



# CCDR Newsletter

Number 8

Summer, 1989

## INTRODUCTION TO SILHOUGRAPHS

"Silhougraphs" of dancers have been featured in several CCDR Newsletters, that are reproduced with two additions on the informal note cards that CCDR has introduced. See insert for ordering information; the proceeds will benefit the HKK Memorial Research-Choreographic residency.

Now is a felicitous time to formally present the Silhougraph idea to the CCDR membership - its genesis, its preparation, its purpose and value, its name, and a hint at its projected application as a tool for analysis.

In the late 1960's Kealiinohomoku rendered photos of dancers into silhouettes. She wanted to focus the members of a linguistics seminar at Indiana University on dancer *shapes* instead of distracting non-shape features such as colors of costumes or facial expressions.

Dancers create shapes with their bodies, their costumes, and their paraphernalia. Further, the contours include the relationships of one dancer to another, and the shape of space that surrounds the dancers.

### GENESIS

To prepare the silhouettes Kealiinohomoku traced photographs of dance with care to include accurate details. The first

silhouette rendered was of a male Flamenco dancer. Even Kealiinohomoku was shocked to see how easily the shapes could be "read" without help from the features that are routinely thought to be essential for decoding dance. The silhouette, after all, does not include color, sound, or movement. In fact, the abstraction of the dancing figure to a silhouette reveals distinguishing features in more clear relief because the other features create "noise."

For several years Kealiinohomoku rendered hundreds of silhouettes from photos. She identified 21 "determinants" that are encoded within a silhouette. They include gender, phenotype, and cultural criteria.

By the mid-seventies Kealiinohomoku had made presentations of the silhouette project for the Society for Ethnomusicology (at which time Juana de Laban declared that this was one of the most useful and innovative developments in dance analysis). She presented the project at the University of Louisville, Northern Arizona University summer linguistics seminar, the School of American Research, the East-West Center, and to students as a teaching aid.

In order to distinguish the

figures from an artist's creative drawing of a silhouette, and to indicate that these silhouettes are rendered from photographs, Kealiinohomoku coined the word "Silhougraph."

### ANALYTICAL TOOL

In Silhougraphs subtle details become clear as well as large overall patterns. Cynthia Knox rendered Silhougraphs as a technique for her M.A. study. She used them to show the "before" and "after" of individuals engaged in formal movement training. Not only did the changes appear in the Silhougraphs, it was clear that Silhougraphs were potentially useful as diagnostic tools for individuals in, say, physical therapy.

The special revelation to Kealiinohomoku was confirmation that dancers truly dance their phenotypes, costumes, and paraphernalia. Kealiinohomoku had never been totally satisfied with accepted dance/movement notation systems. Those systems concentrate on movement as though all dancers were disembodied, or that all human bodies were, or should be, indistinguishable from one another. Without mentioning the Silhougraphs, per se, Kealiinohomoku expressed her insights in print (1979).

Again, without mentioning the Silhougraph study per se, Kealiinohomoku tried to set up a theory for an anthropological study of dance that included the principles implicit in the Silhougraph study, in her dissertation (1976).

Kealiinohomoku did not discuss the Silhougraphs in her dissertation, because she wanted that work to be the cornerstone for future studies that would include the study of Silhougraphs. The potential use of Silhougraphs is so rich its mention would take the focus away from the basic ideas that Kealiinohomoku needed to articulate.

## IMMEDIATE PLANS

Two Silhougraph projects are currently being processed. One is a pilot study designed to establish the validity of the decoding procedures. Several scholars, for example a psychologist, a physical anthropologist, and a kinesiologist, will analyze a set of Silhougraphs by "blind" readings. Without knowing the backgrounds or contexts of the Silhougraphed dancers, but using a Diagnostic Feature Rating schema, the scholars will independently develop a profile about each Silhougraph. We will look to see if there is a consensus reached, collectively.

In a lighter vein, photographer Jessica Yu will photograph dancers from the ten countries to be visited by the fall, 1989, voyage for the Semester at Sea. These photographs will be rendered into Silhougraphs accompanied by descriptive texts written by Kealiinohomoku and Yu. The results should be entertaining and enlightening, and reveal with new clarity the cultural



shapes of the ten countries.

If these projects trigger a response from members of CCDR we encourage you to share them with us.

## INDIVIDUALITY

Silhougraphs reveal with startling clarity the identity of the individual dancer, as demonstrated by the informal note cards being distributed by CCDR.

The Silhougraphs on the six cards show that the figures are female, that they are western dance artists, and especially, show identity. If you know the persons you will immediately recognize Halla K. Kealiinohomoku, Eleanor King, Gertrude P. Kurath, Jancy Limpert, Helen Pelton, and Savannah Walling.

Several Silhougraphs, reduced in size, are included in this Newsletter for you to examine. What can you tell about these dancers?



## REFERENCES

- Kealiinohomoku, Joann W.  
1976 *Theory and Methods for an Anthropological Study of Dance*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University.
- 1979 "You Dance What You Wear and You Wear Your Cultural Values," *The Fabrics of Culture*. (eds. J.M. Cordwell, R.A. Schwarz). pp. 77-83. World Anthropology Series. The Hague: Mouton.
- Knox, Cynthia Gail  
1984 *Dance at the Interface of Biology and Culture*. M.A. thesis, Northern Arizona University.



## UPDATE:

Joann W. Kealiinohomoku

This fall, 1989, Kealiinohomoku will be teaching for the Semester at Sea, as she did twice before in the '70's. Her classes will include anthropology, ethnomusicology, and folkdance.

She will be accompanied by photographer and graduate student, Jessica Yu. Yu will graphically record dancers in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, Suez Canal, Soviet Union, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Morocco. These photos will be rendered into Silhougraphs.

Since January, 1989, Kealiinohomoku has given lectures for the Heard Museum, the Dance History Scholars, UCLA, Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, and for the IRS program in Phoenix on minorities. She has made presentations for the Flagstaff Winterfest, Third Conference on Viewing Dance Cross-Culturally, Museum of Northern Arizona, Dance Critics Association, and panel on African and African-American Dance. She continues to serve as a consultant for an 8-part program, "The Dance Project," being developed by Rhoda Grauer for public television WNET in New York.



# RECENT GIFTS TO CROSS-CULTURAL DANCE RESOURCES

## VIDEO-TAPES

CCDR has received four unique video-tapes. I Wayan Dibia donated a copy of the "CAK" workshop given at UCLA for the annual meetings, 1989, of the Graduate Dance Ethnology program. The tape features Dibia teaching the fundamentals for performing the Balinese "Monkey Dance" to a large group of dancers and ethnomusicologists.

The children of the late Marian Van Tuyl gave the collection a copy of images of Marian in selected clips of dancing and family events.

From the third annual conference on Viewing Dance Cross-Culturally, co-sponsored by the Arizona Dance Arts Alliance, the Dance Department at Arizona State University, and CCDR, Pegge Harper Vissicaro contributed a video that recorded three workshops. They were instructions for performing folk dances from England, Bulgaria, and Greece.

Judy Mitoma, professor of international studies at UCLA added to the collection "Excerpts from the Fifth Festival of Pacific Arts, Townsville, Australia, 1988" filmed and edited by her and several of her students.

From the minorities study center at the University of Arizona, Tucson, CCDR received a copy of "DANCEAFRICA 88 Featuring LES GUIRIVOIRES", through Joann Kealiinohomoku, who participated in a panel discussion on African and African-American dance.

## ARTIFACT

Kathleen Stemmler, Acting Executive Director of CCDR, gifted the collection with a

woven dance fan from Fiji.

## BOOKS

In the past several months CCDR has received valuable additions to the library.

Cynthia Jean Novack Ph.D., contributed a copy of her dissertation SHARING THE DANCE: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF CONTACT IMPROVISATION (1986), Anthropology, Columbia University. This work is in publication as a book.

Another Ph.D. dissertation ANYONE CAN DANCE: A SURVEY AND ANALYSES OF SWAHILI NGOMA, PAST AND PRESENT, was contributed by Marjorie Ann Franken (1986) Anthropology, University of California, Riverside.

Two master theses written for the Dance Ethnology Program, University of California, Los Angeles, were given to CCDR: HINDI CINEMA DANCE FROM VIDEO TO STAGE: A STUDY OF INDIAN IMMIGRANT CULTURE IN LOS ANGELES (1988) by Kiren Elizabeth Ghei; and A FESTIVAL IN NORTHWESTERN GREECE (1987) by Mady Tay-

lor

Jasmine Honore of the Republic of South Africa presented CCDR with her study TOWARDS A TRANSCRIPTION FOR XHOSA UMISHOTSHO DANCES, accompanied with a folder of transcriptions.

Several copies of old Annual Reports from the Bureau of American Ethnology as well as several books on dance from his own collection, were given to the CCDR library by John Irwin, member Board of Directors.

## EQUIPMENT

Dan Boone donated a large Rolodex system, to replace the CCDR system currently in use.

## TIME

Several persons volunteered prime time to help CCDR with mailings and painting the anteroom and the small house used for the Research-Choreographer in Residence. They include Sandra Lynch, Holly Hamilton, E. Azimat-Ala, Jon Vetrnick, Emily Hill, Kathleen Stemmler (and her two sons), and Joann Kealiinohomoku.

**ANNOUNCEMENT: Eleanor King Foundation**

This announcement is to inform you that a legal trust, the ELEANOR KING FOUNDATION (EKF), was formed in April, 1989 on behalf of pioneer choreographer Eleanor King to preserve and promote her work, to ensure the integrity of her choreography in future, and to assist Ms. King in the negotiation of choreographic contracts and other business matters. The Foundation is administered by trustee Dr. Andrea Seidel and an Advisory Committee consisting of members Dr. Joann Kealiinohomoku, Daniel Lewis, and Nicole Plett.

Any individual or company interested in acquiring Ms. King's choreography, utilizing her services as a reconstructor of the work of Doris Humphrey, or making a tax-deductible donation should contact the Foundation at the address below.

Dr. Andrea Seidel  
 19507 SW 325 Kabe  
 Homestead, Florida 33030  
 (305)246-4059

## KURATH'S BOOK REVIEWED BY MEMBER NOVACK IN JOURNAL OF SOCIETY FOR ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

The book *HALF A CENTURY OF DANCE RESEARCH: ESSAYS BY GERTRUDE PROKOSCH KURATH* was reviewed by Cynthia Novack (*ETHNOMUSICOLOGY* 33, 1, 1989: 158-161). She wrote "Kurath's significant contributions deserve attention and grateful acknowledgment." She concluded-

It is also important to note that Kurath's research forms the basis for the extensive developments in dance ethnology over the past twenty-five years. First, Kurath was a guide and an inspiration to other scholars interested in dance; by doing what had previously not been done, she established a realm of research, developed definitions of

dance, the scope of dance ethnology, and the notation of dance, all of which were clear influences on the generation of scholars which followed. Dance ethnologists are dealing with these same questions today and have Gertrude Kurath to thank for possessing the courage, commitment, and insight to raise them throughout her life's work.

The articles in the book, written over a span of fifty years, were compiled and bound by Kurath and given as a gift to CCDR which is the sole distributor of the book. Books may be purchased from us for \$20.00, general cost; \$15.00 for members of CCDR, CORD, and SEM. Overseas add \$2.00 postage.

For its generous contribution in support of this newsletter CCDR wishes to thank:

~ PHOTO ~  
OUTFITTER



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## CCDR WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Janet Goodridge, Kathy Chase, Luise Scripps, Stephani Reynolds, Aanya Adler-Friess, Travis Jarrell, Helen Pelton, Naima Prevots, Doris Harper-White, Rhoda Grauer, Sara Coffey, Shawn Bowman Hicks, Barbea Williams, Sarah Houston, Gretchen Van Metre, Sally Banes, Constance Old, Daniel Nagrin, Amelia Zlamal, Margaret Gisolo.

Cross-Cultural Dance Resources, Inc.  
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