

HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS DOCTORAL SCHOOL

# SPACE-IMAGINATION

Theses

Melinda Szitt

2024.

Supervisor: Dr. habil. Erős István DLA

## Introduction

As a professional teacher of dancing, I have spent my life studying, understanding human movement and imparting all my experience I have acquired during my career journey. During this learning process, while studying several scientific fields and art forms, I achieved the level of experience that encouraged me to set the course for further development in both assimilating and imparting knowledge. As both fine arts and dance can only be perceived visually, we can discover more and more overlap between these art forms. Fine arts as an objectified genre had been distinct from time-based dance until a time-based approach appeared in the 20th and 21st century avantgarde fine art endeavours. After the time-based approach became a characteristic of this new form of fine arts regarding performances, happenings, and actions, the boundaries between modern dance and modern fine arts seemed to be fading. Attempts to cross and dissolve these boundaries have never stopped, they are still experiments in progress that will actually give birth to new art forms. The "existence in art", following and living the process, and in a sense its social role represents higher value than a work of art does. In my research I try to find the cooperations, correlations, and bridges that connect and dissolve the sharp boundaries between fine art and dance from the 20th century until today.

From the viewpoint of this thesis the study of the human body is essential from both philosophical and anthropological aspects, because while the human body is the subject and the object of fine art, it is the medium of dance. Understanding these processes requires some historical overview. With regard to both genres there are crucial points which were determining aspects in the successive eras. One of these milestones in the development of the 20th century modernist endeavours was the early 20th century "Lifereform" movement as well as the ideology of Bauhaus, which provided people with a vision with new ideas, and their influence can be detected in different forms of art as well as education even today.

In my thesis Rudolf von Laban's life accomplishment has a prominent role, then so does the art of the generation evolving from his ethos. Rudolf von Laban is an essential milestone in modern dance and the birth of the new European theatre dance. By creating his movement analysis and space analysis system, he developed his space harmony theory and invented his dance notation system, which can still be used. His legacy is invaluable, because he created a unique universal world, with which his purpose was to make dance on a par with other forms of art. Later he had an influence on coreographers, school founders, who with their experimentation continued the examination and analysis of human movements and the human body in relation to space and time.

In my research a key hypothesis is that without structure there is no freedom. My doctoral thesis presents the revolutionary artists and the collaborations between them, which support my assumption and show that structure has a predominant role in artistic creation.

As a result of my theoretical research and practical experience an artwork was created, which takes into account Rudolf von Laban's movement analysis and adapts its basic movement ranges, then culminates in a synthesis following an analysis. This experiment can be seen either as a performance on stage or the video recording of it can be used as a visual demonstration material in dance education.

## Theses

I. In relation to dance, the body and its movements bear the social changes of historical periods and their effects on its role in culture. The role and importance of dance is subject to constantly changing social perceptions. Almost from the beginning, the ambition of its representatives has been to elevate dance to the status of an art form on an equal footing with other artistic disciplines. The different philosophical and cultural anthropological interpretations of the body provide an opportunity to make sense of dance as a medium of communication.

II. The art of spatial design traces the changes in the relationship between man and society in terms of the genres that shape space. The sculptural and architectural space is related to movement, it can only be captured through visuality and fills all four dimensions of space. The analysis of movement, motion and space can create a structure to interpret and shape space and conscious existence in space.

III. Movement and spatial analysis methods provide opportunities to develop body awareness, to refine inner sensations (kinesis), and to create and experience expressive movements. There is a link between the inner sense of movement and the external occupation of space. It is through the constant search for balance that harmony is created - in all aspects of human existence - which is a symbol of stability.

IV. The illustrative experiment in the masterpiece can be used in education and helps to understand the spatial arrangement of movements and encourages creative shaping of space, resulting in a pure dance without any narrative. Movement sequences in regular geometrical bodies, extended in space, maintain structure, which gives freedom of movement and expression. Without structure there is no freedom.