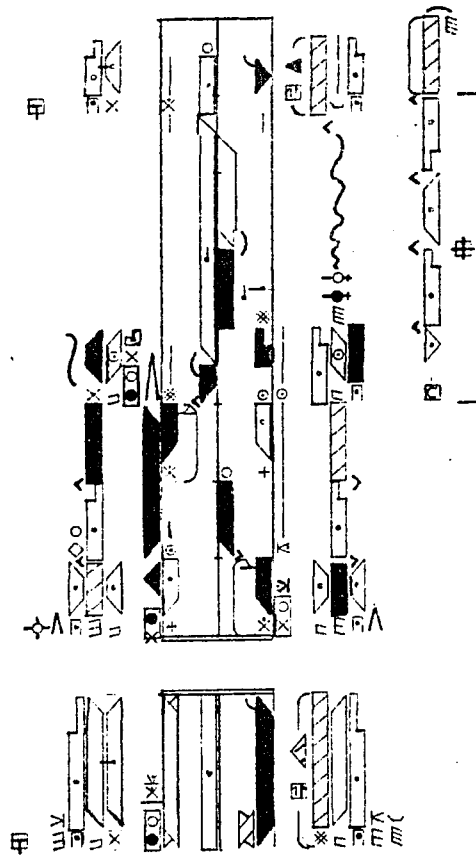


Illustration 4, continued.

c. Accents on 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Men's Section

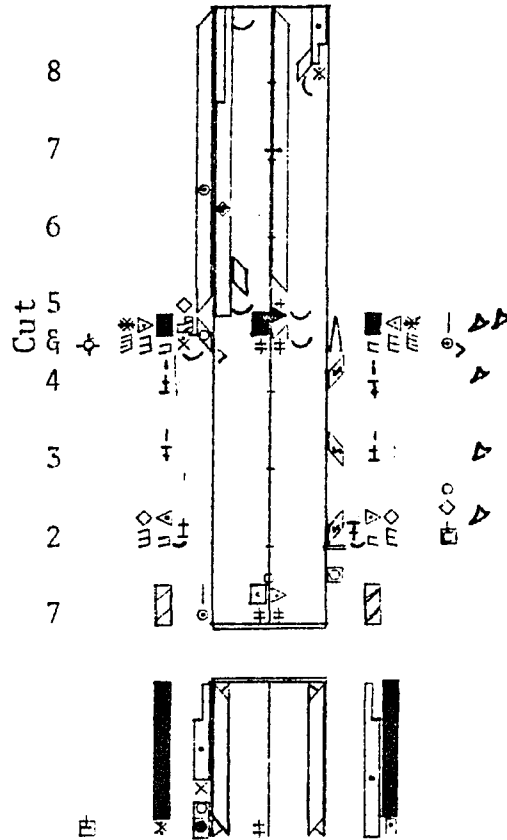
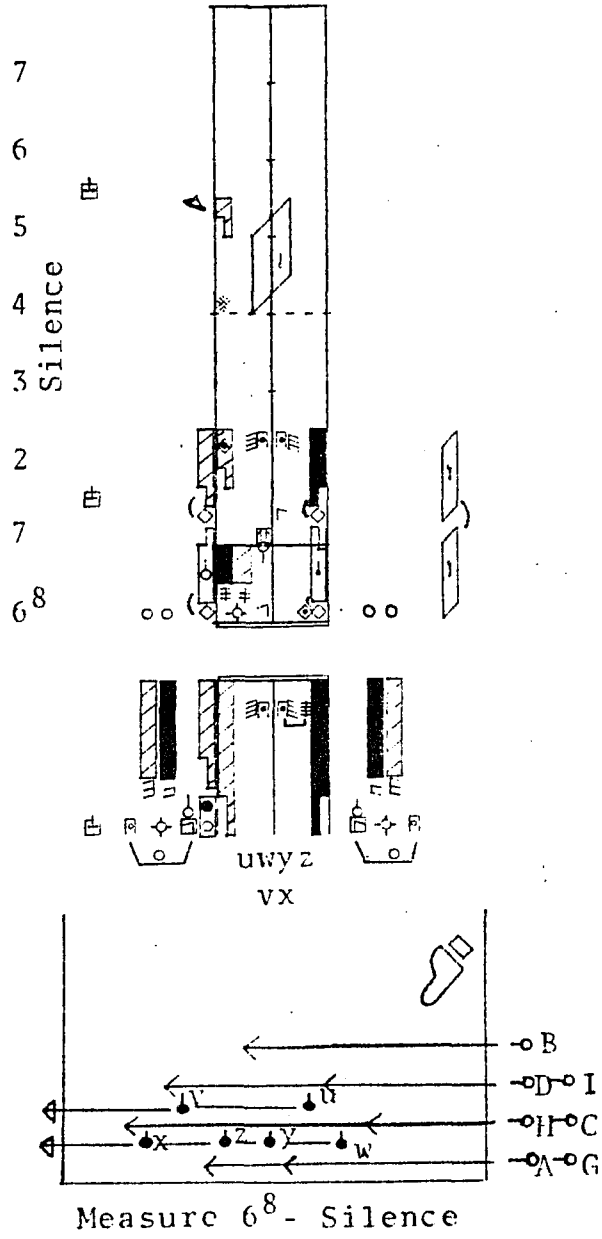


Illustration 4, continued.

d. Accents on 2 and 5 in Men's exit



counts to music with indeterminate meter. The "Dream," "Bacchanale," and "Toy Piano" closing section are ambiguous metrically, and in these sections Miller casts the dancers' movements loose to shape themselves. These sections contrast strongly with the order and regularity of the rest of the dance. Each type of music-dance relationship, the amiable predictability of eight-count or eight-measure dance phrases on the beat and the unpredictability of irregular-length dance phrases to less accessible music, relieves and sets off the other.

Lastly, Miller takes nothing in life perfectly seriously, including concert dance. He has a disbelief in "the artist akin to the gods." His skepticism lets him laugh at himself in his choreography, and goads him to poke fun at and caricaturize clichés of modern dance performance. Audiences are supposed to join in the laughter, and most do. This sometimes flippant approach to choreography is not for those who consider the art of dance with the utmost seriousness. For Miller, dance is the way things are in American life, reflected on the stage. He is cynical, irreverent, a realist.

### Structural Analysis of the Dance

A joke begins Not For Love Alone, adjusting audience expectations of what is to come. Following the formula of formal dance events, the musician-in-charge, often the conductor but in this case the solo pianist, emerges in black tie and tails in a follow-spot. He stops in the middle of

his regal progress across the stage and does a tap time step! This fantasy past, he continues to his piano and soberly readies himself to play.

The theme of a spotlighted individual continues. As the music starts, the light shifts to a woman seated on a chair center-stage, who is bending over, doodling on the floor. She seems suddenly to become aware of being watched, and rises to her feet in slow-motion. There is an air of unreality to her movements; she seems to wade through space and time. As this figure moves about the stage, her light reveals other women, sitting scattered all over the space. They respond to her in various ways, all with the same suspended sense of time. One welcomes and treats her as a friend, another pushes her away and avoids physical contact, another picks her up as if she were a child. All the female figures, regardless of whether or not they experience direct contact with the solo woman, are set in motion by her as she passes. Some join her in reaching movements, others rise and circle in response to her turning. All the women are linked to the solo woman, are part of a dream-like sequence which carries her from one episode of interaction to the next.

The dance to this point has been about women, and has perhaps portrayed a number of ways they interrelate: with warmth and support, with cold unconcern, with maternal care. An atmosphere of dreaming or day-dream remembering pervades this opening section, bringing with it a mood of gentle solemnity.

Miller does not remain serious for long. The solo woman

makes her way to the piano and picks up a microphone. She nods to the pianist and begins to sing. It is "Me and My Shadow," and she is mouthing lyrics sung by Peggy Lee! The "shadows" she left around the stage begin to dance.

The women dance alone; after all, "there's nobody there" in the song. But they manage all sorts of changing supports and "pas de deux" work with their chairs. If Not For Love Alone is, as I think it is, a dance about women, then this section is a parody of classical pas de deux work. The women are featured, as they traditionally have been in "dances for two." The men who have traditionally supported them, however, who made suspensions in the air and lifts and balances of various kinds possible, have been turned by Miller into pieces of furniture! It is as if the women can do just as well with chairs, thank you. (See illustration 5.)

One can envision this section of Not For Love Alone on a cinematic screen with each woman on a piano-top. The movements are sensuous; the women vamp. They have beautiful long legs and they display them. The music is sultry, and the dance matches Lee's tone. It is a wiser section than the preceding one in the sense of cracking-wise or street-wise. This section presents another fascinating, physical side of women, and the audience is asked to admire it openly. People react to women on the street, why not in the theatre?

It is with this section that Miller sometimes loses some of his audience. This section is deliberately enticing, as women can be. It is also very controlled; the choreography

Illustration 5. Partnering with chairs in "Me and My Shadow"

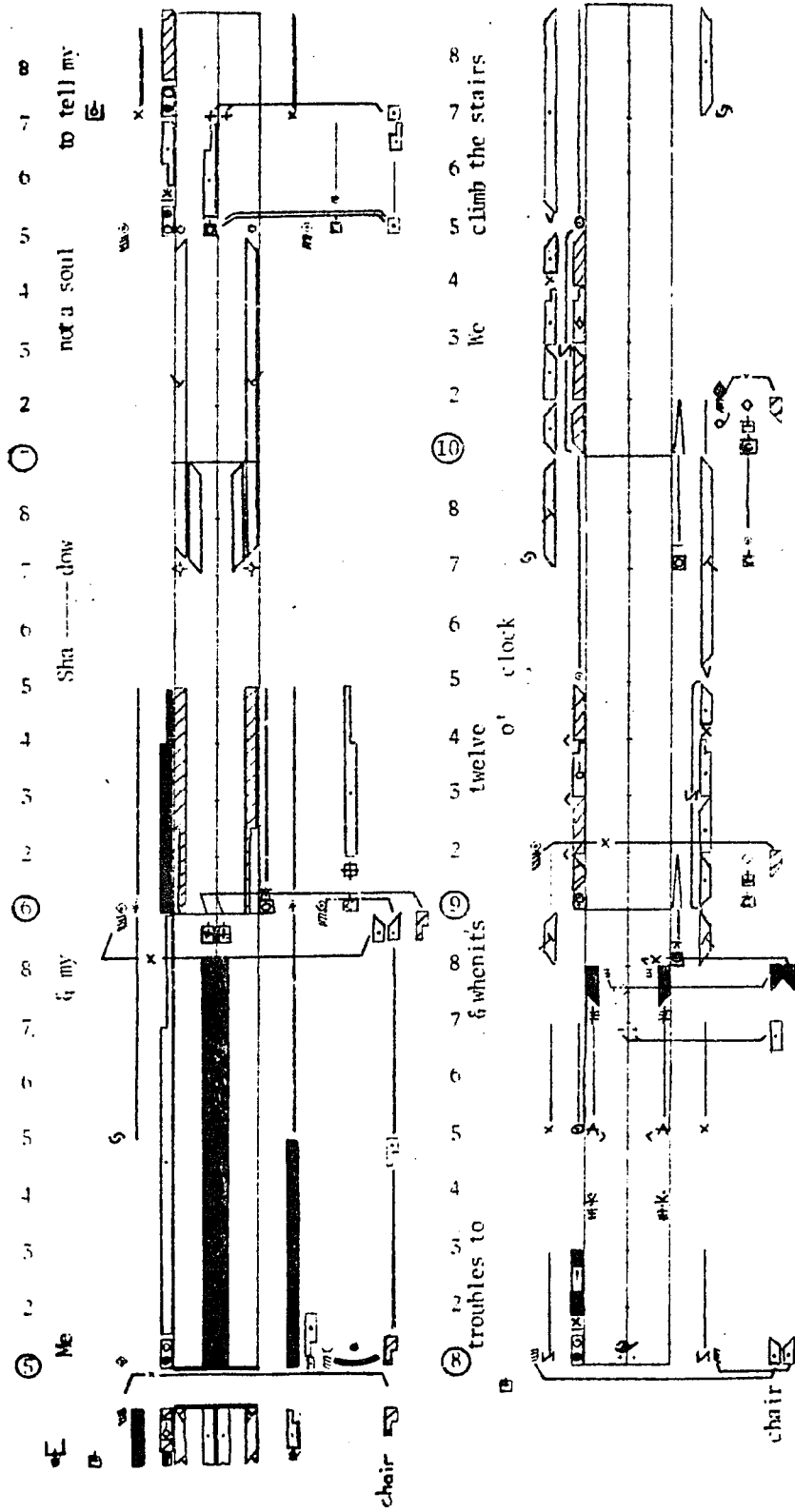
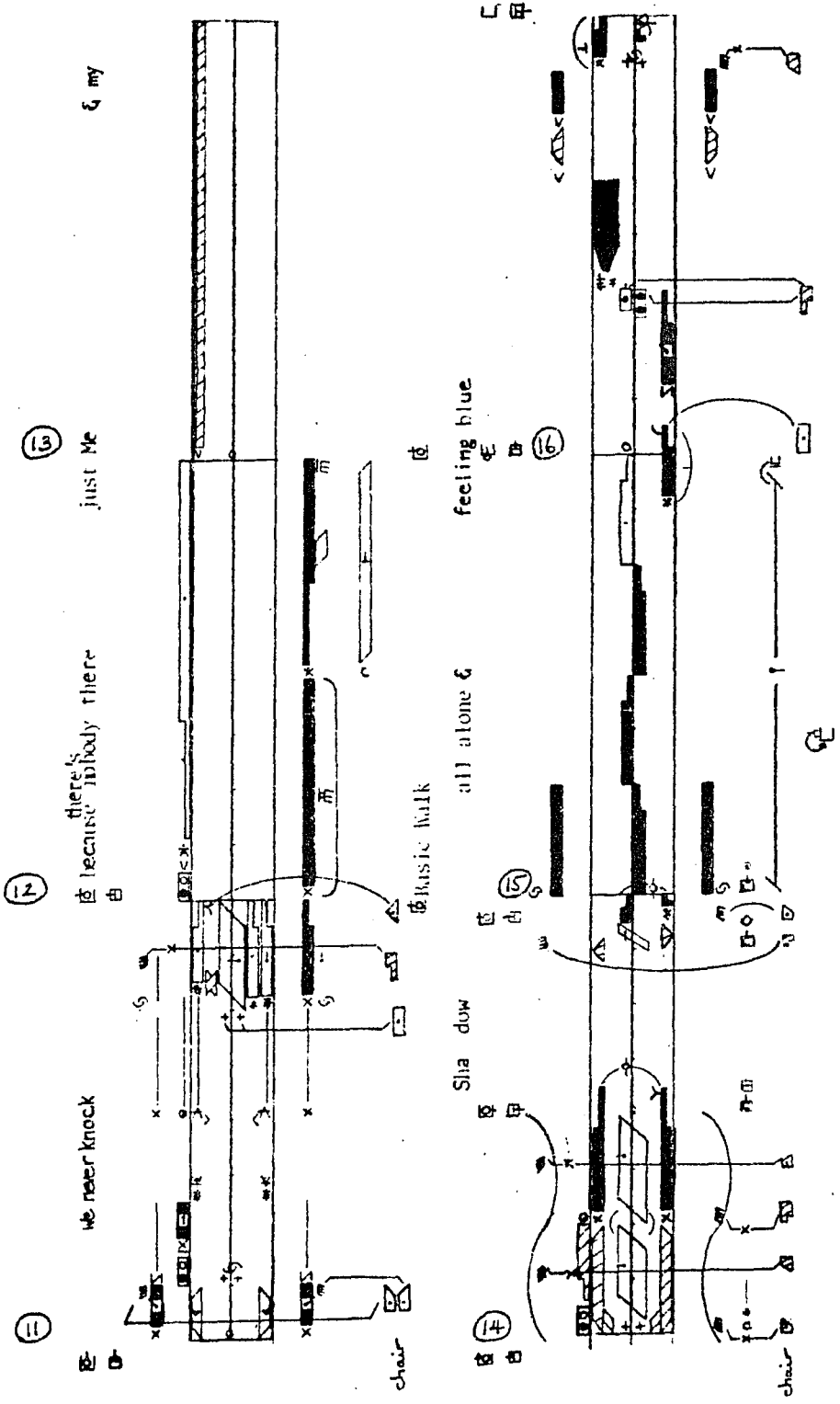


Illustration 5, continued.



never passes beyond flirtation. By merely suggesting sexual content, Miller effectively demonstrates one of the tremendous powers of women. (See illustration 6.)

When "Me and My Shadow" finishes, Miller faces the tactical problem of getting the women's chairs off the stage. He accomplishes it via a "whirlwind" theme that pops up at other points in the dance.<sup>9</sup> The women are dispersed as if by a violent wind; they spin and skid off the stage, carrying their chairs. This passage in the dance is like the static between radio stations or a sleeper's restlessness between dream images.

Once the chairs are removed, the women are blown back onstage. They compose themselves, and in a parody of the grand exit, flounce off with exaggerated aplomb. (See illustration 7.)

We are now at the middle of Miller's choreography, and like many Hollywood dance segments, the middle of Miller's piece highlights the dancing and downplays the theme. Men appear onstage for the first time, and they perform what are some of the best movement arrangements in the piece. They begin facing upstage, a group of three in black and leather, a street costume. When they turn, we see their street accessories: cigarettes and dark glasses. Men, it seems, come with this garb.

The men's dance starts with an upward reach followed by

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<sup>9</sup>The whirlwind recurs in the "Third Men's" entrance; in the "Fast Scriabin;" measures 25-31 for F, E; in the curtain call.



Illustration 7. Women's Grand Exit

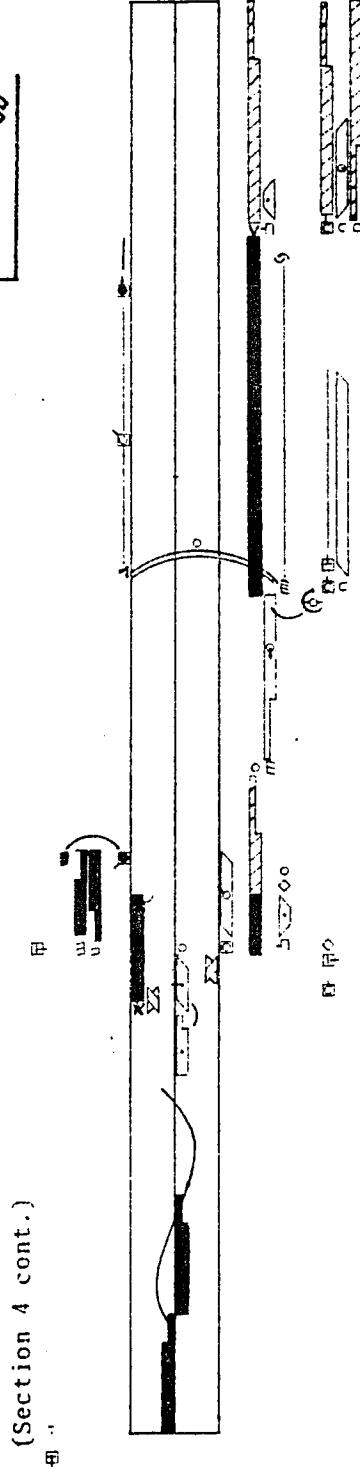
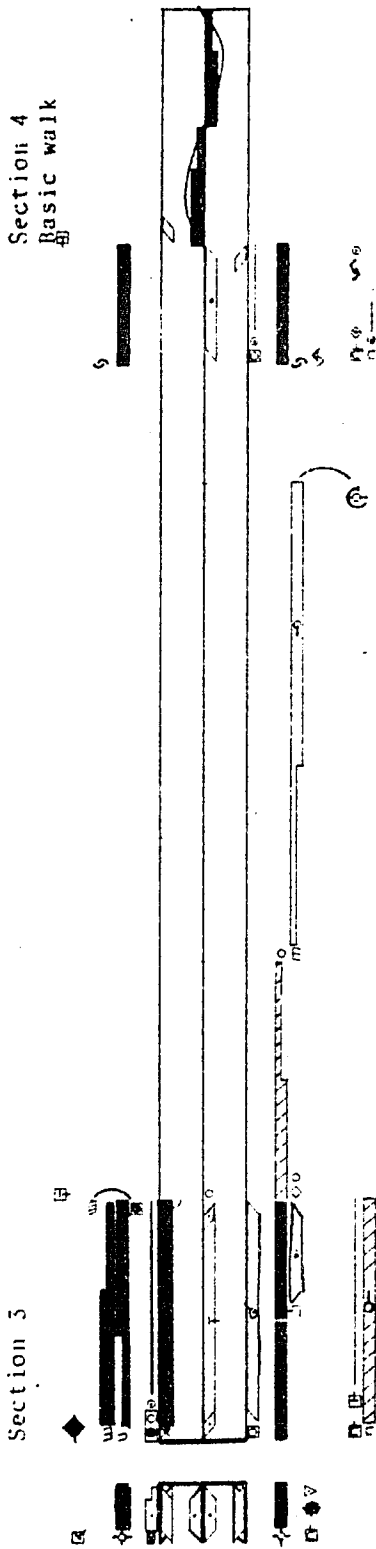
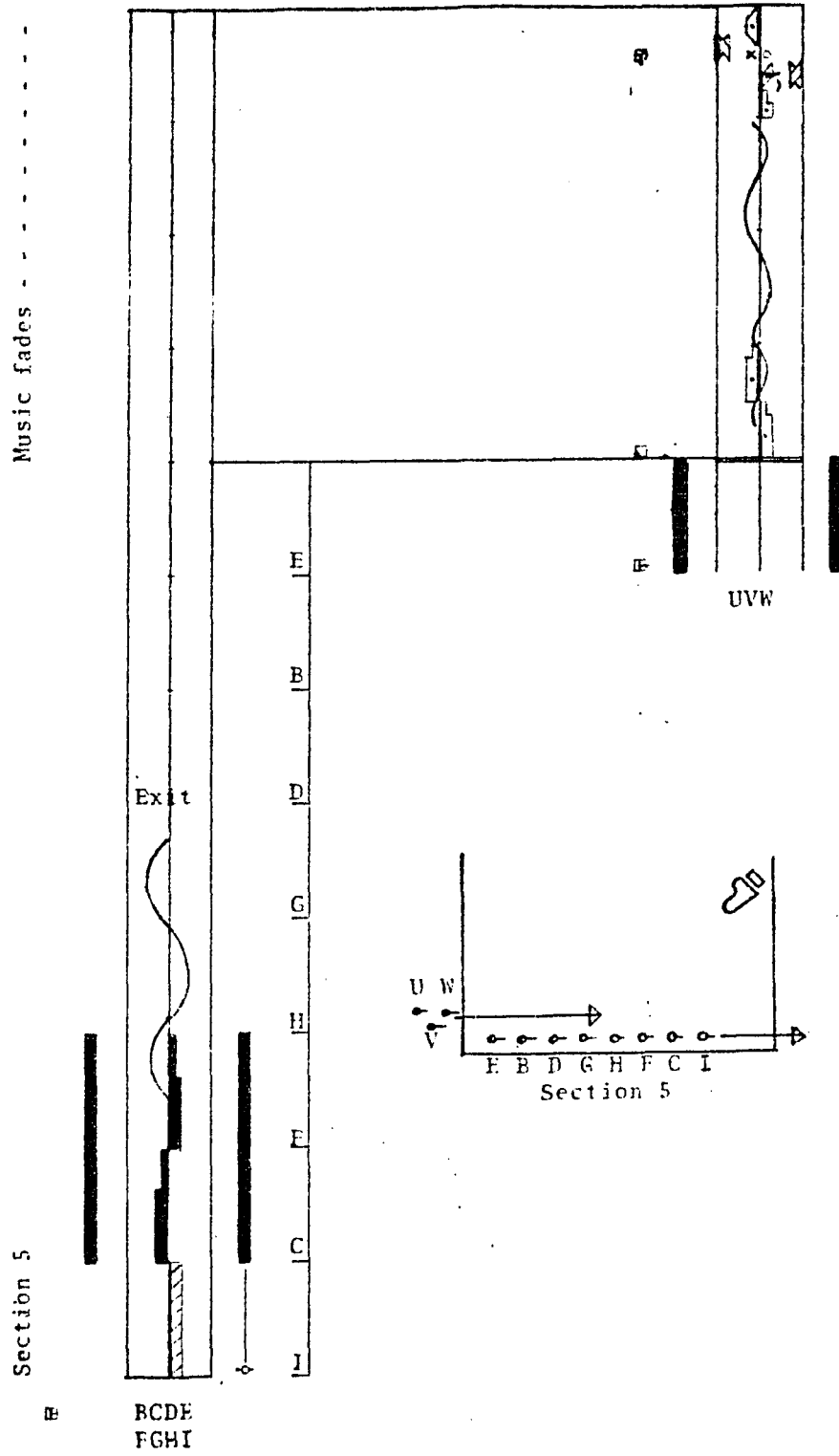


Illustration 7, continued.



a contraction in arms and torso, seen from the back. As an image, "it's kind of sad, like losing someone you love."<sup>10</sup> The men show this sadness and vulnerability when their backs are to the audience. Subsequent movements that communicate distress are tougher, angrier. Not For Love Alone's theme of "women" may be lurking in this section as women's effect on the men they love. Men, trapped in roles society has forged for them, must look a certain way and act a certain way. They turn their sadness to anger to fit accepted masculine models of behavior. In these cartoon-like roles, men are reduced to something laughable. Women actually come out to giggle at them later in this section.

Meanwhile, the men's dance can be a tour de force if done with technical skill and panache. "How many can you do without dying?"<sup>11</sup> Miller asked dancers at Arizona State University who were spinning and dropping to the floor. The men were asked to exhibit strength and force their endurance to the limits in this section. Miller focused here on a universal audience expectation of male dancing in styles of dance ranging from folk and ethnic dance to ballet: audiences enjoy and want to see demonstrations of male power.

The men's performances are supposed to be gender-specific. Their stance is low and into the ground, more so than the woman's, who have a parallel section which follows

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<sup>10</sup>Buzz Miller, rehearsal at Arizona State University: April, 1984.

<sup>11</sup>Videotape 4 of Miller rehearsal (Arizona State University: April, 1984), foot 0935.

this one. "Stay in plié," "Lower your center of gravity," "Use more upper body" were frequent corrections by the choreographer. "Think shoulders, not port de bras" was a typical comment as the choreographer tried to get movements of the extremities to be motivated by torso movement. When the men had difficulty with a "hip isolation," Miller explained that if they exaggerated the bend in their torsos and the inward rotation of their arms, the hip would have to move. What looked like an isolation was actually the result of global body involvement. (See illustration 8.) Performance of the movements in the men's dance should be very intense, very physical.

Miller's instructions to the men on performance quality were, in general, not applicable to the women. His choreographic style involves a distinction between men and women, based on observable differences in their qualities of movement. Men and women may perform the same sets of steps in his dances, but Miller asks each to approach the movements differently. Critics may say this perpetuates sexist choreography. Others may feel that men and women do participate in the same activities in life, but display different temperaments, qualities, energies. Miller, as a choreographer, is a mirror of society rather than one who attempts to shape it. What some choreographers might see as a noble goal, the forging of new outlooks in society, Miller would probably see as pretension. His dances tell things as they are, not as they might be.

Some illustrations of Miller's coaching for the men



follow:

Illustration 9: Some of Miller's coaching for the men

- a. "It's a swat . . . Really take a hunk out of someone. Get the upper back involved."<sup>12</sup>

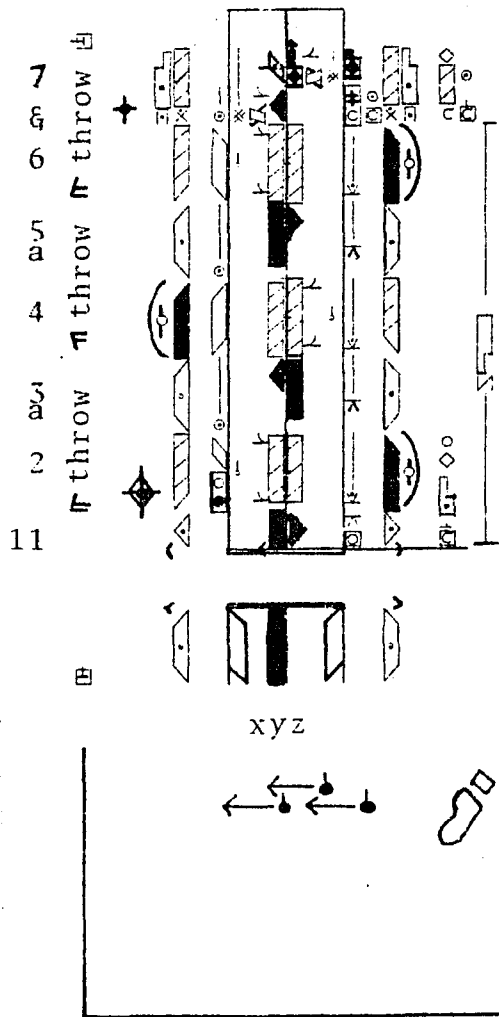
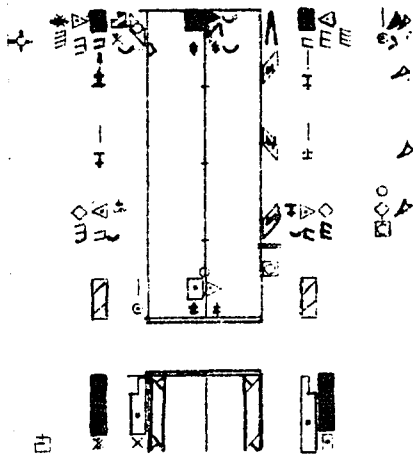


Illustration 9, continued.

b. "Slash with your elbows and a whack to the stomach.  
Really push it."<sup>13</sup>



c. "It's a little Jimmy Cagney."<sup>14</sup>

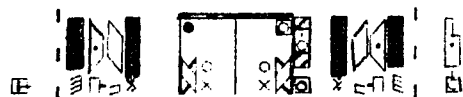
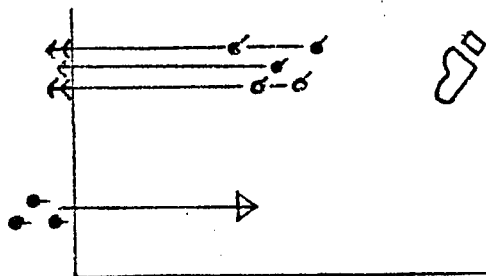
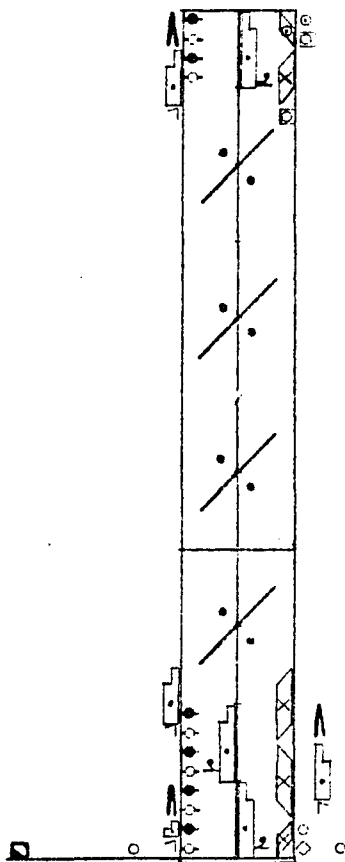
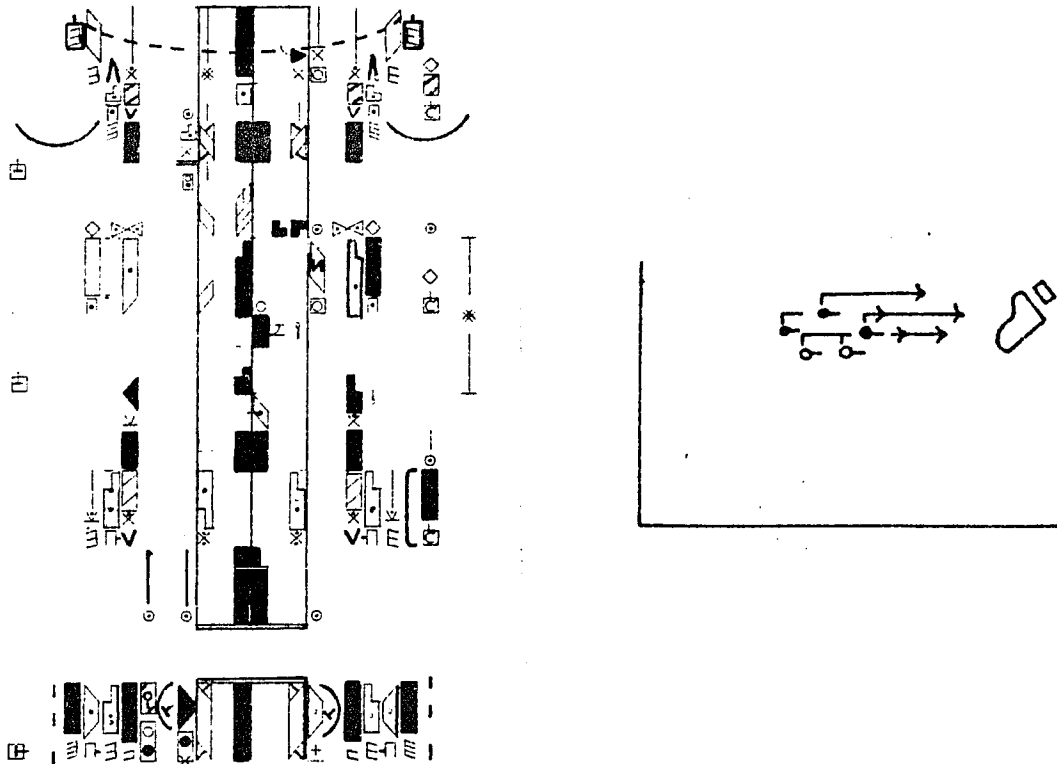


Illustration 9, continued.

- d. "Give in the spine like someone stabbed you in the back."<sup>15</sup>



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<sup>12</sup>Videotape 3 of Miller rehearsal, foot 0040.

<sup>13</sup>Videotape 2 of Miller rehearsal (Arizona State University: April, 1984), foot 0215.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., foot 1690.

<sup>15</sup>Buzz Miller, rehearsal at Arizona State University; April, 1984.

The men's dance is overtly theatrical. "Don't look down. Look right at the audience."<sup>16</sup> Audience reaction was an important consideration for the choreographer. The aim of most of Miller's coaching was to improve the clarity of the unison dancing. "It's not reading. You have to be together," Miller advised.<sup>17</sup> Throughout the man's section, and elsewhere in the dance, the choreographic goal is one unified impression, whether it be of strength, vulnerability, or another quality. This impression is intensified by the multiple images of that quality being projected by numbers of dancers. Numbers of people on stage are rarely used by Miller to diversify an effect; he consistently employs unison dancing to augment the impact of movements designed for individual bodies. The men's section builds to its climax in large part due to the accumulation of more and more dancers on stage.

Because of the importance of clarity in performance, Miller's choreography requires vigorous attention to timing. Mastering the counts is not overly difficult, since movements are for the most part organized in standard-length phrases of 4-8 measures, and the dance moves in accord with the music. Precise timing yields powerful, scrupulously unison movement of the type that has been the aesthetic ideal in American theatre dance for generations.

The men's section ends with a bit of humor. After all

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<sup>16</sup>Videotape 4 of Miller rehearsal, foot 0575.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., foot 0890.

the bravado, the strong dancing, the men momentarily admit they have worn themselves out and corkscrew to the floor to a "dead cockroach" position. (See illustration 10.) They stand up again almost immediately in a recapitulation of movements from the first men's section that gives structural unity to the men's dance.

The women now reclaim the stage, in a section called "Etude" that has many of the same or similar movements as in the men's dance, but performed in a completely different way. The difference is summed up in one of Miller's directions, "Try to make it as lyrical as possible."<sup>18</sup> The major alterations Miller has made in the choreography for the women involve more extended uses of time, changes of movements from plié to relevé, and movements which were performed as floor work taken to standing. (See illustration 11.) Even the "cockroach" position has its equivalent in the "Etude," as the women "flop" on the last note of the music. (See illustration 12.) "Make it subtle," Miller advised.<sup>19</sup>

Undoubtedly, some of the "Etude" choreography is tongue-in-cheek. In measures 17-20 (See illustration 11c.), the women's hands flutter as they rise in developpé relevé. This touch of maudlin romanticism is played for a laugh. Some of the women's quivering innocence in the dance is a put-on. Miller may see this as a choreographic reflection of realistic behavior patterns among women.

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<sup>18</sup>Videotape 2 of Miller rehearsal, foot 0775.

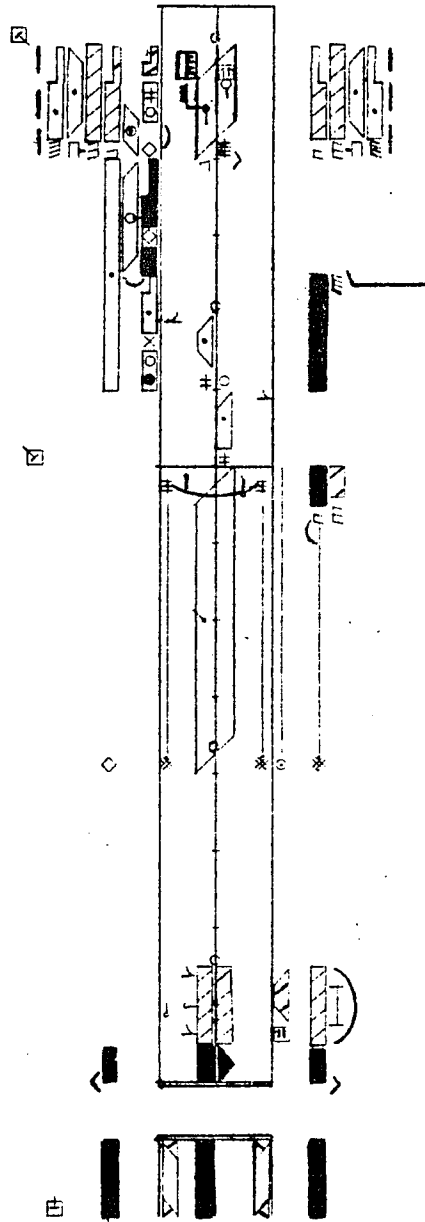
<sup>19</sup>Ibid., foot 0925.

Illustration 10. "Dead cockroach" position in the Men's Section

prarie dog  
hands

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uvwxyz

Illustration 11. Movements from the women's "Etude" compared to movements from Men's Section

a. Opening of the Men's dance and of "Etude"

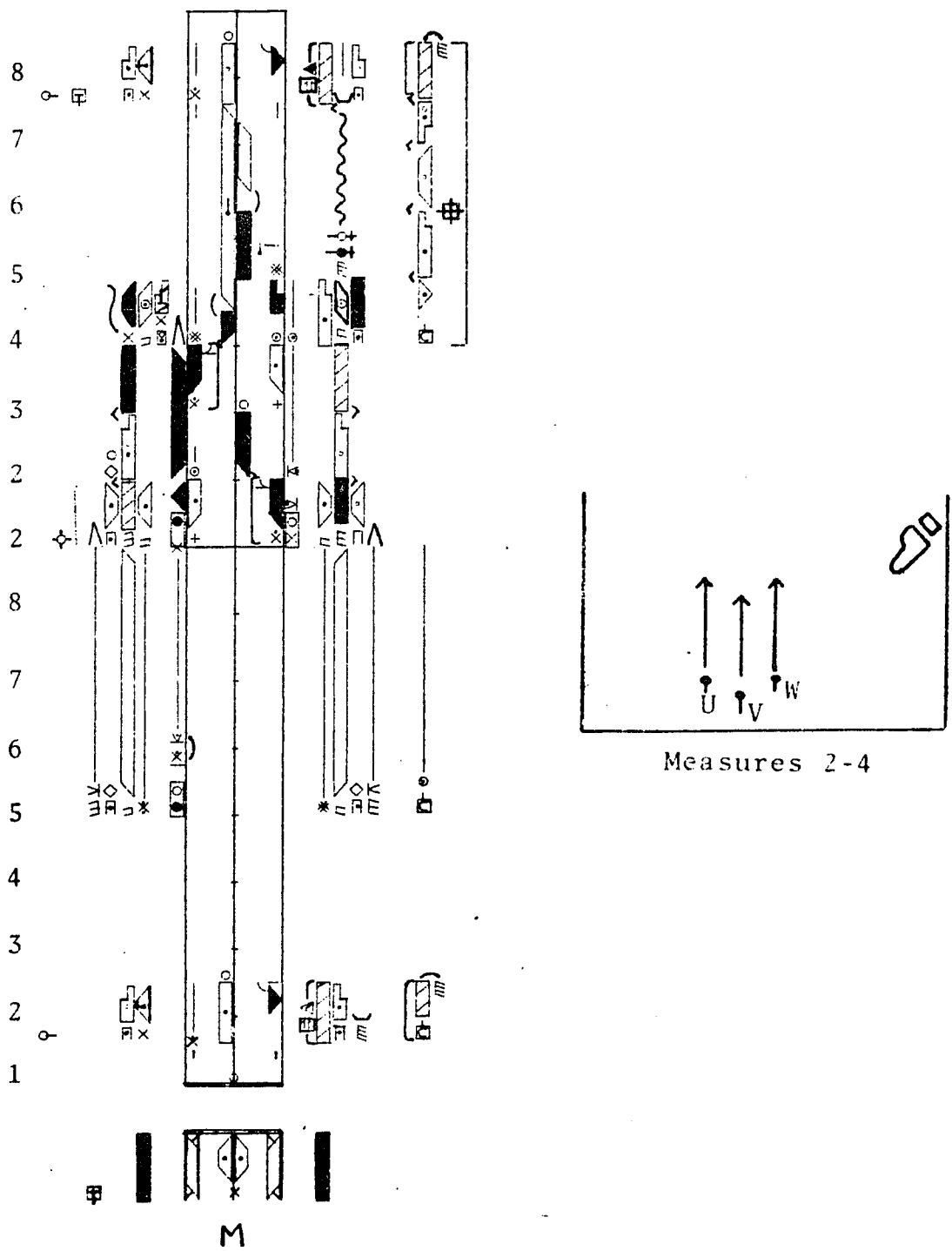
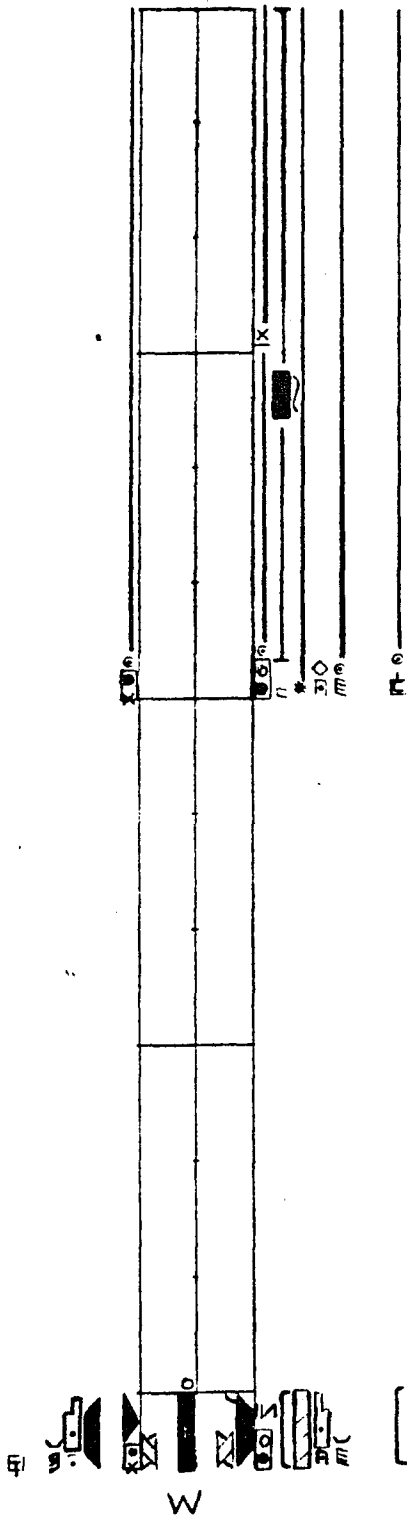


Illustration 11, continued.



Vibrate from the tension

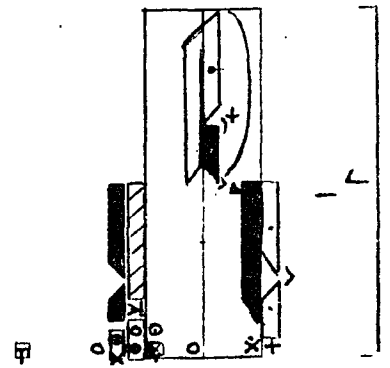
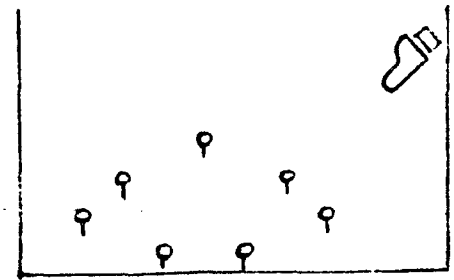
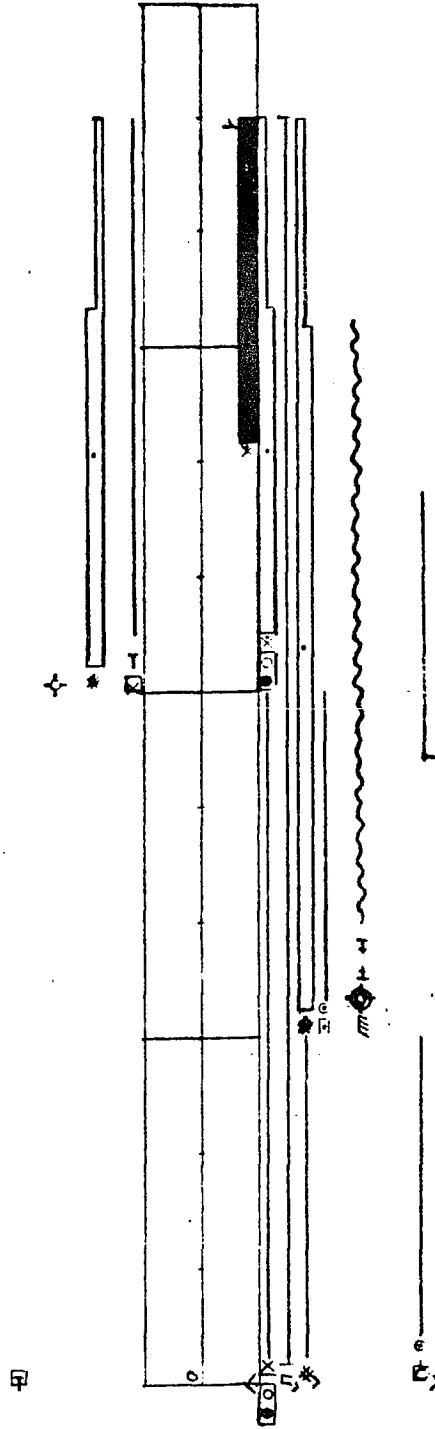
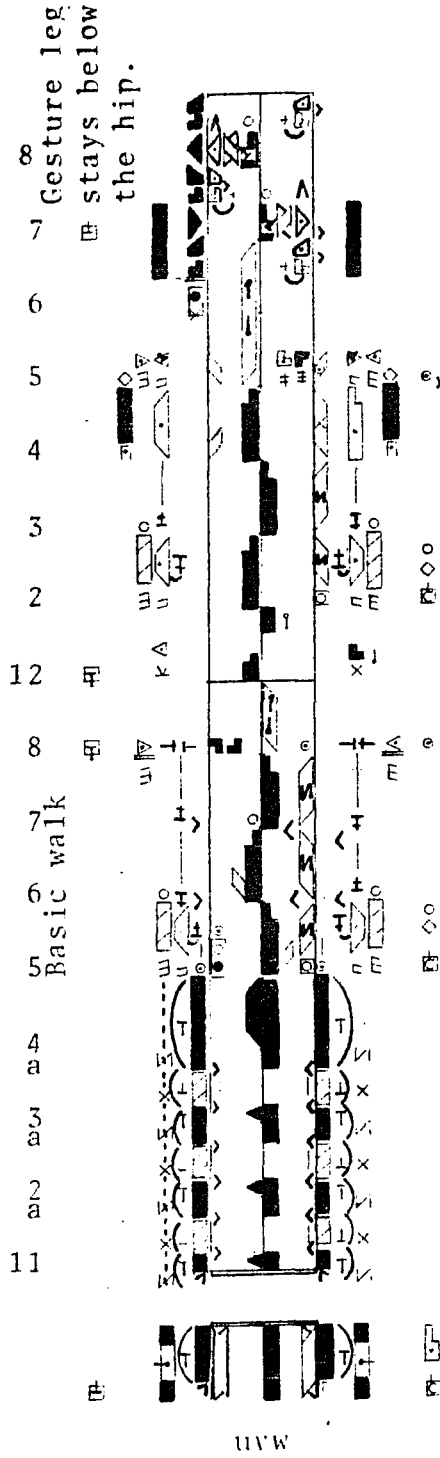
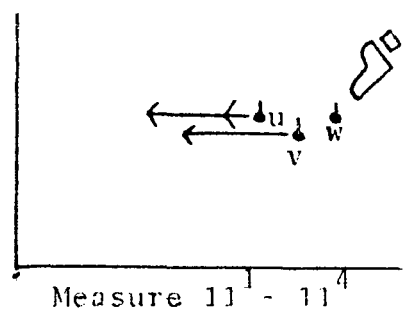
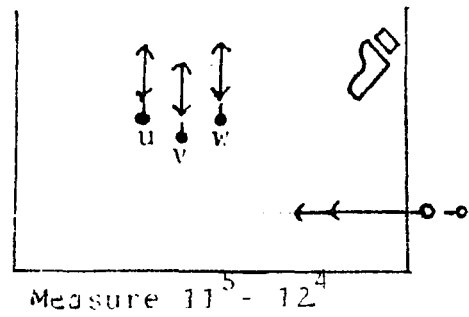


Illustration 11, continued.



I don't think so.







The "Fast Scriabin" section which follows is the only time in Not For Love Alone that women and men are on the stage together. Their dance is jaunty, exuberant, youthful. They have a great time together, moving further and faster than either men or women did on their own. The dance is upbeat, joyous, rising to a happy frenzy through fast and intricate floor patterns. Although there is no physical contact between men and women, the dance builds to a tumult through "group chemistry."

The climax of the "Fast Scriabin" comes with the reentry of the solo woman from the opening dream sequence, who is raised overhead by all the men. As she is, perhaps, "put on her pedestal," the dream-like slow motion which characterized her first appearance returns. This return lends an A B C D A structure to Not For Love Alone. The woman is left alone on stage, and she ushers in a shock greater than Peggy Lee: "The Stripper."

Buzz Miller's strip is a joke. The women wear bras over baggy sweatshirts, floppy hats, corny feather boas. When they flick off their bras and toss their hats, they are paring down to the leotards and tights we've seen them in from the beginning of the piece. The women shake their boas, not themselves. "Take-off" has a double meaning here, and the women stay strangely apart from their dance.

When the brassy sounds of "The Stripper" end, the pianist plays a toy piano, and the women slowly gather their

things. They approach the audience with a "Kabuki walk"<sup>20</sup> and gently sink in an Eastern bow. At the end of Not For Love Alone, the women seem utterly unfathomable, distant. Miller presents them to us as an enigma of Oriental proportions. Are they the American dream woman? Sensuous, but demure? Miller has shown many sides of women in this dance that begins and ends with them alone on stage. Are women, to this male choreographer and to many men, a puzzlement, a zany combination of qualities and behaviors? Is it women who in their complexity are not for love alone?

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<sup>20</sup>Videotape 1 of Miller rehearsal, foot 1285.

## **II. Principles of Choreography**

This chapter will discover and summarize the statements of belief made by the five choreographers during the creation and rehearsal of their dances, and in interviews and conversations with the author. The resultant list of their principles of choreography will highlight their basic ideas regarding the nature of choreographic inspiration, the proper goals and concerns of dance directors, and the role concert dance should play in society.

Some basic beliefs held by the choreographers about the source of inspiration for dances are traditional and widespread in the field. One such is that **music can directly inspire choreography**. Three choreographers in this study indicated that music had been the motivating force behind their work: Anna Sokolow, Clay Taliaferro, and, to a lesser extent, Moses Pendleton.

Sokolow's tie to Charles Ives was the strongest of the three choreographer/composer links. Her respect for Ives extended to his lifestyle, his radical departures from standard practices in music composition, his fondness for Americana. In Sokolow's words, Ives's music touched her enough to make her feel, "I want to do this."<sup>1</sup> Taliaferro's personal affection for Debussy seems not to have paralleled Sokolow's for Ives, but that choreographer was equally clear about his indebtedness to the composer for inspiring his dance. "[The music] is my whole point. Does [the dance]

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<sup>1</sup>Anna Sokolow, Composition class at the University of Hawaii, April, 1983.

look the way the music sounds? The music has motivated me to do this work."<sup>2</sup> Pendleton's link was not to any one composer, but to using music as a means of eliciting improvisations around which his choreography could be structured. "The way I worked at City College was going in, turning on any kind of music, and having people just get up and handle it in front of an audience."<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, Buzz Miller characteristically searches for music to fulfill plans he has made for different sections of his dances.<sup>4</sup> Rachel Lampert prefers, ideally, to have music composed for her dances after the choreographic process is completed.<sup>5</sup>

Another principle on which several choreographers agreed is that **autobiographical material is an important source on which to draw in dance composition.** Taliaferro's dance drew on his remembrances of life in the South and a family in which women dominated and prevailed.<sup>6</sup> Lampert confessed that most of her work is "generally very personal, somewhat

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<sup>2</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1685; videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0275.

<sup>3</sup>Moses Pendleton at public forum, University of Hawaii, October 29, 1983.

<sup>4</sup>Buzz Miller at student forum, Ohio State University, January 13, 1983.

<sup>5</sup>Telephone interviews with Rachel Lampert in New York City, Fall, 1982.

<sup>6</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0475.

autobiographical. . . ."7 And Moses Pendleton, despite his work with student improvisation at City College, included his own family relics and costumes in Children on the Hill and kept one image of his father alive onstage as "the man in the white suit."<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Pendleton's belief in autobiography extended beyond the choreographer to the dancers. It is precisely through improvisation that he revealed something of the participants' backgrounds and tastes as he "makes us do our own stuff."<sup>9</sup> Life experience, previous dance and movement experience, the immediate autobiographical data from the process of making the dance, are all visible in Pendleton's work.

Even Anna Sokolow's choreography depended to some extent on autobiographical associations. "The Pond, The Cage" is an homage to Nijinsky which focuses on two sides of that dancer's life: artistic success, and psychological and emotional deterioration. These two aspects have also characterized Sokolow's life, which has included both acclaim for her artistic achievements and hospitalization for emotional breakdown. Autobiographical associations may well have influenced Sokolow's choice of Nijinsky for this choreographed portrait. Miller's is the only dance that makes no apparent use of autobiographical material.

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<sup>7</sup>Rachel Lampert at radio forum, University of Iowa, April, 1983.

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Moses Pendleton in Washington, Connecticut, February, 1985.

<sup>9</sup>Conversation with Leslie Meyers in Pendleton's kitchen, September, 1982.

The five choreographers were divided on the purpose and goals of concert dance. Buzz Miller alone voiced the principle that **dance performances should be entertaining.**<sup>10</sup> Miller believes "heavy thinking" and American jazz dance are at odds, since jazz deals with physical spontaneity and the expression of emotions, energy, impulses. The jazz technique within which Miller works dictated to some extent the entertainment purpose he ascribed to stage dance.<sup>11</sup>

Sokolow took another position entirely. Entertainers may indeed strive to give audiences pleasure, but in Sokolow's opinion this is not a proper objective for concert dance. Artists have a responsibility, according to Sokolow, to broach the most serious subjects, and to focus people's thoughts on moral, metaphysical, ethical questions. It is Sokolow's view that **choreography should reflect the concerns of contemporary society.**<sup>12</sup> Within Sokolow's view of the world, these concerns include existential distress, alienation, anxiety, political and religious persecution, the hostility of youth, the reduction of human misery to news stories, and other equally somber subjects. Sokolow's argument in defense of this principle is that artists must reveal aspects of life that materialism, consumerism, and other impersonal currents within our society bury from our

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<sup>10</sup>Rehearsal comments at Arizona State University, April, 1984.

<sup>11</sup>Interview with Buzz Miller in New York City, December 31, 1984.

<sup>12</sup>Interview with Anna Sokolow in New York City, November, 1983.

view. Sokolow believes artists are the conscience of a society and she argues that choreographers who create entertainment reduce dance to a consumer product.<sup>13</sup>

Actually, Buzz Miller joined Sokolow in her concern that choreography reflect contemporary society.<sup>14</sup> It is because his view of society is so disparate from hers, and due to his focus on entertainment values, that his work departed so radically from hers in result. Miller picked up on fashion trends, male and female behavior, clichés in the entertainment industry, and highlighted these as what is important in this country now. For Miller, Americans are consumers and materialists, and he makes dances about that reality.

Lampert, Taliaferro and Pendleton think **the single most important goal of choreography is to discover new ramifications of dance through movement exploration.** For these three, the materials of dance: motion, space, time and energy, are the prime concern of the choreographer, with themes of social or entertainment value taking second place. Taliaferro choreographed Falling Off the Back Porch in the studio, forging the movements, as he put it, "out of my body."<sup>15</sup> The choreographer admitted "there are no new movements, so to speak, but there's a new way of approaching

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<sup>13</sup>Interview with Anna Sokolow in Honolulu, April, 1983.

<sup>14</sup>Student forum at Ohio State University, January 13, 1983; rehearsal comments, Arizona State University, April, 1984.

<sup>15</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0320.

them."<sup>16</sup> Taliaferro researched and explored movement requirements; his mind and body acknowledged the dictates and possibilities within movements, and he made decisions about which dictates and possibilities he wanted to accept or to deny. Pendleton's work with improvisation had a similar goal of "finding material" that was outside the scope of established, familiar dance vocabulary.<sup>17</sup> Lampert's dictum, "never throw anything away," is an indication of the strength of her attachment to post-modern techniques for manipulating movement.<sup>18</sup> "What do you think?" she asked student choreographers at the University of Iowa repeatedly. "If the material doesn't satisfy you, work with it. But don't throw it away."<sup>19</sup> For these three choreographers, creativity with movement is the raison d'etre of choreography, and a principal purpose of concert dance is to show audiences new directions in movement exploration and design.

A controversial principle among these choreographers was that **choreography should suggest a story or communicate an idea**. Sokolow enunciated this principle most clearly, speaking against the post-modern tendency toward abstract choreography devoid of narrative content. For Sokolow, content determines form, and without content, the imposition

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., foot 0365.

<sup>17</sup>Public forum, University of Hawaii, October 29, 1983.

<sup>18</sup>Title of composition class, University of Iowa, March 29, 1983.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

of form on movement is an arbitrary exercise.<sup>20</sup>

Lampert's method of coaching her dance by having the dancers converse and explain the story behind their movements demonstrated the ties in What's Remembered? to dance as communication and to Lampert's desire to establish a narrative framework for choreography. For Buzz Miller, story was one way of engaging the audience's attention, and keeping it involved with the dancing.<sup>21</sup> Although Falling Off the Back Porch has "a scenario," Taliaferro never specified that dance should be linked to story, and Pendleton was in clear disagreement that this link is necessary.

For Lampert and Sokolow, the narrative content of their choreography necessitated a further choreographic principle, that **realistic acting techniques can be used to enhance choreography**. Both choreographers concentrated on training their dancers in acting, to give them the means of performing movement with quality and credibility. Lampert's requirement that the dancers "look real" and Sokolow's criticisms, "That's too mechanical!" and "I don't believe you," show concern for personal investment on the part of the performer in the role the choreography mandates and describes. These choreographers in fact recommended readings in acting techniques to aid their dancers in achieving realistic

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<sup>20</sup>Interview with Anna Sokolow in New York City, November 14, 1983.

<sup>21</sup>Interview with Buzz Miller in New York City, December 31, 1984.

character portrayal while dancing.<sup>22</sup>

Taliaferro's approach to content in choreography was very different: one of his principles was that drama must be inherent in movement, not overlaid via acting techniques. His remarks ("Don't ask one what you should be thinking about;" the drama should "all be in bodies, not faces, so that you don't have to act;" "There's technique involved" that accomplishes the drama.<sup>23</sup>) were illustrative of his ties to José Limón on this subject. In a recent review of Limón's The Moor's Pavane, Anna Kisselgoff wrote that "In true Limón style, . . . no emotion was imposed upon the movement" in a choreography which epitomizes "Limón's use of form to express feeling."<sup>24</sup> For Taliaferro, dance must embody drama in its very organization, and be self-sufficient in arousing reaction and conveying information. Dance may tell a story, but Taliaferro believes that story must be visible in the motion, space, time and energy of the dance, and not require another art, acting, to elucidate it.

Some of the choreographers believe that **dancers should be permitted to impact on choreography**, not merely on its performance. The extent to which this principle is implemented varies greatly between choreographers, and indeed

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<sup>22</sup>Lampert recommended Theatre Games by Viola Spolin, in rehearsals at Ohio State University, March, 1983; Sokolow recommend Stanislavski, in rehearsals at University of Hawaii, April, 1983.

<sup>23</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0714, 1010.

<sup>24</sup>Anna Kisselgoff, "Ballet: Joffrey in 'Pavane,'" New York Times, March 18, 1985.

between sections of individual dances. The greatest advocate of this principle was Moses Pendleton, who said "I tend to try to make something from whatever mental and physical interaction is in front of me;"<sup>25</sup> and " . . . I'm all for this kind of spontaneous behavior," i.e. spontaneous choreography. Pendleton adopted some of his dancers' ideas directly into Children on the Hill; other ideas were modified and some rejected entirely. In this process, Pendleton acted as catalyst, editor and arranger, more than as a traditional choreographer.

If Pendleton worked with "collective choreography," in which he and the dancers shared fairly equally in the movement results, Lampert engaged in "collaborative choreography," in which she assumed a more dominant role by providing verbal instructions for dancers to fulfill. The instructions established boundaries within which the dancers could collaborate on the choreography.<sup>26</sup> Lampert never asked the dancers to "handle music" or, "get a different kind of costume, [so] you move a little differently," as Pendleton did. She specified music and the dramatic situation she wanted, and asked the dancers to come forth with ideas on how to express that situation in movement.

Sokolow's approaches to performer input on the actual organization of Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives varied

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<sup>25</sup>Public forum at University of Hawaii, October 29, 1983.

<sup>26</sup>Videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: March, 1983), foot 1000-1100.

from section to section of the dance. In "Hallowe'en," the dancers were shown "motifs," which set precedents for the kinds of movement the choreographer wanted. The dancers could vary these motifs or create new ones which produced similar effects. In "Central Park in the Dark," the dancers were given more freedom, and were asked to improvise at length. Sokolow did not solicit choreographic input from the dancers in "The Pond, The Cage" or "The Unanswered Question." These sections of the dance require contributions from the dancers in performance only.

Neither Miller nor Taliaferro used improvisation or any other means to allow dancers to impact on their choreography. In rehearsals they did, however, take the movement abilities of dancers into account, often altering choreography to make it more accessible to the individuals involved.

The choreographers differ dramatically on what they thought the "tone" of concert dance should be. Miller and Lampert articulated that they enjoy including comedy, that **choreographers should exercise a sense of humor** and not take themselves too seriously. Lampert described her work as "usually with a sense of humor;"<sup>27</sup> Miller was fully aware of the benefits of humor in entertaining an audience. Although Pendleton never spoke of humor in relation to Children on the Hill, he frequently used the lack of humor in other choreographers' work as a basis for criticism. "No whimsy!" he lamented after seeing Lucinda Childs' choreography for

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<sup>27</sup>Radio forum, University of Iowa, April, 1983.

In contrast, Sokolow and Taliaferro view concert dance with utter, perhaps unrelieved seriousness. Taliaferro admonished dancers at Arizona State University repeatedly on the extent of the physical, emotional, and mental commitment he expected from each of them.<sup>29</sup> He pointed out that dancing is difficult, and choreographing is a very serious responsibility. "If it's comfortable," he said, "it's dead wrong."<sup>30</sup> In Sokolow's rehearsals, the word "respect" kept cropping up: respect for artists, respect for the work, respect for the point of view that **dance is a very serious profession, in which one can make as profound statements as in any of the other arts.** "What's very important for me," she said, "is that a profound statement like ["The Unanswered Question"] ends the whole piece. This is very, very important."<sup>31</sup>

Lampert, Pendleton and Sokolow were united in their desire to **extend the definition of dance.** Lampert and Sokolow wanted "dance" to encompass gestural and day to day movements; both choreographers tried to achieve some

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<sup>28</sup>Conversation with Moses Pendleton in Brooklyn, New York, December, 1984.

<sup>29</sup>Videotape 13 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1300 - end.

<sup>30</sup>Videotape 11 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1706.

<sup>31</sup>Videotape 4 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: November, 1983), foot 1675.

"natural" movement from their dancers and to move beyond the "trained" look.<sup>32</sup> Pendleton went further in formulating the principle that **choreography is the art of ordering motion**, including motion by inanimate objects and any motion taken from life.<sup>33</sup> These three choreographers worked to enlarge the traditional boundaries of dance, within which Miller and Taliaferro were more content to stay.

Miller and Taliaferro continued to explore the movement possibilities offered by established systems of dance training, movement styles and technique. For Miller, that movement style was jazz, which "has influenced ballet the world over."<sup>34</sup> Taliaferro's heritage, the Humphrey-Limón school, is equally rich. These choreographers believe that **choreography can find inspiration in the creative potential of established techniques and styles of dance.**<sup>35</sup>

Pendleton was alone in proclaiming two further principles of choreography: that **process is as important as product**<sup>36</sup> and that **choreography should explore and**

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<sup>32</sup>Videotape 5 of Sokolow rehearsal (City College of New York: November, 1983), foot 1396; videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: March, 1983), foot 1057.

<sup>33</sup>"Moses Pendleton presents Moses Pendleton," video program produced by Mitchell Johnson (New York: Hearst/ABC), 1982.

<sup>34</sup>Buzz Miller, letter to the author, February 7, 1984.

<sup>35</sup>Videotapes 1 and 2 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983).

<sup>36</sup>Public forum, University of Hawaii, October 29, 1983.

incorporate the latest media and stage technology.<sup>37</sup> Three of the other choreographers, while certainly involved with process, placed less value on the experience of making the dance than on the "finished" work of art. Miller placed no value on process whatsoever; his dance was choreographed in advance of his rehearsals.<sup>38</sup>

Sokolow's position is antithetical to Pendleton's regarding the use of technology, since the implementation of multi-media and advanced stagecraft concentrates on visual results. This seeing of dance "from the outside, in" conflicts with Sokolow's insistence that choreography proceed "from the inside, out."<sup>39</sup> Taliaferro, Miller and Lampert did not consider "hi-tech" stage design and multi-media as motivating forces behind choreography.

The principles of choreography operative among these five choreographers in 1983 , then, were:

1. Music can directly inspire choreography.
2. Autobiographical material is an important source on which to draw in dance composition.
3. Dance performance should be entertaining .
4. Choreography should reflect the concerns of contemporary society .

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<sup>37</sup>Rehearsal comments at The City College of New York, October, 1982.

<sup>38</sup>Student forum, Ohio State University, January 13, 1983.

<sup>39</sup>Conversation with Ron Burns at The City College of New York, November, 1983.

5. The single most important goal of choreography is to discover new ramifications of dance through movement exploration and manipulation.
6. Choreography should suggest a story or communicate an idea.
7. Realistic acting techniques can be used to enhance choreography.
8. Drama must be inherent in movement.
9. Dancers should be permitted to impact on choreography.
10. Choreographers should exercise a sense of humor.
11. Choreography is a serious profession in which the most profound statements can and should be made.
12. Choreography is the art of ordering motion, and should enlarge the boundaries of what is accepted as dance.
13. Choreography can find inspiration in the creative potential of established techniques and styles of dance.
14. Process is as important as product in choreography.
15. Choreography should explore and incorporate the latest stage technology.

The distribution of these principles among the five choreographers is charted in the following matrix:

Table 1. Distribution of principles of choreography among the five choreographers

	Sokolow	Lampert	Taliaferro	Pendleton	Miller
Music inspires choreography	X		X	X	
Autobiographical material is important source	X	X	X	X	
Dance should be entertaining					X
Choreography should reflect contemporary society	X				X
The prime focus of choreography should be movement exploration/manipulation		X	X	X	
Choreography should suggest a story or theme	X	X			X
Realistic acting techniques enhance choreography	X	X			
Drama must be inherent in movement			X		
Dancers should impact on choreography	X	X		X	
Choreography should show a sense of humor		X		X	X
Choreography should be serious, profound	X		X		
Choreography should enlarge the boundaries of "dance"	X	X		X	
Choreography should explore established techniques and styles of dance			X		X
Process is as important as product				X	
Choreography should explore latest technology				X	

If principles of choreography are to serve as a means of comparing and contrasting choreographers and their work, and to illustrate the degree to which there is unanimity or diversity of belief in the field, it is important to note the frequency with which choreographers' viewpoints converge and diverge.

There is no principle of choreography that was stated unanimously by these five choreographers. The most common principle, that autobiographical material is an important source of inspiration in the creative process, was articulated by four of the artists.

Six principles of choreography were held by the majority of the choreographers: that music inspires choreography; that the prime focus of choreography should be movement exploration; that choreography should suggest a story or theme; that dancers should impact on the choreography; that choreography should show a sense of humor; and that choreography should enlarge the boundaries of what is accepted as "dance."

Four principles of choreography were shared by only two of the choreographers: that choreography should reflect contemporary society; that realistic acting techniques enhance the performance of choreography; that choreography should be serious in tone and profound in content; that choreography should explore established techniques and styles of dance.

Four of the choreographic principles were articulated by a single choreographer. Miller was alone in his belief that

dance should entertain, as was Taliaferro in his belief that drama should not be superimposed on but must be an integral component of the movement design. Pendleton was the most idiosyncratic of the choreographers, voicing principles on the importance of process, media and stagecraft that none of the others mentioned.

The following table shows the extent to which the five choreographers shared basic points of view.

Table 2. Shared principles among the choreographers (Single numbers indicate total number of shared principles. Sequences of numbers list which techniques are shared.)

	Sokolow	Lampert	Taliaferro	Pendleton	Miller
Sokolow	_____	2, 6, 7, 9, 12	1, 2, 11	1, 2, 9, 12	4, 6
Lampert	5	_____	2, 5	2, 5, 9, 10, 12	6, 10
Taliaferro	3	2	_____	1, 2, 5	13
Pendleton	4	5	3	_____	1
Miller	2	2	1	1	_____

The choreographers with the most in common are Sokolow with Lampert, Sokolow with Pendleton, and Lampert with Pendleton. These pairs of artists shared four or five principles, and all three agreed on the importance of autobiographical material, that dancers should impact on their choreography and that choreography should aim to extend traditional concepts of "dance."


The choreographers with the least in common are Miller with the other four, and Lampert with Taliaferro. Miller shared only one principle with Pendleton and Taliaferro, and only two with Lampert and Sokolow. Lampert and Taliaferro also agreed on only two basic ideas about the art.

The choreographers with the most viewpoints on the art are Sokolow and Pendleton, who expressed eight ideas which shape their approach to choreography. Miller expressed the fewest viewpoints (five).

### **III. Techniques of Choreography**


Techniques of choreography are the means by which choreographers put their basic ideas about the art into practice. One or more techniques were used by the choreographers in this study to implement each of the principles of choreography outlined in the previous chapter. Some of the principles lent themselves to very varied techniques and applications; others received almost identical treatment by all the choreographers who expressed them.

The principle that music can directly inspire choreography was implemented in different ways. Sokolow and Taliaferro strove to capture the general qualities of music in their dances. These choreographers chose **to listen to music, to react, and to translate those reactions into movement.** They began work by responding to music with free associations, projections of their imagination, feelings. The function of their choreography was then to make the content of those ideas and feelings visible to audiences. Music served as the impetus for their choreography by suggesting a dramatic framework or mood for their dances to embody or communicate.<sup>1</sup>

Both choreographers went beyond trying to capture the general mood of music in dance. Evidence of a concrete interrelationship between Sokolow's choreography and Ives' music is the  symbol which is used in the Labanotation

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<sup>1</sup>Anna Sokolow, transcript of seminar, "What is Choreography?" at the University of Hawaii (April 14, 1983), pp. 1-4. Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 1685. Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0005.

score of her work.  is glossarized as signaling a "music cue"<sup>2</sup> and it appears in the score when the movement phrasing is affected by changes in the music. (See illustration 1.) Sokolow's establishing music cues insured that Ives' and her phrases would begin concurrently.

The **duration of Sokolow's movements closely matches tempo variations in Ives' music.** In measures 60-66 of "Central Park in the Dark," for example (See illustration 2.), a clear transition is made from sustained to quick movement. The choreography is at this point closely following the music in which "the tempo of the quarter note for the winds, brass, piano, and drum gets gradually faster." In the Labanotation score, "the dance has been laid out with the [musical] measures for those instruments."<sup>3</sup> Movement tempo follows the musical lead throughout the dance.

There are several examples of ways in which Sokolow also **imitated Ives in overall structure.** In "Central Park in the Dark," his **ABA format** is precisely paralleled in her choreography. In "The Unanswered Question," Ives' **use of a recurring, questioning motif** intoned by the trumpet with "the hunt for 'The Invisible Answer' undertaken by the flutes,"<sup>4</sup> is boldly duplicated in Sokolow's use of a questioning hand

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<sup>2</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox (New York: Dance Notation Bureau, 1983), p. vi.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>4</sup>Charles E. Ives, Foreward to "The Unanswered Question," Southern Music Publishing Company, n.p., n.d.

Illustration 1. Music cues in "The Unanswered Question"

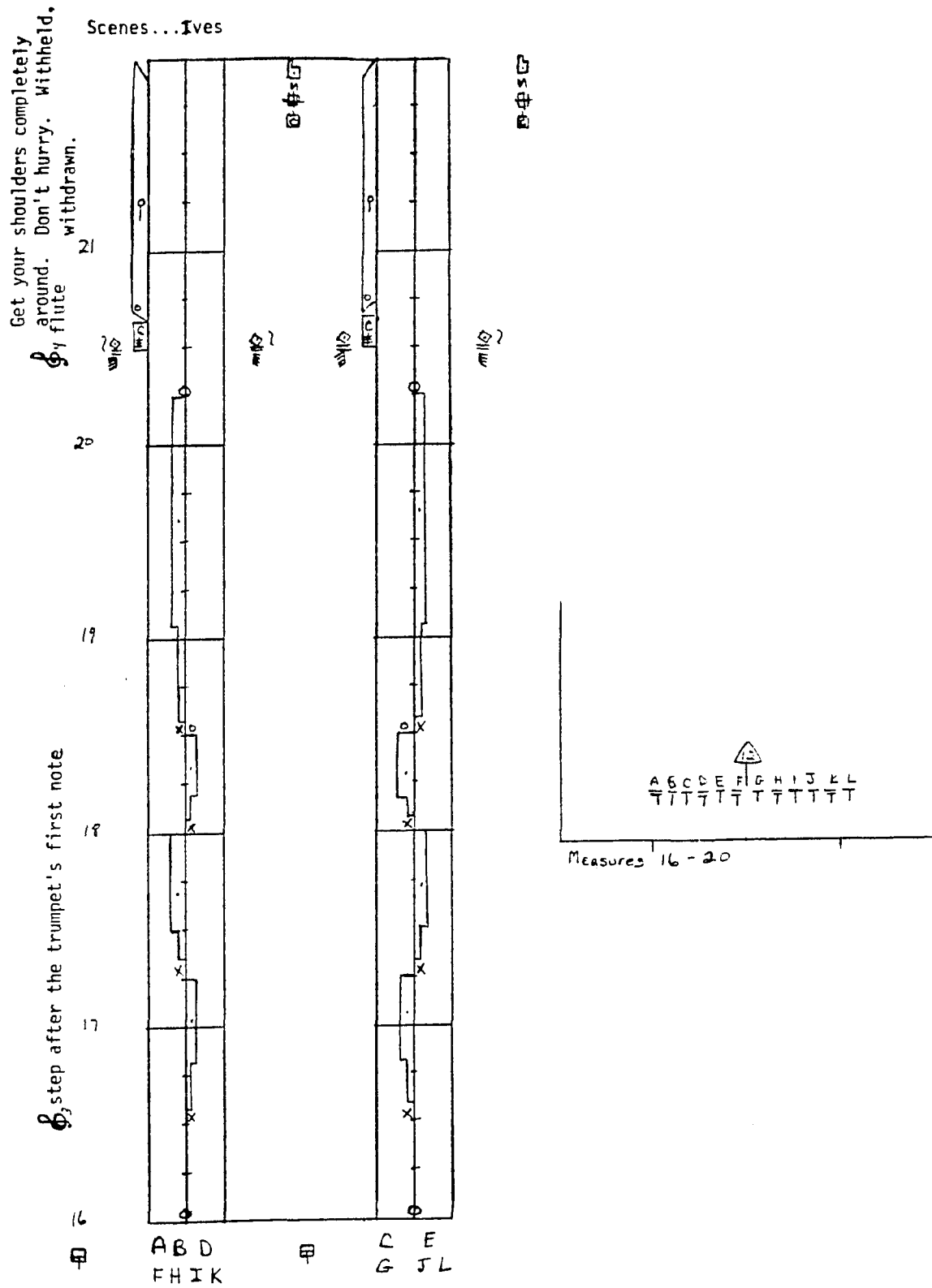
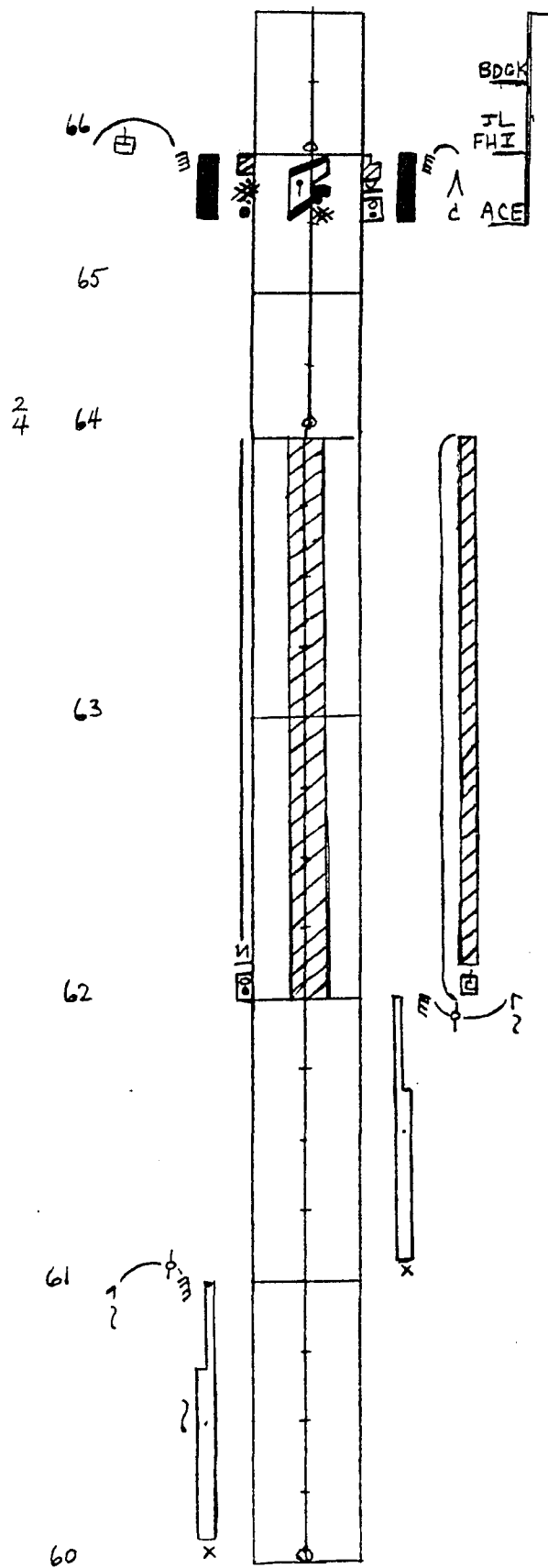


Illustration 2. Transition from sustained to quick movement in "Central Park in the Dark"



gesture and searching gaze.<sup>5</sup> In "Hallowe'en" and "Central Park in the Dark," Ives' uses of accents are replicated in movement. Measures 59-61 of "Hallowe'en" and measures 91-95 of "Central Park in the Dark" (See illustration 3.) show **movement designed in direct accordance with the dynamics and emphases in the music.**

Although Taliaferro did not establish music cues in his dance, he was sensitive to tempo changes in Debussy's music, to which he choreographed responsively quickening or decelerating movement. (See illustration 4.) Taliaferro also used the techniques of imitating music dynamics and accents and of repeating movement material to coincide with musical repeats. These techniques are especially apparent in the closing measures of the First and Third Movements and in the woman's solo in the First Movement, respectively.<sup>6</sup> Debussy's use of motifs was also echoed by Taliaferro, as in, for example, the opening measures of the Second Movement. The "swung, whipped" motif in the movement here corresponds in length and quality to the introductory music motif. The preliminary high notes in the music and subsequent broadening of sound relate very closely to the preliminary head circle and subsequent spread of movement to other body parts in the choreography.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score by Ilene Fox, pp. 96-112.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-19, 36-37 and 83-85.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

Illustration 3. Movement designed in accordance with dynamics and accents in Ives' music

a. Measures 59-61 of "Halloween"

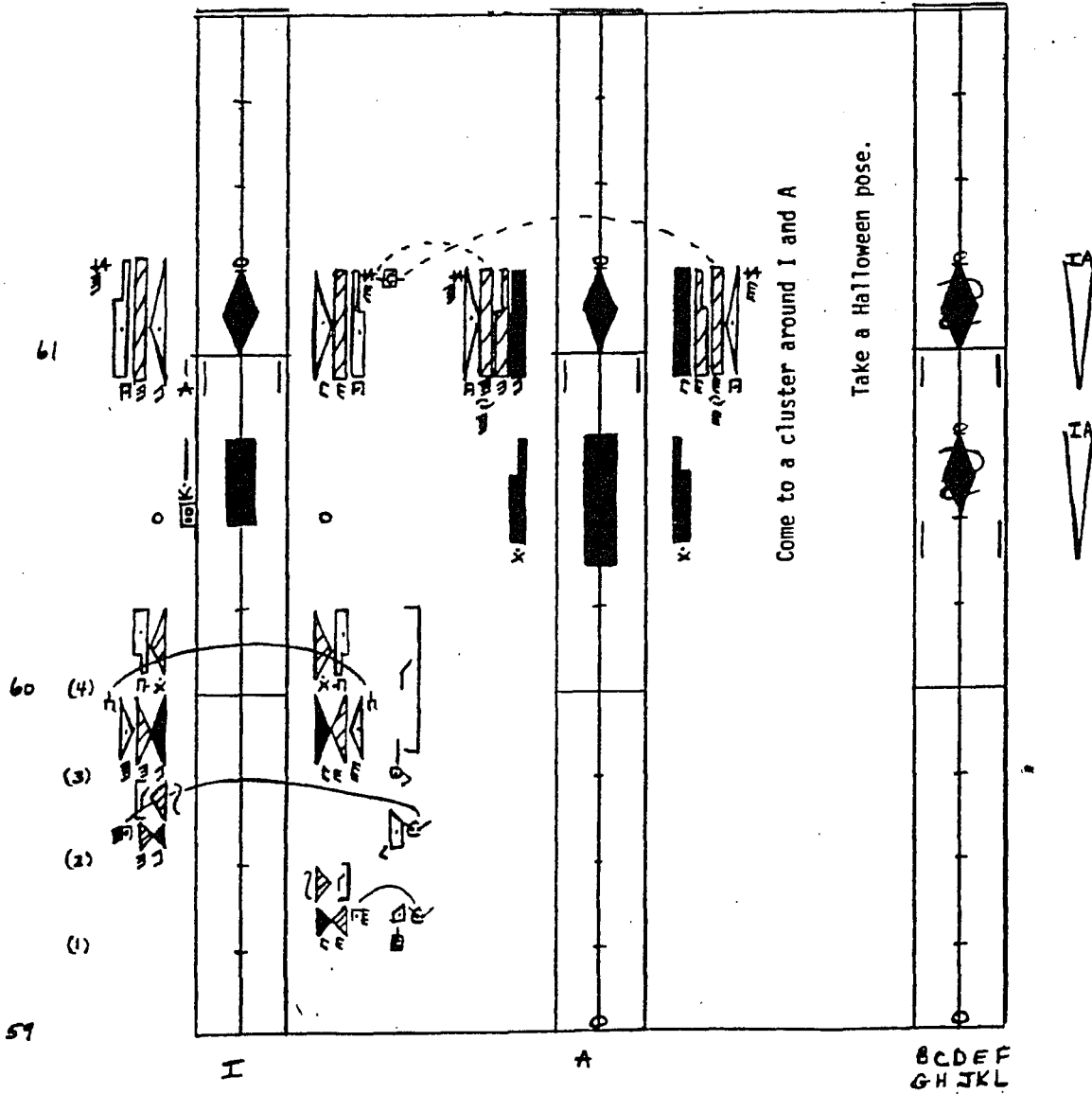


Illustration 3, continued. Movement designed in accordance with dynamics and accents in Ives' music

b. Measures 91-95 of "Central Park in the Dark"

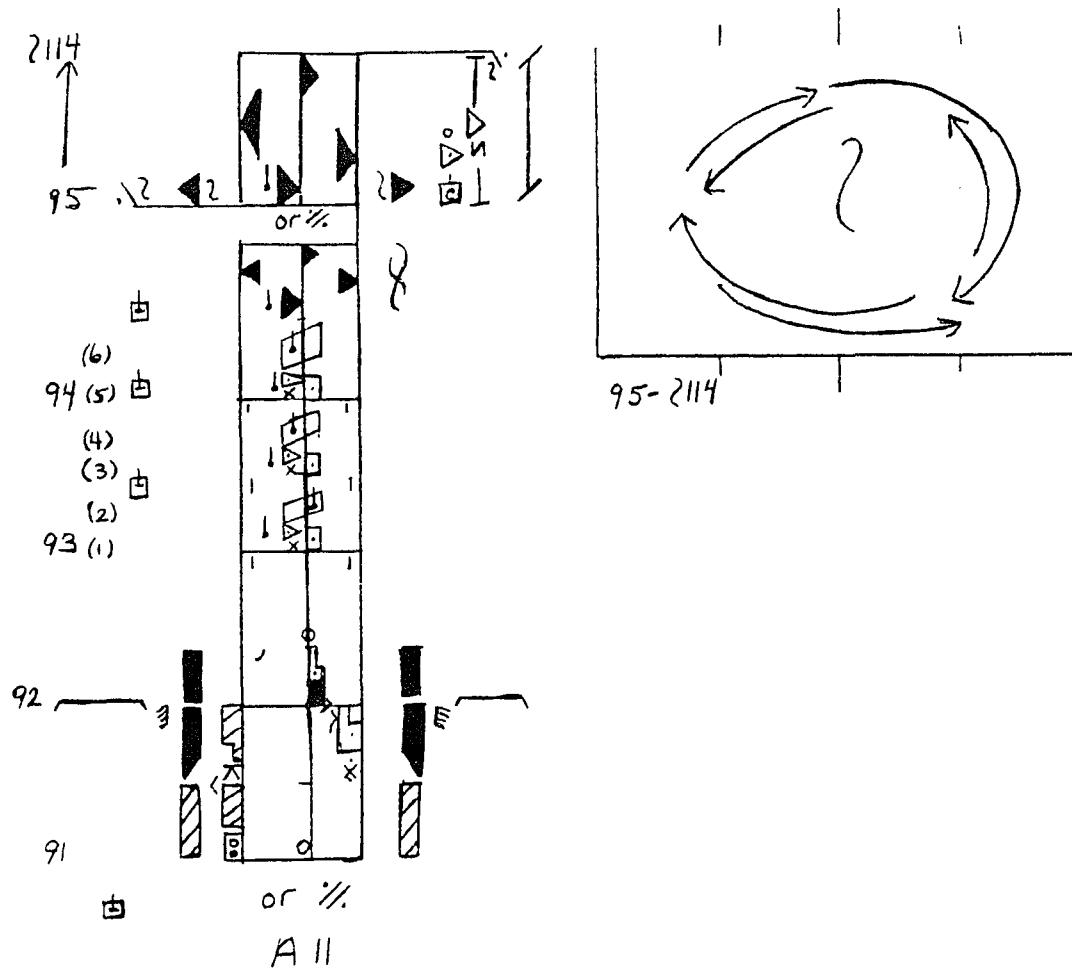
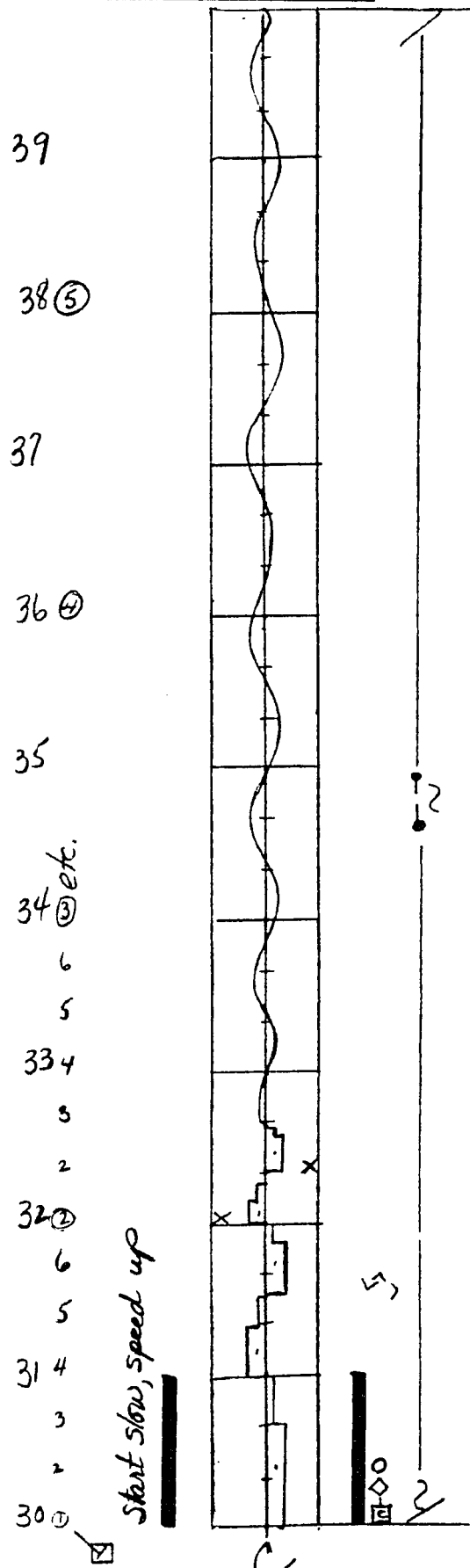


Illustration 4. Quickening movement in Falling  
Off the Back Porch



Pendleton implemented the principle that music can inspire choreography differently, chiefly by **condensing the time lapsed between music listening and movement design** in order to elicit less conscious responses. In improvisation, he asked dancers to enact spontaneously the feelings and ideas an array of musical stimuli sparked. Pendleton did not work deeply with one selection of music, as Sokolow and Taliaferro did. He repeatedly offered new music to dancers. The electric pace of the dancers' thinking as they strove to stay with and "handle" the music was one way Pendleton hoped to provoke the discovery of new movement material. Pendleton used rapidly changing musical contexts to force dancers to suspend planning and thinking, and to move instead from impulse, emotion, in response to rapidly changing states of mind.<sup>8</sup>

The principle that autobiographical material is an important source of choreography resulted in **direct and indirect references to artists' pasts in their work**. Sokolow worked perhaps the most subtly with this principle, by **making dances not about herself, but about people she thought were like herself**. Her choice of Charles Ives was clearly based in part on her empathy for an artist who in his lifetime did not receive the recognition he deserved.<sup>9</sup> In

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<sup>8</sup>University of Hawaii forum, October 29, 1983. Also see "found movements" in sections 3-4 of Children on the Hill 1982, based on improvisations shown on pp.189-193 of this text.

<sup>9</sup>Anna Sokolow, rehearsal comments at the University of Hawaii, April, 1983.

recompense for the neglect of which she too feels a victim, Sokolow honored the composer by choosing to structure her choreography around his music. Sokolow's sympathy for another historical character was responsible for "The Pond, The Cage." Perceptions of parallels in her and Nijinsky's lives perhaps made it easier for Sokolow to devise movement for Nijinsky's character development and exposition. It seems that Sokolow transferred insights and understanding from her own life experiences to the choreographic tributes she paid to Ives and Nijinsky.<sup>10</sup>

Sokolow also worked with biography, including the recapturing in her choreography of photographic images and impressions of Nijinsky as he is generally remembered. Sokolow's preference for realism on stage extended to her use of **historically authentic elements** preserved from Nijinsky's stage career. There are, then, references to Nijinsky's separate set of artistic accomplishments in her dance as well as a focus on a composer's and a dancer's lives which she felt intersected with her own.

That Lampert's dance is autobiographical throughout is suggested in her title, What's Remembered? In the months prior to choreographing the piece, Lampert experienced the dissolution of a marriage of several years. Choreographing What's Remembered? was a coping mechanism Lampert used to reduce the trauma of her separation, by helping her

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<sup>10</sup>Anna Sokolow, interview in New York City, November 14, 1983. Also interview with Jeff Duncan, former Sokolow company member, New York City, March, 1985.

externalize her memories and emotions.<sup>11</sup> Many of the sections of Lampert's dance seem fairly **direct translations of actual memories into dance**,<sup>12</sup> as, for example, the "Drive in the Country." However, since the choreographer wanted dancers to have some freedom in interpreting the dance's story line, she has publicly concealed the extent of her autobiographical associations.

Taliaferro's techniques for incorporating autobiographical material were extensive. As with Lampert, the entire story of his dance was built from specific memories of his past. To a greater degree than Lampert, Taliaferro abstracted from particular people and events, so that **as he drew on actual recollections, he created a dance about a universal human concern.** The porch, the sisters, the man leaving for war, are all aspects of Taliaferro's past that his choreography generalized to apply to any family in any time or place.<sup>13</sup>

Taliaferro had great insight about himself psychologically, and noted instances of autobiographical reference in his dance that were not readily apparent. After he located the family porch offstage, Taliaferro wondered why he was so preoccupied with investigating offstage space. His subsequent realization was that **that** was where his

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<sup>11</sup>Rachel Lampert, lunch conversation at the University of Iowa, April, 1983.

<sup>12</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score by Leslie Rotman, pp. 136-164.

<sup>13</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal (Arizona State University: March, 1983), foot 0555, 1000.

emotional and intellectual energies were concentrated in his life, as he searched for a role in the dance field to replace performance.<sup>14</sup> Taliaferro recognized that one of the ways autobiography entered his choreography was by his projecting psychological concerns and stresses onto the media of space, time, motion and energy.

Lampert engaged in this process of projection more consciously and systematically. With the goal of communicating inner states, she choreographed by searching for appropriate symbols to represent those states.<sup>15</sup> Whether consciously or subconsciously, Lampert and Taliaferro both employed the technique of **generating symbolic representation for active concerns in their lives.**

Taliaferro was also much more concrete in his applications of the autobiographical principle. He expressed his Southern United States heritage by including cakewalks and other regional movement vocabulary in his choreography. Taliaferro drew on **actual movements from a specific geographic area linked to his past.**<sup>16</sup>

Pendleton's techniques for integrating autobiographical material in Children on the Hill included his use of

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<sup>14</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0475.

<sup>15</sup>Videotape 2 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January, 1984) foot 0100. Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?. Labanotation score and introduction by Leslie Rotman, pp. 168-176.

<sup>16</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch. Labanotation score and introduction by Mary Corey, p. 46.

costuming and props which had personal connotations. The character "M" in section three wears the white suit and Panama hat in which Pendleton remembers seeing his father. Also, the movements for this male figure (See pp. 204-207 of this text.) are ones drawn from Pendleton's personal movement vocabulary. They **derive from** Pendleton's **past choreography** in the way that other movements in the dance are both reminiscent and foreshadowings of past and future Pendleton repertoire.<sup>17</sup> Walter Terry and Arlene Croce have pointed out that Anna Sokolow is similarly self-derivative.<sup>18</sup> When past achievements are revived to find a place in new choreography, the artist is clearly drawing on autobiography.

Buzz Miller's principle that dance should entertain dictated five choreographic techniques. The one most universally applied throughout Not for Love Alone was **unison dancing**. Seven of the eight sections of the dance feature it.<sup>19</sup> Unison yields the precise, well-rehearsed look Miller favors. Another technique evident throughout the dance is the **choice of a wide range of sound**. Miller's selection of music by five composers of very different styles and tastes instilled variety and surprise in the dance.

Although Miller was the only choreographer to choose a

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<sup>17</sup>See p. 204 of this text.

<sup>18</sup>Walter Terry, I Was There, pp. 520-521 and Arlene Croce, After-Images, pp. 330, 385.

<sup>19</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone. Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriott. See "Me and My Shadow," "Bacchanale," "Men's Section," "Etude," "Fast Scriabin," "The Stripper," and "Suite for Toy Piano."

wide range of sound to heighten entertainment value, Lampert used the **same technique** to satisfy a **different principle**. For Lampert, a sound potpourri was a means of expanding the definition of what is normally considered "dance." Lampert's choice of sound included monologue, dialogue, pulsing sound, classical music, and an absence of sound--silence. Through this technique, she challenged the traditional concept of dance as movement to music.<sup>20</sup>

Miller and Lampert intersected on another technique that they used for different reasons. That technique was **traditional design of areas of the stage and of patterns of travel on stage**. Both choreographers placed characters of most importance downstage and/or in center stage, and used a variety of directions of stage travel. (See illustration 5.) For Miller, the symmetry of having central characters at center stage, and dancers moving in complex "traffic patterns" provided harmony and diversity in the stage space. The result was visually pleasing and entertaining. For Lampert, the use of downstage and center-stage space for featured characters concentrated audience attention on story unfolding in the choreography, and helped discriminate between more and less important events on stage. Different paths of travel in the stage space helped to distinguish sections of her work that dealt with different remembrances and emotions, and were thus a further device for delineating story.

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<sup>20</sup>See page 71 of this text.

Illustration 5. Uses of stage space by Miller and Lampert

a. Traditional patterns of travel on stage in Not For Love Alone and What's Remembered?

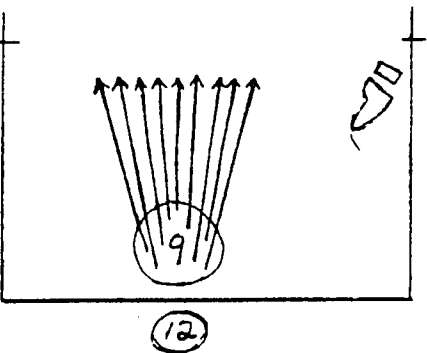
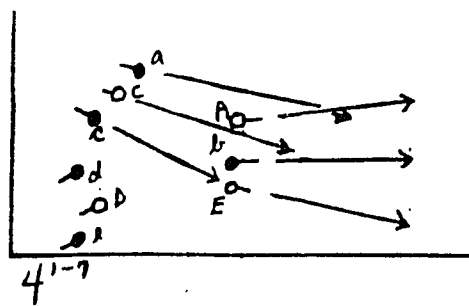
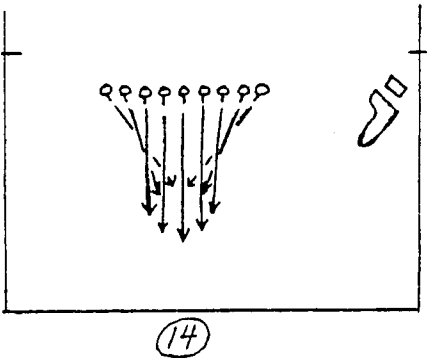
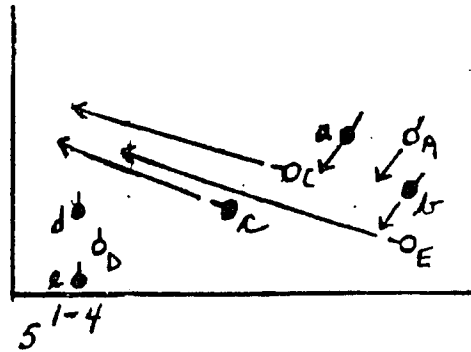
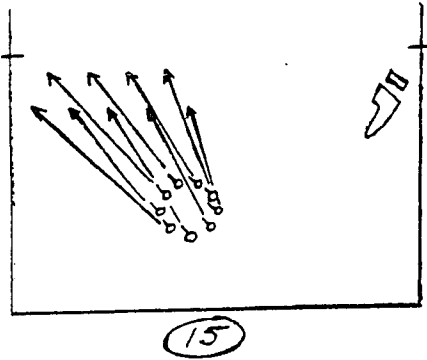
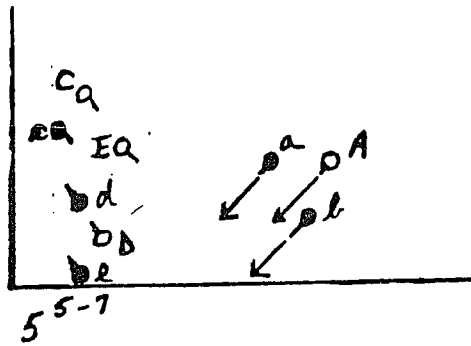
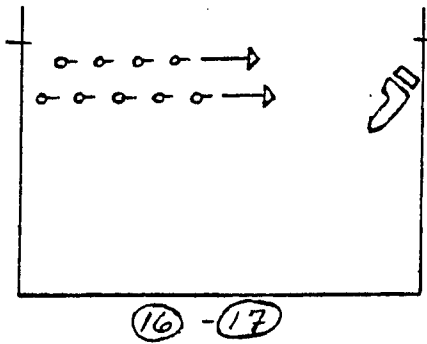
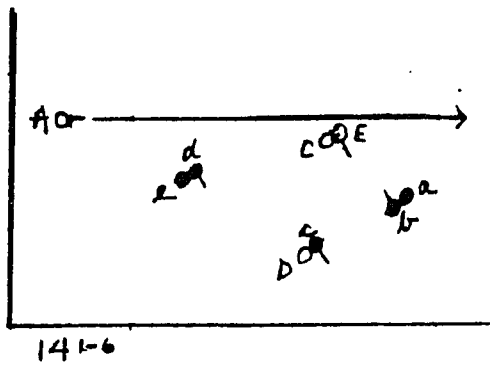
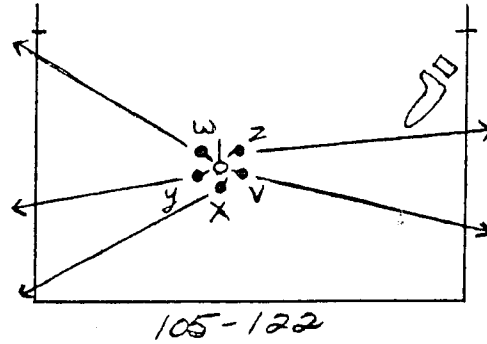


Illustration 5, continued. Uses of stage space by  
Miller and Lampert

- b. Central character at center stage or downstage  
in Not For Love Alone and What's Remembered?



Miller's fourth technique for making choreography entertaining was **virtuosic dancing**. The men's section at the middle of the dance contains some especially effective passages.<sup>21</sup> Once again, Miller was not alone in the implementation of this technique. Taliaferro also used virtuosic dance, but for a different reason. The solo man's movements before he departs from the family involve leaps and landings with full leg extensions.<sup>22</sup> The movements are "virtuosic for a number of reasons. Primarily because it's heroic."<sup>23</sup> It was Taliaferro's principle that any drama in choreography must be inherent in the movement that necessitated virtuosic, heroic dancing for the character preparing to leave for war.

The last of Miller's techniques to be entertaining was to include **a range of emotional expression** in his choreography. Each of the sections of his dance projects a different quality or mood, the extremes of which appear in the aggressive "Men's Section" and the sad, elusive women's "Dream" and "Toy Piano" sections.<sup>24</sup> Again, for alternate reasons, other choreographers adopted this same technique. Sokolow and Lampert both incorporated a spectrum of emotional expression in their work, ranging from explosive extroversion

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<sup>21</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, pp. 36-54.

<sup>22</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey, pp. 40-41.

<sup>23</sup>Videotape 14 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0955.

<sup>24</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, pp. 4-19, 36-54.

to nervousness, anger, serenity, despair.<sup>25</sup> The principles which this technique fulfilled for them were that choreography should involve a story, and that realistic acting techniques should be allied to choreography.

Miller and Sokolow only agreed on one principle of choreography, and they chose different ways of implementing that principle. They agreed that choreography should reflect the concerns of contemporary society. For Miller, a technique for realizing this was to **include "world movements," i.e. movement vocabulary from different cultures, in an American choreography.**<sup>26</sup> In that way, the dance reflected the "melting pot" character of the nation. Another technique Miller used was **trendy costuming.** The men in his dance wore leather jackets, sunglasses, and smoked cigarettes. The women appeared in several guises, including demure pastel dresses, sweatshirts, and gold bras. (See photo appendix.) They represented a fashion barometer of the dance's time.

Sokolow implemented the principle about contemporary society in her own way. One choice she made was to focus on **an American composer, Charles Ives, and American subjects,** namely Halloween and Central Park. She selected an artist, a holiday, and an environment she found quintessentially

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<sup>25</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, compare pp. 6, 24-33,, 57-58, 83-84, 110-112. Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, compare 4 "Q" phrases pp. 3-12, pp. 60, 167, 188-189, 208-210.

<sup>26</sup>See pages 221-222 of this text.

American.

A combination of her beliefs in the seriousness of the choreographer's responsibility and goals, and in the need for choreography to reflect contemporary society led Sokolow to **choose metaphysical content** for the last section of her dance. "The Unanswered Question" presents a subject which concerns everyone, in this society and all others. The theme's presence in the dance reflects that, for many people, religions no longer supply satisfactory answers to the question of existence. The choice of this subject matter was an institution of the principle that choreography should be relevant, and profound.

Because Sokolow's choreography is serious, she must seek devices to focus audience attention. The **periods of silence** preceding "Central Park in the Dark" and both playings of "The Pond" are means of sobering the audience and increasing its attention.

Working with the principle that the prime focus of choreography should be the exploration and manipulation of movement, Sokolow, Taliaferro and Pendleton implemented **non-traditional uses of the stage space**. "The Pond, The Cage" uses space non-traditionally because it hardly uses any at all. Sokolow's technique of confining the male dancer in a pool of light emphasized the vertical possibilities of movement and the drama of robbing a dancer of space. (See illustration 6a.) Taliaferro's orientation of the majority of his choreography along a stage diagonal, with offstage space given great importance and focus, is another result of

Illustration 6a. Starting position for "The Pond, The Cage" with dancer in a pool of light

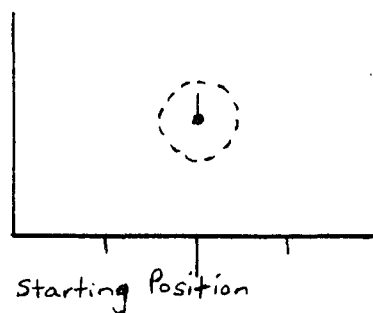
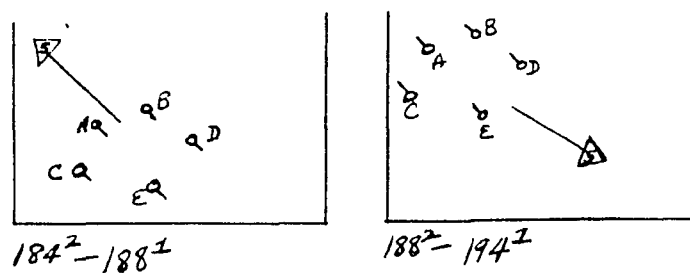


Illustration 6b. Sample floor plans showing stage - diagonal orientation of Falling Off the Back Porch



this technique. (See illustration 6b.) Pendleton's choreography uses this technique most frequently. In section one, a black traveler curtain restricts the dancers' movements to the extreme downstage area. In section two, the dancers lie on the floor in the extreme upstage area. Section three begins with nine hard-edged pools of light scattered over a dark stage, before switching to one central pool which captures only some of the dancers' movements. In section four in the 1982 version, two characters at opposite corners of the stage hold a movement conversation across a barrier of unlit space.<sup>27</sup> The efforts of these three choreographers are all aimed at exploring the effect of

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<sup>27</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, pp. 86-96.

spatial restrictions on movement design.

Lampert used **recognized movement manipulation techniques** in her exploration of movement possibilities. These techniques included **fragmentation** of movement combinations and their **recombination** in new orders; **interruption** of movement phrases to introduce pauses or foreign movement material; the use of **different lengths of the same phrase**, involving repetitions of counts 1-4, 1-6, 1-8, etc.; **changes in tempo and dynamic** in the same movement; use of **canon** (staggered beginnings) and **cross-phrasing** (using dance phrases of different length than the music phrases); **changing stage facings** for a repeated movement phrase; **reversing a movement phrase** from one side of the body to the other; use of **retrograde** (performing a phrase starting at the end and progressing toward the beginning); **re-combining movement and sound selections**; **changing the personnel** involved in a movement phrase; **foreshadowing and recapitulating** movement material.<sup>28</sup> These techniques have become well-known in post-modern dance as methods of modeling movement without recourse to story, emotion, or musical stimulus. Although Lampert used these techniques fully, she combined her enthusiasm for movement manipulation with a commitment to dance allied to story and acting. One of Taliaferro's techniques for

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<sup>28</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman. See for examples: for fragmentation, p. 207; for re-combination, pp. 190-191; for interruption and different lengths of the same phrase, p. 167; for changing stage facings and reversing a movement phrase, p. 40; for retrograde, p. 161; for re-combining movement and sound selections, p. 231; for changing the personnel, pp. 169, 172; for foreshadowing, pp. 150, 168; for recapitulation, pp. 4, 231.

exploring the medium of movement was to work with a high level of detail, probing the potential of smaller parts of the body often neglected by Western dance artists. Taliaferro worked with hands and fingers, the head, the shoulders, the elbows.<sup>29</sup>

Another technique used by Taliaferro and shared by Lampert and Pendleton was to have **multiple things ongoing onstage at the same time**. The juxtaposition of different movement phrases highlighted the similarities and contrasts between them. The technique allowed the choreographers to plan a total landscape of dance, to explore a more complex movement aesthetic than that allied to unison dance.<sup>30</sup>

Taliaferro's final technique for exploring movement was a very personal one. He stopped himself in mid-movement to ask, "What happens if I go the wrong way?"<sup>31</sup> Taliaferro **analyzed the requirements of movements and experimented with contradicting them**. Through this technique, he also satisfied his principle that drama and conflict be inherent in movement, not superimposed. By denying the natural requirements of movements, "the effort needed to do it produces the tension in the body that [he needed]

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<sup>29</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey. See, for example, the opening measures of the First Movement, pp. 1-4.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., examples on pp. 10 and 25. Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, examples in "Dream" section. Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, examples in section 3.

<sup>31</sup>Videotape 1 of Taliaferro rehearsal, foot 0012, 0070.

dramatically. . . ."32

Taliaferro's **choice of a serious theme** for Falling off the Back Porch parallels Sokolow's selection of the metaphysical question for her choreography to music by Charles Ives. War, separation, death<sup>33</sup> are subjects as equally universal as the meaning of life, and of the utmost seriousness. Taliaferro, like Sokolow, choreographed a characteristic, representative work for this study. His career, like Sokolow's, has involved consistently serious themes for choreography.

The principle that choreography should contain a story or theme was implemented in several ways. One was Sokolow's **use of gestural movements**, chosen because of their recognizability, legibility, communicability. Sokolow tried to avoid clichéd gestures, which she felt would detract from the seriousness of her work's tone. She sought and devised movements whose meaning would be unmistakable, without being mundane. (See illustration 7.) Lampert also used gestural movement in What's Remembered?, one fine example of which is shown in illustration 7.

Another of Lampert's techniques for instilling story in movement was to have her **dancers talk through movement sequences** as they performed them, articulating their reasons for doing specific acts and describing the general progress

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey, p. iv.

Illustration 7a. Final gestural movement in  
 "The Unanswered Question"

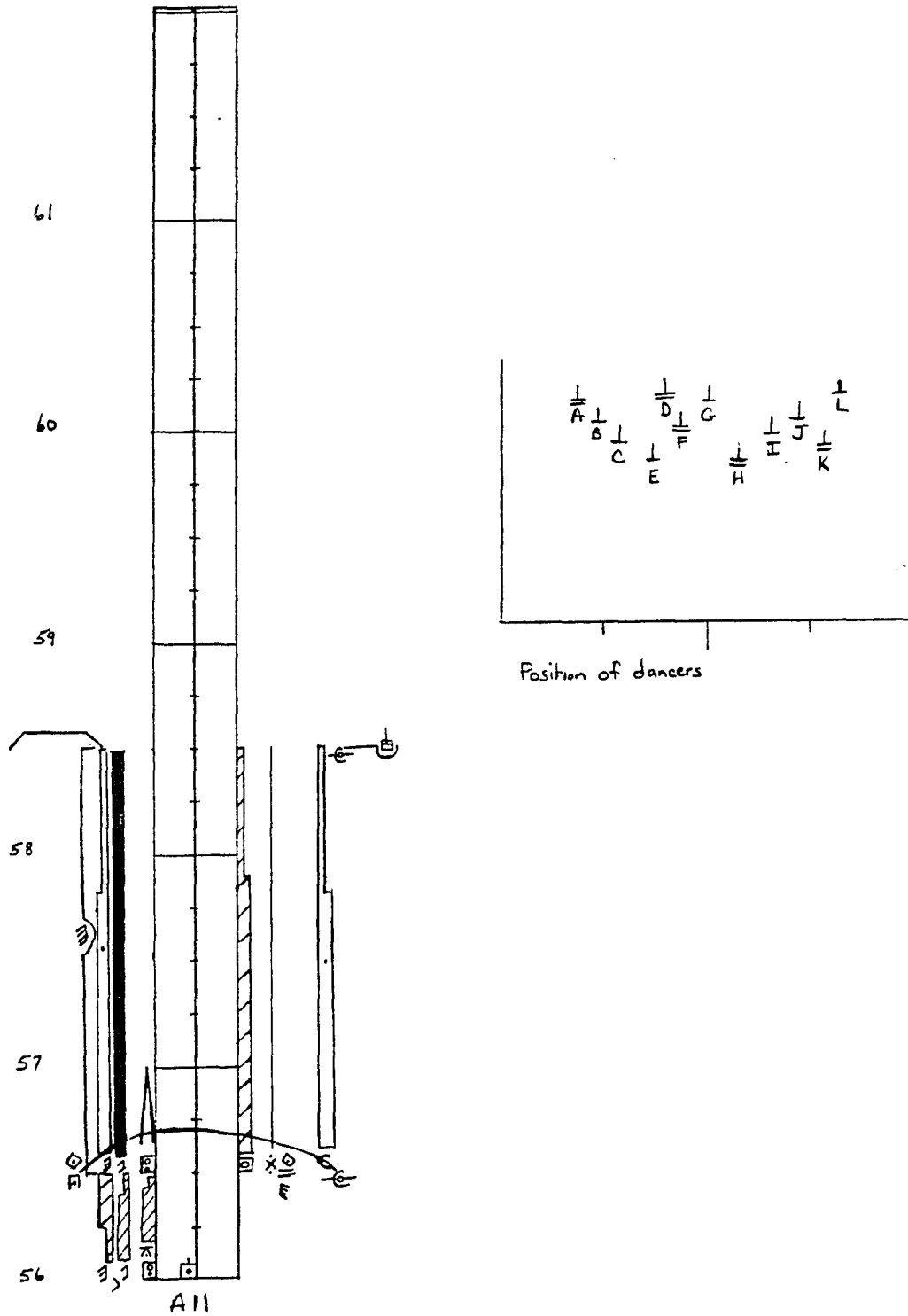
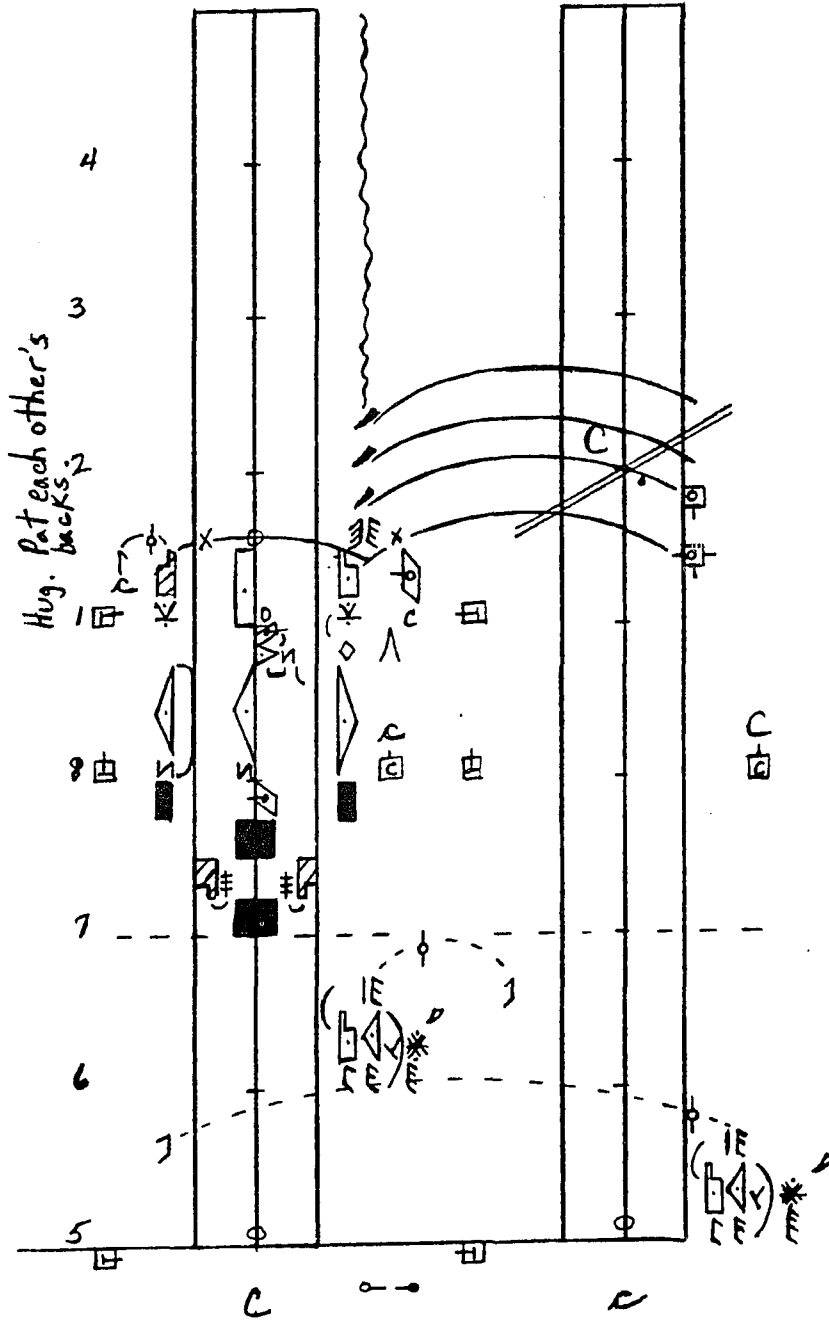


Illustration 7b. Threatening fists and placating pats on the back in What's Remembered?



of events. This instilled a strong sense of purpose in the performers, and immersed them in their activities. The dancers were encouraged to shape the story of What's Remembered? so that it made sense to them, but they were drilled to recognize that their roles were as communicators.<sup>34</sup>

Sokolow's and Taliaferro's choreography maintained **linear progress through story lines** for greater clarity. In Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, linear progression was used within the section of the dance most tied to story, "The Unanswered Question" and, viewed as a whole, the four sections are arranged in a sequence of developing mystery and fear. Falling Off the Back Porch maintains linear development within and between the First, Second, and Third Movements.<sup>35</sup> Lampert and Miller opted for **episodic, non-linear structures** for two different reasons: Miller because he preferred thematic rather than story - bound dance, and Lampert because a stream of memories could be more truly represented in a non-linear framework.<sup>36</sup>

Lampert and Sokolow implemented **training for actors** to heighten the legibility and realism of their choreography.

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<sup>34</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, p. xv.

<sup>35</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. iv. Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey, p. iv.

<sup>36</sup>See pp. 69 and 224 of this text

Lampert used theatre games<sup>37</sup> and Sokolow lectured on Stanislavski. This technique of including acting in the dancer's training was to satisfy their shared principle that realistic acting can enhance and should be allied to choreography.

Sokolow used another device to further realistic acting, namely the **elimination of costumes** in "The Unanswered Question." Performers wore their own clothing and dressed their hair as they were accustomed to in daily life. This helped them "be themselves" on stage.<sup>38</sup> Lampert clarified the importance of dramatic realism in her work by adopting the technique of **"acting timing" to replace dance counts**. In some sections of What's Remembered?, precedence was given to the timing needs of the developing dramatic situation, and the pace of the movement flow was left flexible to accommodate those needs.<sup>39</sup>

The principle that performers should be permitted an impact on choreography had three proponents: Sokolow, Lampert, and Pendleton. All of the choreographers used **improvisation** to some extent to achieve this goal. Sokolow's techniques of improvisation were the most narrow. Performers

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<sup>37</sup>A selection of these games were Labanotated by Professor Odette Blum of Ohio State University. Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman. See "Introduction."

<sup>38</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. vii.

<sup>39</sup> See p. 94 of this text.

were allowed to affect only certain sections of Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives, namely, "Hallowe'en" and "Central Park in the Dark." The sections of the dance in which the choreographer had the most personal investment, "The Pond, The Cage," and "The Unanswered Question," were choreographed fully by herself. In addition to **restricting improvisation to certain sections of the dance**, Sokolow provided **specific frameworks within which the improvisations were to take place**. The choreographer offered movement motifs with which dancers could experiment, choices of counts on which movements could occur, verbal instructions about the motivation for improvised segments and the image the movements should create.<sup>40</sup>

Pendleton made the widest use of improvisation. In his own words, "one way of finding material [he had was] not to go in with any specific idea but to set up a kind of force-field in the studio and to involve the dancers in the very process and very ritual of what's being done. . . ."41 Pendleton supplied **few or no restrictions on what the dancers should aim for or try**, although he edited their results to keep only what he considered their best and most original movement ideas. Pendleton's technique of improvisation was

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<sup>40</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox. For movement motifs, see pp. 2, 6, 15, 17, 21; for choices of counts, see pp. 5, 24a; for verbal instructions, see pp. 52-53.

<sup>41</sup>Moses Pendleton, public forum at University of Hawaii, October 29, 1983.

also a manifestation of his interest in process beyond product.

Lampert used both focused and free techniques of improvisation. The Labanotation score of her choreography is a study of movement that ranges from that largely at the disposal of the performer, to movement improvised within a framework of verbal instructions, to movement that is choreographed but requires embellishment, to movement that is fully choreographed and must be performed "as is."<sup>42</sup>

All three of the choreographers who used improvisation also permitted **different versions of the same movement phrases for dancers with different abilities**. Although all five choreographers in this study adapted some aspect of their choreography to individual dancers, Sokolow, Lampert and Pendleton aggressively sought to tailor movement to particular performers and **did not have an ideal conception of how any one movement should look**. Dancers' personalities and peculiarities took precedence over movement material.<sup>43</sup>

Techniques for bringing humor into choreography were plentiful and paralleled standard comic devices from the theatre. **Sight gags** included Sokolow's masks and Pendleton's oversized props and seemingly undersized performers in large

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<sup>42</sup>Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman. For movement at the disposal of the performer, see p. 167; for movement improvised within a framework, see pp. 207-210; for movement requiring embellishment, see "U" phrase, p. 30; for fully choreographed movement, see pp. 205-206.

<sup>43</sup>See pp. 22-23 and 72-73 of this text. See Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, p. 13.

costumes.<sup>44</sup> **Caricature** was used by Miller to reduce his men to types and to highlight foibles of women and the entertainment industry, and by Lampert in her pantomime of familiar "fighting couple" behavior.<sup>45</sup> **Farcical behavior** was another Miller device to get a laugh, as with his tap-dancing pianist.<sup>46</sup> Sokolow's wildly applauding Hallowe'en characters were equally farcical. Sokolow was the only choreographer who introduced humor without it being a principle of hers that dance should show a sense of humor. The funny masks in "Hallowe'en" were in acknowledgement of the holiday, but perhaps most importantly, served to satisfy initially audience expectations of dance as entertainment and to conceal the dancers' identities from view.<sup>47</sup>

Practical applications of the principle that choreography should enlarge the boundaries of "dance" numbered nine, and Pendleton employed all of them. No other choreographer had as many techniques for putting this principle into action.

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<sup>44</sup>Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. 2. Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill (1982), Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, pp. 87-88.

<sup>45</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, "Man's Section" and "Etude." Rachel Lampert, What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, p. 13.

<sup>46</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, p. 2-3; Anna Sokolow, Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. 21.

<sup>47</sup>See p. 64 of this text.

The first of these techniques was the elimination of the "trained dancer" look. Pendleton was joined in this technique by Sokolow and Lampert. The technique was primarily one of editing, of removing movements and performances that appeared consciously stylized. For Sokolow and Lampert, this technique also fulfilled their principle that there be more realism in dance performance.<sup>48</sup> A lack of traditional movement stylization is visible throughout the Labanotation score of Pendleton's work, in the general movement descriptions, sparsity of symbols, and in the plentiful word notes to describe ideas rather than specify technical requirements for movements.<sup>49</sup>

Pendleton was alone in using **sports movements** to augment dance vocabulary. Cross-country ski strokes and golfing appear in Children on the Hill.<sup>50</sup> He was also the only choreographer to use **costuming to re-shape the body**. Differently shaped organisms move in different ways, and Pendleton's "grub" demonstrated how new kinds of movements could be derived from the needs and abilities of an unusually-formed body.<sup>51</sup> Pendleton's shadow projections in

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<sup>48</sup>Videotape 1 of Sokolow rehearsal (The City College of New York: November, 1983), foot 0436, 0925, and 0964. Videotape 1 of Lampert rehearsal (Ohio State University: January, 1984), foot 1057.

<sup>49</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, sections 1-4.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 27, 79-83.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 22-23.

section 2, creating strange shapes and altering the scale of the human body, were another of his devices for stretching the frontiers of "dance."

Pendleton and Miller used **props to make new kinds of movements possible**. Examples of this were Pendleton's "Casper" rope that enabled a dancer to walk forward tilted at 45°, Pendleton's cane that made floating and diving, circular runs possible, and Miller's chairs on which the women were supported in "Me and My Shadow."<sup>52</sup>

Further enlarging the boundaries of "dance," Pendleton included **objects as movers and choreographed motion for non-human participants in the dance**. These objects were the stage curtains, a long cord ("Casper" wound), a white wall of cloth ("Casper" unwound), flashlights and fluro-luminescent tubes, "magic dust," cigarette smoke, a levitating hat.<sup>53</sup>

Three choreographers used the technique of **placing movements from daily life in choreography**. Pendleton's "man in the white suit" consulted his watch, Lampert's dancers kept pointing to the distance, Sokolow's dancers saluted the flag and stared. All of these movements express an open-

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 4 ff. and pp. 195-6 of this text. Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, "Me and My Shadow" section, pp. 20-29.

<sup>53</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, pp. 1, 4, 31, 37, 64, 90, 94, and 96.

mindfulness about where "dance" begins and ends.<sup>54</sup>

The last two techniques for expanding traditional notions of dance were the **anti-finale** and **minimalism**. Pendleton and Sokolow both used these techniques. Pendleton's choreography "goes up in smoke" with one person alone, upstage; Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives ends with all the performers lying on the floor as though in their graves, hands on their heads in despair.<sup>55</sup> The closing moments of these choreographies represent the antithesis of the finale. The minimalist challenge to established dance forms is a slowing of pace, a condensation of movement so that small actions receive inordinate attention and acquire significance unproportionate to their scale. The initial cross of the stage by the "man in the white suit" and the entire "The Pond, The Cage" section are products of minimalist movement design.

In order to explore established techniques and styles of dance, to affirm their continuing creative potential, Miller worked with **jazz dance vocabulary** and Taliaferro with **ideas from Doris Humphrey and Jose Limón**. Many of the movements in Miller's choreography belong to mainstream American jazz dance; his choreographic originality resides in his

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 54. Rachel Lampert What's Remembered?, Labanotation score and Introduction by Leslie Rotman, pp. 42-50. Anna Sokolow, Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. 16 and p. 102.

<sup>55</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill, Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, p. 96. Anna Sokolow, Scenes from the Music of Charles Ives, Labanotation score and Introduction by Ilene Fox, p. 112.

arrangements of those movements.<sup>56</sup> Taliaferro included many Humphrey-Limón concepts in his choreography, to the extent that Falling Off the Back Porch can serve as one measure of the creative potential remaining within this fundamental modern dance technique.<sup>57</sup> "Rebound," "fall and recovery," "suspension," "continuous movement of the center of weight," "deflation," "impulse," "body as orchestra," "drama inherent in movement," are all elements of Humphrey-Limón dance training that are implemented by Taliaferro in an effort to achieve new results with tested means.<sup>58</sup>

Pendleton explored his principle that choreography should incorporate the latest electronic technology and stagecraft via two techniques. One involved **direct use of a piece of equipment**, the computerized light board at the City College of New York. The speed and number of lighting changes in section four of the 1982 version of Children on the Hill were made possible by that board, and Pendleton exploited its capabilities. The shadowplay Pendleton used in

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<sup>56</sup>Buzz Miller, Not For Love Alone, Labanotation score and Introduction by Jane Marriett, "Men's Section" contains examples of mainstream movements (p. 45, m. 11 and page 49, measure 5) and original arrangements (for instance, p. 51, measures 11-12 and p. 40-41, measures 13-16.)

<sup>57</sup>See pp. 126-134 of this text and Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey, p. viii.

<sup>58</sup>Clay Taliaferro, Falling Off the Back Porch, Labanotation score and Introduction by Mary Corey. For rebound, see p. 24; for fall and recovery, see p. 43, measures 28-9; for suspension, see p. 8, measure 42; p. 18, measure 98; p. 17, measures 96-7; for continuous movement of center of weight and deflation, see p. 2 for D; for impulse, see pp. 36-7; for drama in movement, see p. 58.

section two was another choreographic response to available technical means.<sup>59</sup>

The second technique was to find dance equivalents for techniques current in film and video. There are, as Pendleton put it, "cine-dance" elements in Children on the Hill. The stop-action in the central pools of light in section three, the dissolves as the white wall turns to shadow-play in section two, the slow-motion movements of the "grub" in section four, are all dance-cinema equivalents Pendleton designed to integrate or approximate media technology in choreography.<sup>60</sup>

The techniques of choreography operative among these five choreographers in 1983, then, were:

1. Listen to music, react, translate reactions into movement (S, T)
2. Establish cue points at which music and movement clearly correspond (S)
3. Match the speed of movements to music tempo (S, T)
4. Imitate overall compositional format of the music (ex. ABA) (S, T)
5. Imitate recurring motifs in the music (S, T)
6. Follow dynamics and accents in the music (S, T)
7. Improvise to music to suspend planning and thinking (P)
8. Choreograph about people like yourself (S)

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<sup>59</sup>Moses Pendleton, Children on the Hill (1982), Labanotation score and Introduction by Terri Richards, lighting notes by John Job appended to Introduction.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 33-34, 71-72.

9. Make direct translations of memories into dance "scenes" (L)
10. Generalize from memories to find universal themes (T)
11. Generate symbolic representation for active concerns in your life (T, L)
12. Incorporate movements from a geographic area linked to your past (T)
13. Include family relics as costumes and props (P)
14. Incorporate movements from previous choreography in new work (P, S)
15. Use unison dancing (M)
16. Choose a wide range of sound accompaniment (M, L)
17. Use stage space traditionally: designate downstage and center areas as more important, and devise many patterns of travel (M, L)
18. Include virtuosic dancing (M)
19. Include a range of emotional expression (M, L, S)
20. Bring movements from other cultures into the "melting pot" of American choreography (M)
21. Use trendy costuming (M)
22. Focus on American subjects, artists (S)
23. Use serious themes, such as metaphysical themes and themes of war (S, T)
24. Use periods of silence (S)
25. Design choreography to use space non-traditionally (S, T, P)
26. Fragment and re-combine movement combinations (L)
27. Interrupt movement phrases with pauses or with foreign movement material (L)
28. Repeat different lengths of the same phrase (L)
29. Use canon (L, S, T, P)
30. Use cross-phrasing (L)
31. Change stage facings for a repeated phrase (L)

32. Reverse a movement phrase (L, M)
33. Apply retrograde (L)
34. Re-combine music and movement phrases (L)
35. Change the personnel involved in a movement phrase (L, T)
36. Work with a high level of detail (T)
37. Have multiple things going on onstage at the same time (P, T, L)
38. Experiment with contradicting the normal physical progress and results of movements (T)
39. Use gestural movement (S, L)
40. Have dancers talk as they perform movement (L)
41. Maintain linear development of story line or theme (S, T)
42. Use episodic, non-linear structure (L, M, P)
43. Include historically authentic elements (S)
44. Train dancers in acting techniques (S, L)
45. Eliminate costuming (S)
46. Use acting timing to determine movement timing (L)
47. Use limited improvisation, within frameworks (S, L)
48. Use improvisation widely and edit the results (L, P)
49. Choreograph different versions of the same movement phrase for dancers of different abilities (S, L, P)
50. Use sight gags (M, S, P)
51. Incorporate caricature (M, L)
52. Include farcical behavior (M, P, S)
53. Eliminate "trained dancer" look (S, L, P)
54. Use sports movements (P)
55. Use costuming to re-shape the body and suggest new movement possibilities (P)
56. Use props to make new movements possible (P, M)

57. Include motion by inanimate objects (P)
58. Incorporate movements from daily life (P, L, S)
59. Create an anti-finale (P, S)
60. Adopt minimalist pace and spare aesthetic (P, S)
61. Use shadow projections to create strange shapes and alter scale (P)
62. Make new arrangements of jazz dance vocabulary (M)
63. Borrow Humphrey-Limón ideas (T)
64. Exploit lighting technology (P)
65. Find dance equivalents for techniques in film and video (P)

The following tables show the number of techniques each choreographer used, and the number of techniques that were applied to each principle of choreography.

Table 3. Distribution of techniques of choreography among the five choreographers

Choreographers	Total techniques	Which techniques?
Sokolow	27	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 14, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 39, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 58, 59, 60
Lampert	27	9, 11, 16, 17, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 53, 58
Taliaferro	17	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 23, 25, 29, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 63
Pendleton	22	7, 13, 14, 25, 29, 37, 42, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65
Miller	14	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 42, 50, 51, 52, 56, 62

Table 4. Distribution of techniques among principles of choreography

Principles	Total Techniques	Which techniques
Music inspires choreography	7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Autobiography an important source	7	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
Dance should be entertaining	5	15, 16, 17, 18, 19
Choreography should reflect contemporary society	4	20, 21, 22, 23
Focus should be movement exploration	14	25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38
Choreography should suggest a story or theme	5	17, 39, 40, 41, 42
Realistic acting adds to choreography	5	19, 43, 44, 45, 46
Drama must be inherent in movement	2	18, 63
Dancers should impact on choreography	3	47, 48, 49
Choreography should show a sense of humor	3	50, 51, 52
Choreography should be serious, profound	2	23, 24
Choreography should expand boundaries of "dance"	10	16, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61
Choreography should explore established techniques and styles of movement	2	62, 63
Process as important as product	1	48
Choreography should explore latest technology	2	64, 65

The choreographers with the most techniques (more than 20) were Sokolow, Lampert, and Pendleton. Those with the fewest were Taliaferro (17) and Miller (14).

The principles to which the most techniques were applied (7-14) were: that the prime focus of choreography should be movement exploration and manipulation; that choreography should expand the boundaries of dance; that music can directly inspire choreography; and that autobiography is an important source of material for choreography. These were the principles put into practice most commonly by this group of artists.

The principles to which the fewest techniques (1-3) were applied were: that process is as important as product; that choreography should be serious, profound; that choreography should explore established techniques and styles of movement; that choreography should explore multi-media and the latest stage technology; that choreography should show a sense of humor; and that dancers should impact on choreography. These principles were put into practice least commonly by this group of artists.

Table 5 shows how many and which techniques of choreography were shared by these choreographers.

Table 5. Shared techniques of choreography among the five choreographers (**Single numbers** indicate **total number of shared techniques**. **Sequences of numbers** list which techniques are shared.)

	Sokolow	Lampert	Taliaferro	Pendleton	Miller
Sokolow	—	19, 29, 39, 44, 47, 49, 53, 58	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 23, 25, 29, 41	14, 25, 29, 49, 50, 52, 53, 58, 59, 60	19, 50, 52
Lampert	8	—	11, 29, 35, 37	29, 37, 42, 48, 49, 53, 58	16, 17, 19 32, 42, 51
Taliaferro	9	4	—	25, 29, 37	N/A
Pendleton	10	7	3	—	42, 50, 52, 56
Miller	3	6	0	4	—

The choreographers who shared the most techniques (8-10) were Sokolow and Pendleton, Sokolow and Taliaferro, and Sokolow and Lampert. The choreographers who shared the fewest techniques (0-3) were Miller and Taliaferro, Miller and Sokolow, and Pendleton and Taliaferro.

All of the choreographers used techniques unique to themselves within this study. Table 6 shows the total number and identities of these techniques.

Table 6. Techniques used by a single choreographer

	How many unique techniques	Which techniques were unique?
<b>Sokolow</b>	6	2, 8, 22, 24, 43, 45
<b>Lampert</b>	10	9, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 40, 46
<b>Taliaferro</b>	5	10, 12, 36, 38, 63
<b>Pendleton</b>	8	7, 13, 54, 55, 57 61, 64, 65
<b>Miller</b>	5	15, 18, 20, 21, 62

Lampert, Pendleton and Sokolow chose the most unique means of applying their ideas (more than 5 means). Taliaferro and Miller showed the fewest unique means of applying their ideas (5 or fewer).

#### **IV. Conclusion**

This chapter will summarize the results of the study of the five choreographers, discuss the applications of data on principles and techniques of choreography, and suggest further research directions.

Limited as the study is to five choreographers, the study does not conclude that the principles and techniques stated here are a definitive set. In fact, the list might very well be altered if a larger or different sampling of choreographers were used. The importance of the study, however, lies not only in what was discovered about the five choreographers and in the fresh use of notation and videotape as added tools of research, but in this first attempt to establish a modus operandi to be used in discovering principles and techniques of choreographic work.

The distribution of principles and techniques among the five choreographers tallied proportionately: those with more principles implemented them with a wider range of techniques; and choreographers with fewer principles used fewer techniques. In no case did a choreographer have many principles and proportionately few techniques, or vice versa, although these circumstances could certainly arise in a broader sample of artists. In this study, however, Pendleton ranked lowest in the ratio of techniques to ideas. Pendleton feels this is characteristic; he cheerfully acknowledges that he generally has more ideas than the means to carry them out.<sup>1</sup> (See Table 7.)

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<sup>1</sup>Conversation with Moses Pendleton in New York City, December, 1984.

Table 7. Distribution of principles and techniques among the five choreographers

	Number of Principles	Number of Techniques
Sokolow	8	27
Lampert	7	27
Taliaferro	6	17
Pendleton	8	22
Miller	5	14

Table 8 shows the number of principles and techniques these choreographers had in common.

Table 8. Number of shared principles and techniques among the five choreographers

Choreographers	Shared Principles	Shared Techniques
Sokolow and Lampert	5	8
Sokolow and Taliaferro	3	9
Sokolow and Pendleton	4	10
Sokolow and Miller	2	3
Lampert and Taliaferro	2	4
Lampert and Pendleton	5	7
Lampert and Miller	2	6
Taliaferro and Pendleton	3	3
Taliaferro and Miller	1	0
Pendleton and Miller	1	4

Some of the choreographers clearly had more in common in their basic ideas about dance than in their techniques of choreography, as is highlighted in Table 9.

Table 9. Choreographers with substantially more in common in principles than in techniques

Choreographers	% of Principles Shared	% of Techniques Shared
Sokolow and Lampert	33%	12%
Lampert and Pendleton	33%	11%
Taliaferro and Pendleton	20%	4.5%

Some of the choreographers had high ratios of shared techniques to shared ideas, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Choreographers with high ratios of shared techniques to shared ideas

Choreographers	Ratio of shared techniques to shared ideas
Sokolow and Taliaferro	9 to 3
Sokolow and Pendleton	10 to 4
Lampert and Miller	6 to 2
Pendleton and Miller	4 to 1

The principles and techniques operative among the majority of these choreographers are shown in Table 11, representing a "slice" of dance history from 1983.

Table 11. Principles and techniques operative among the majority of the five choreographers

Most active principles	Most applied techniques
Music can directly inspire choreography	Include a wide range of emotional expression
Autobiographical material is an important source of choreography	Design choreography to use space non-traditionally
Prime focus of choreography should be movement exploration	Use canon
Choreography should suggest a story	Have multiple things going on at the same time
Dancers should impact on choreography	Use episodic, non-linear structure
Choreography should show a sense of humor	Choreograph different versions of same movement phrase for dancers of different abilities
Choreography should enlarge the boundaries of dance	Use sight gags
	Include farcical behavior
	Eliminate "trained dancer" look
	Incorporate movements from daily life

Clearly, much more research involving many more than five choreographers is needed before any real conclusions about the field could be drawn. However, it is important to consider here what this type of data could add to the understanding of choreography.

A continuing, broad analysis of operative principles and techniques of choreography could yield important information for dance history; namely, what are the most active principles and most frequently applied techniques of a given period? Comparative research between periods could determine when principles and techniques did/do change, and answer questions such as: Was/is the change abrupt or over time? Were/are changes in principles evident significantly prior to changes in techniques, or were/are those changes concurrent? Do principles of choreography endure in dance history longer than techniques? Is there more change in methods of application and implementation than in basic ideas about the art?

It might be interesting and important to chart the development of individual choreographers. How many stages were there in Balanchine's career, marked by the expression and application of what principles and techniques of choreography? A verifiable course of development and change in a choreographer's career could be traceable through data of this sort.

Choreographers who adhere to unique principles of choreography, and/or whose techniques are idiosyncratic,

could represent lingering fragments of a choreographic tradition or the "next wave." A comparison of their principles and techniques with historical trends could reveal which were the case, and when a "new" approach is actually a survival or revival of ideas and techniques from an earlier period.

Revolutions in dance history may be equally attributable to artists with new outlooks, and to those with the technical means to carry out new ideas. It may be that in existing overviews of dance history, artists with greater techniques have received greater credit than those whose principles may have sparked the demand for invention. Maintaining a perspective on the origins of both principles and techniques of choreography could remove this prejudice.

Perhaps real revolution in the history of choreography comes with the enunciation of new principles, which departures are followed by years, perhaps decades, of exploration of these principles by creating techniques to render them in dance. Extensive data of the type in this study could help to answer questions such as: When did/do the revolutions in ideas occur? Is a given period one of revolution in ideas or consolidation of techniques? Is the current choreographic malaise due to the staleness of contemporary principles of choreography, for which new techniques are becoming more difficult to find?

To help respond to these and other questions, further research in principles and techniques of choreography is

essential. It would enhance the fields of choreography and dance history if the analysis of principles of choreography, primarily through the documents of rehearsal videotape and interviews, and of techniques of choreography, primarily through Labanotation scores, continued. Graduate students and researchers, studying choreography in this way, would accumulate a rich data base on which extensive future research could build. The specification of principles in dance is paralleled in other arts, in which manifestoes are written to announce the adoption of new principles. The difference is, of course, that artists in other fields write their own manifestoes, while this is rare in dance.<sup>2</sup>

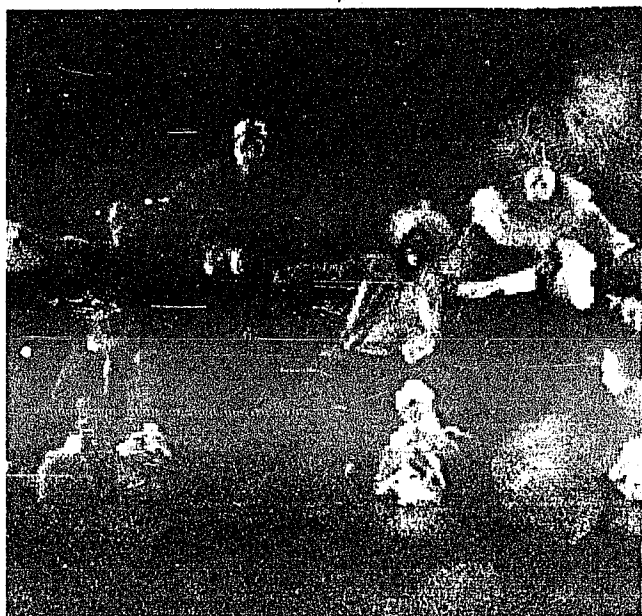
This dissertation is itself in some ways a manifesto, since it aims to point out an inferiority in research in choreography based on performance and secondary-source materials. It also aims to affirm that the capability for improved research lies in use of new technology for documenting the process and results of choreography. Thirdly, it demonstrates the new research, with five examples of choreographic study. And lastly, by developing preliminary sets of principles and techniques of choreography, shows the potential and need for further work in this area, as a means toward improved understanding and scholarship in dance.

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<sup>2</sup>There are some examples, including The Modern Dance, Seven Statements of Belief, edited by Selma Jeanne Cohen (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1965) and the artist Filippo Marinetti's "Manifesto of Futurist Dance" in R.W. Flint, ed., Marinetti, Selected Writings (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972).

**Appendix: Photographs of the dances**

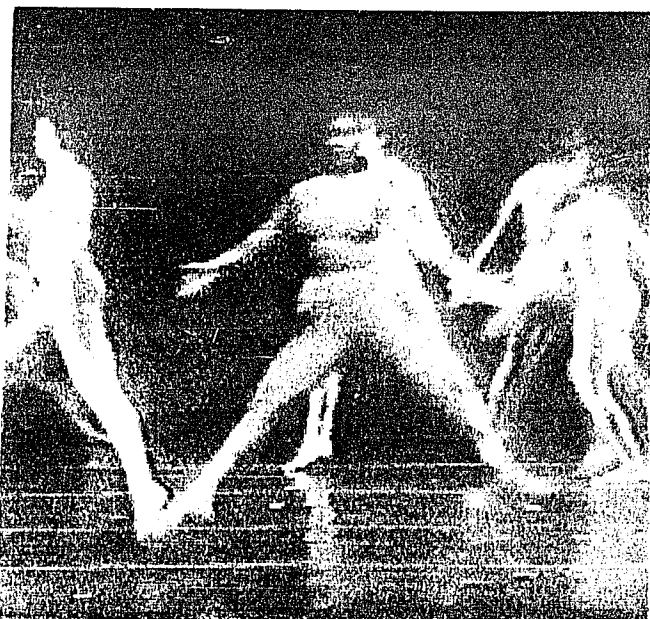
Scenes From the Music of Charles Ives by Anna Sokolow



Masked tableau in  
"Hallowe'en"



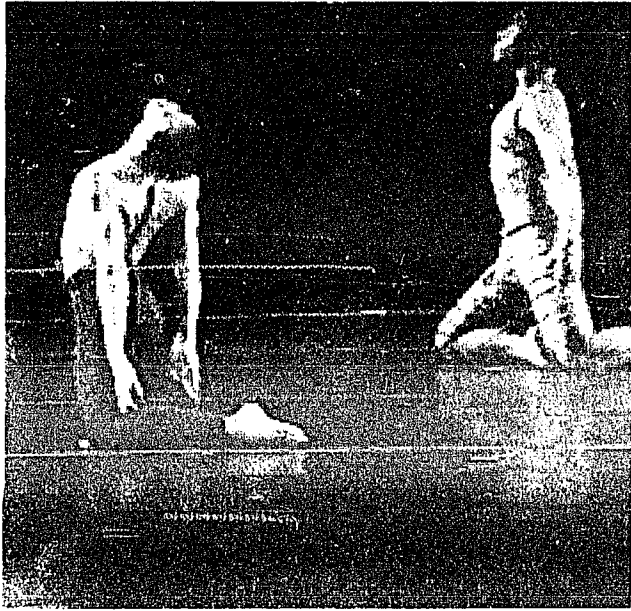
Moving shapes resemble  
trees in "Central Park  
in the Dark"



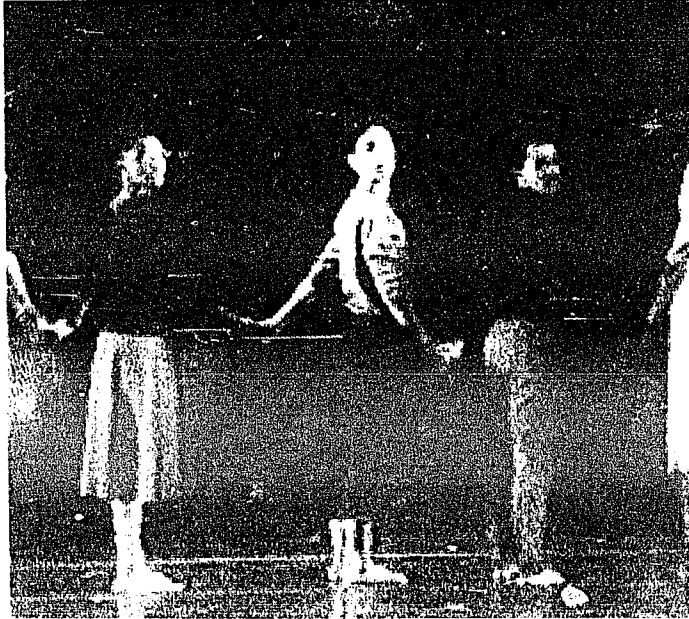
"Wild! Wild! middle  
section of "Central Park  
in the Dark"



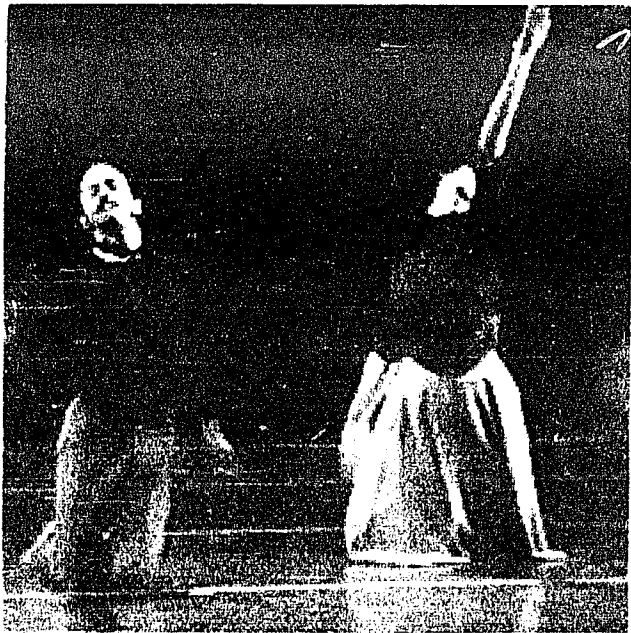
Calm image of Nijinsky  
in "The Pond"



Tormented image of Nijinsky  
in "The Cage"



Turning to face the  
audience for the first  
time in "The Unanswered  
Question"



Reaching motif in "The  
Unanswered Question"

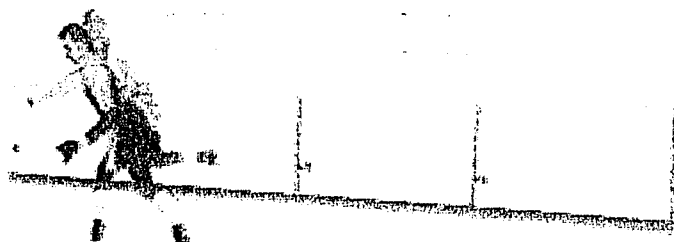


Final motif of despair  
in "The Unanswered Question"

What's Remembered? by Rachel Lampert



Couples in "Q" phrase that opens the dance



The "Duet:" up on him



The "Duet:" up on her



The "Duet:" a burst of delight

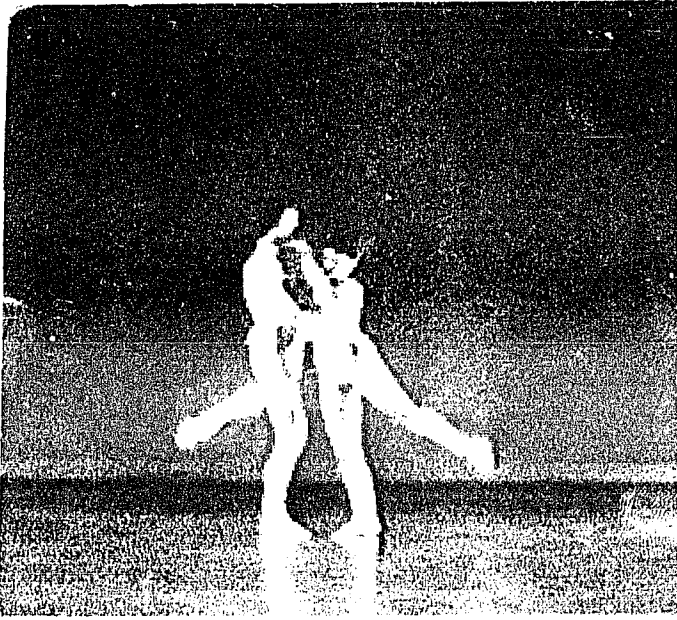


Angry Circle in the "Fives"

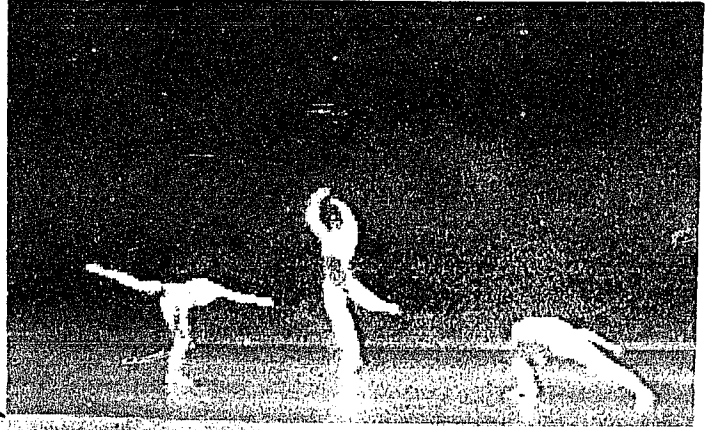


Diagonal stage cross for the entire group in climactic "Canon" section

Falling Off the Back Porch by Clay Taliaferro



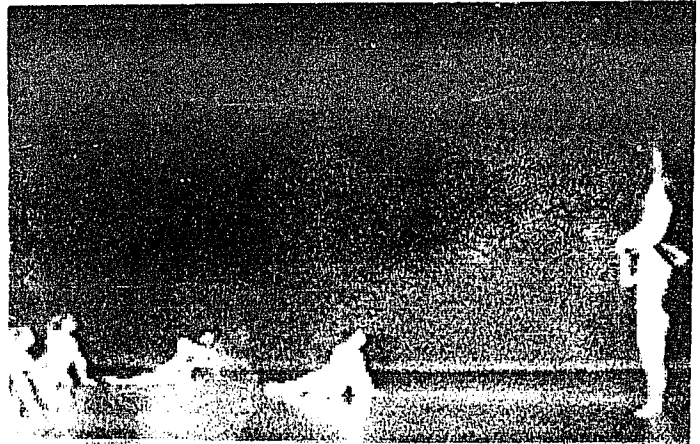
The duet



Multiple things ongoing  
simultaneously

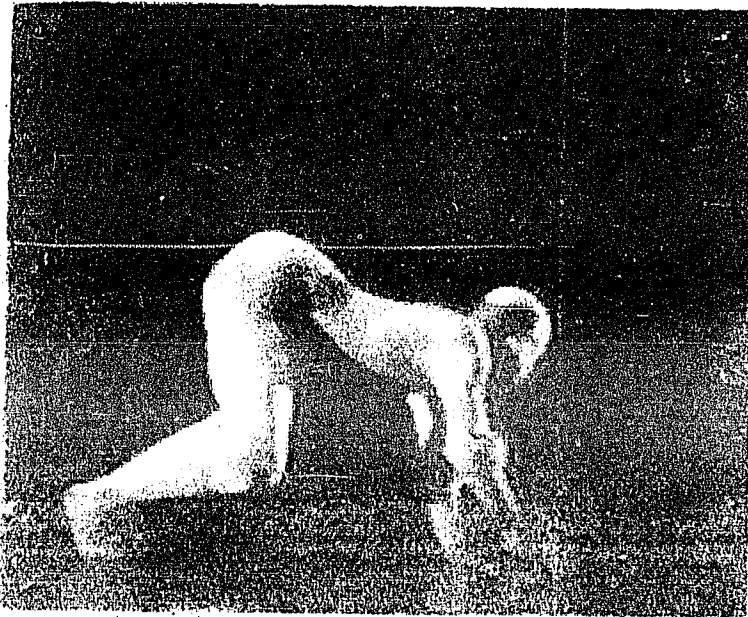


The man leaves

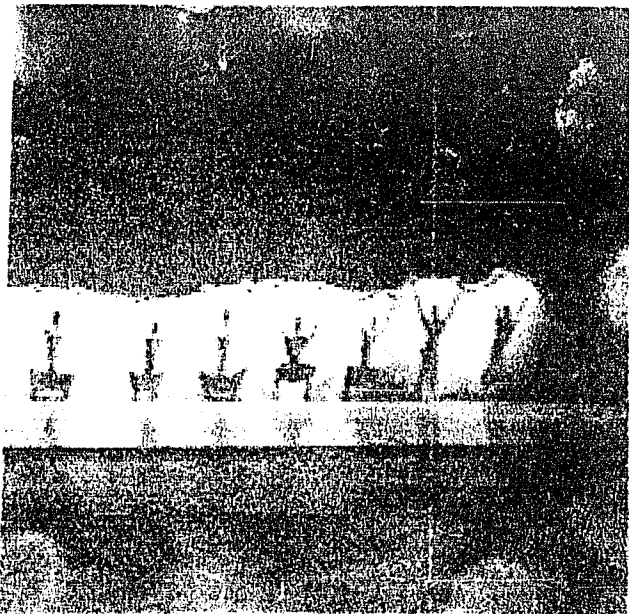


High and low levels onstage  
emphasize the strength of  
the final leap at the man

Children on the Hill by Moses Pendleton



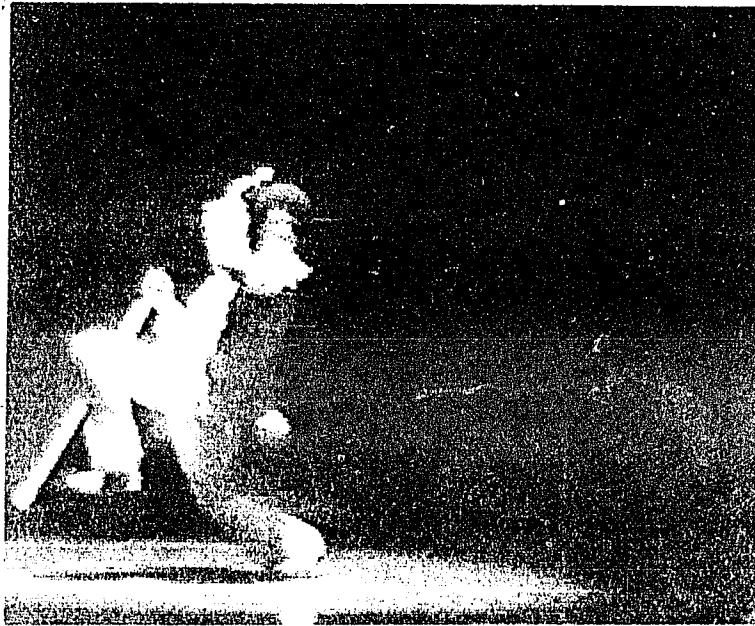
"The grub" in padded costume



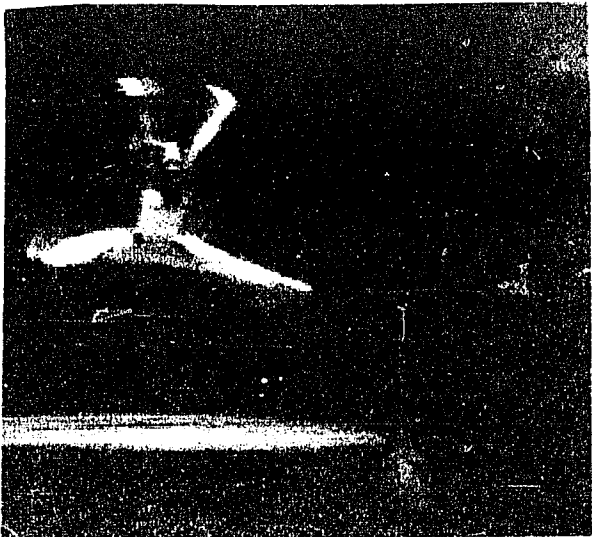
Dancers in shadow behind  
white wall of "Casper"



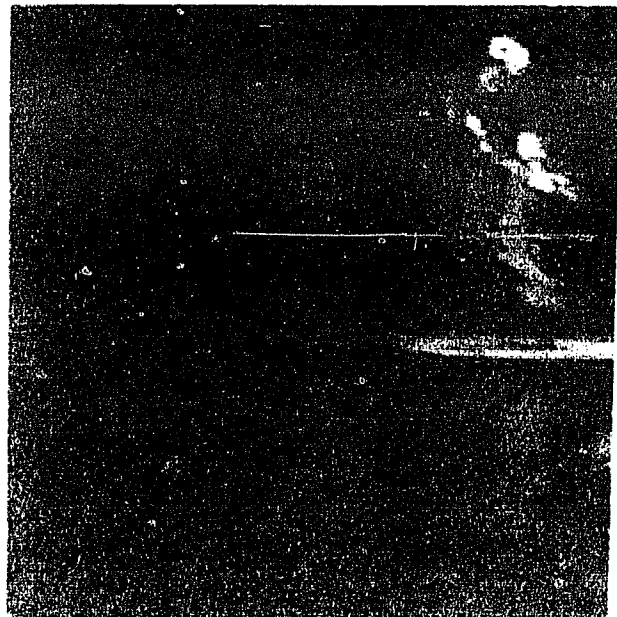
Gyrating in individual  
pools of light



**"Stop action" in center-stage light**

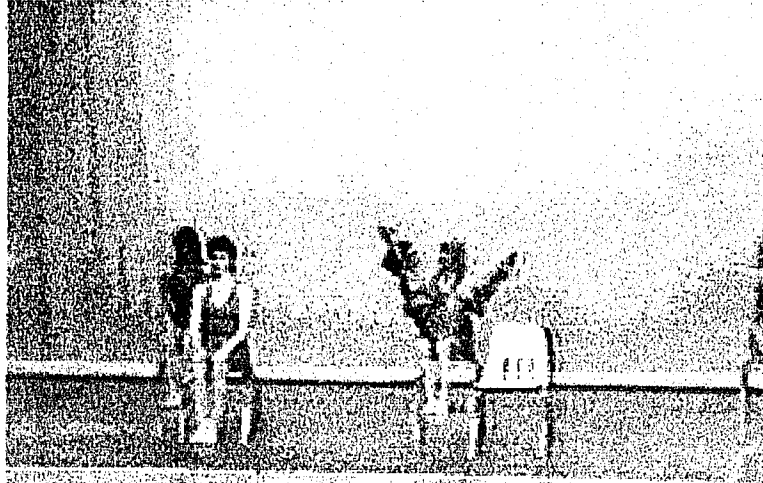


**Flying leap through  
center-stage light**

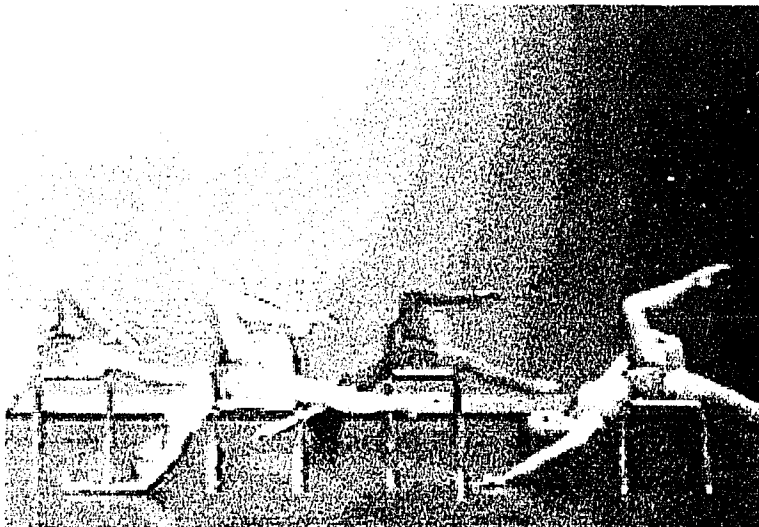


**Top-coated man offers a  
bouquet of flowers to  
beautiful woman across  
the stage**

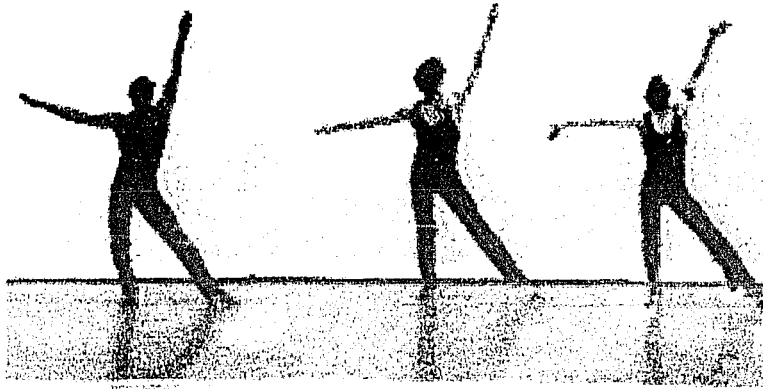
Not For Love Alone by Buzz Miller



"Dream" section



Partnering with chairs in "Me and My Shadow"



Strong lines of men's section



Bats, shades, and cigars



"Woman on a pedestal"  
near the close

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