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In Movement Analysis, all of our various categories of description intertwine or coalesce into an experience of the *lived moment*—to borrow a term from phenomenology—with the event of observing, witnessing, or participating in the world of movement. While the descriptive words, themselves, last beyond the experience that first brought them to life, we have yet to identify—as movement analysts—the process by which we formulate these descriptions into analysis. How do we bring ourselves into the same realm of movement in which the movement itself is born? How do we bring ourselves into the body/mind of Body, Effort, Space, and Shape? Do we do this through attunement in any or each of these categories? Do we simply arrive in our ordinary state and wait for the movement to speak to our own situatedness? To our dispositions? Our sense of ourselves? Our expectations of another?

How do we create an ‘opening to’, or facilitate a ‘disclosing of’, the immediate and *whole* world that is presenting in the moving experience?

For my part in this panel presentation, I would like to re-initiate a proposition begun by Peter Madden over 10 years ago, regarding our use and understanding of the term Shape in Body/Effort/Space/Shape. In this proposition, Shape is seen not only as a separate category within LMA, but as an *organizing principle* of the whole system, which creates meaning and context within the ‘operation’ of the system itself.

Within our system of BESS as it presently exists, Shape is recognized as the inner motivation to relate: by being with oneself, or in intimate relation, by making contact or bridging to the ‘other’, and by interacting with, or accommodating various ‘others’ in one’s environment.

In addition to expressing the ‘urge’ to relate, Shape is what gives *form* its meaning, and creates a context for meaning-making. Our system of LMA is built implicitly on relationship and context, though Shape—as relationship—is not articulated explicitly as a category/container large enough to hold all aspects of the system together. Still, we recognize that there can only be meaning when there is relationship between the individual parts. Our movement descriptions are encoded with relationship: relationships of body parts to whole body; relationships of Effort elements to each other; relationship of the moving body to Space, and relationships between ours and ‘others’ in the Space between and around us. We also know implicitly, that meaning is made only when it occurs within the context of a larger framework than our categories of movement description provide. In fact, without the whole ‘form’ of the movement event—that is, its *gestalt*—all the elements we observe, or the experiences we have in movement together, would be left as discreet bits of unconnected data—which is sometimes, what they look like, when we come upon these descriptions, later.

Shape itself is a *gestalt*. And as it is with any gestalt, it is a whole which does not reduce itself to the sum of its parts. Shape is not Body, nor is it Body and Space—though both comprise *some*

of the media through which we recognize its visible traces. Shape is never a matter of bridging or accommodating in a Space inhabited by us alone: it is always relational, and is an expression of an experience of relatedness which we carry with us throughout our *lived experience* in the world. The relating, then, of Shape, seems larger than Shape as a category in BESS. And even as a category in BESS perhaps it, too, is not emphasized in the system enough, as an understanding, or a *being*, which can bring us back to the wholeness of the movement experience itself.

Our bodies are always in a process of living our unknown potentials, as well as our past experiences. We are at once vulnerable and powerful, as relational beings, moving with hints of our past history and culture, and our own potential for future development. To speak of movement from within this *living/becoming* experience, I believe we need a means of explicitly granting inter-relationship, or intersubjectivity, a fundamental place in our movement descriptions and experiences. The sociologist Thomas Csordas created the term ‘Somatic Modes of Attention’ to describe this way of being with, or attending to, others’ bodily movements and sensations; for he, too, recognized this way of being as different than what was commonly expected or understood in western relationships. If, we, on the other hand, operate in Movement Analysis as though there were a third, objective eye, casting its neutral gaze over the movement landscape, we do an injustice not only to ourselves and those whose movement we experience, but also an injustice to the field of movement, itself.

And to that end, I would like to consider the categories of Body/Effort/Space/Shape again. There are four of them, though Laban did not create these himself, and try as we might in LMA to add a fifth, something keeps coming between that fifth category and the other four. There is harmony and balance in the quaternity—which Carl Jung also believed—and the overlapping and interacting of these four categories seem limitless. They catapult each of us into what seem to be unending explorations of interconnections and echoes of each other. If we were to consider them as typological, or at least as corollaries to Jung’s typology, then we can see that each category of BESS reflects *a way of being and perceiving*, as much as a way of seeing or describing movement intent.

Years ago, Peter Madden suggested that BESS could stand as metaphors for, or movement descriptions arising from within, Jung’s Sensing/Feeling/Thinking/Intuiting psychological types. I have been using this framework dancing, teaching, and working with other’s therapeutically for nearly 15 years. One of the most useful results of allowing such a correlation between our LMA framework and Jung’s quaternity, is that it also offers us the awareness that, as with typology, our BESS framework can be perceived individually and as a whole, through any of the four categories. In other words, I can describe Body from within a typological framework of Thinking, which would be disaffined, and sound something like terms of Space; or I can describe Body from within a typological perceiving of Sensing, which would be affined, and would support better emergence into a bodily perceiving. Furthermore, each of us comes to BESS from an understanding or a describing that is aligned with our individual typology. Which, from my experience, can also be ‘seen’ in the predominance of movement categories in each of us.

Without getting into the subtleties and complexities of this any further today, I would like now to focus on the category of Shape as I would use it, that is as a *relational* umbrella for containing the system of BESS, specifically in the realm of dance performance.

As a larger Shape context, we can consider entering the performing space, *with* the performer or, as a performer, to enter *with* the audience, as a means of opening to the world of performance as dialogue, as it appears to us, in a shared, living and moving space.

Dance performance is a communication—indeed a relationship—which requires both dancer and audience to take up, or to complete, the intention of an other(s) in a mutual experience of time and space. As an audience, we have the opportunity to communicate through sharing in a specifically kinesthetic sense. Entering this sharing as a *living moment*—which is the felt sense of any performance—we can allow our own bodily knowing to emerge in a dialogue that includes kinesthetic or emotional conflict with what unfolds before us; recognition of ourselves and others' experiences through the body's wordless unfolding of a world; tension or excitement from what we see and experience; and an overall feeling of embrace in a shared kinesthetic knowing. We can experience the boundaries of self and other, whether we are the performer or a member in the audience, and can allow the reciprocal—or reversible--relationship of audience to performer to create a dynamic, vibrating experience between us. We can learn about who and what our experiences are in relation to the experiences of another—as an audience member, as a performer, or any of us to each other—through the very special medium of what is emphasized in dance, our shared corporality. To arrive in the dance in this Shaping, or opening, Janna Parviainen refers to as a way of 'listening', a way in which dance brings to light the *sensuous* world of the lived body. Parviainen states, in *Bodies Moving, Moved*:

'Listening' to a dance work teaches us the essence of reversibility: to listen to another is to learn what the world is like from a position that is not our own; to listen is to reverse position. The echo is radically deconstructive, subversive, even anarchic: it sets in motion countless vibrations of uncertainty; it refuses to be controlled, it cannot be possessed by analyzing it'. (page 178)

In my own experiences, within the larger framework of 'Shape'—that is, *Shape* as a ground of *being in relationship*, as a way of doing Laban Movement Analysis--the form, or the Shape I discover is created as a dynamic, intentional, and indeterminate content forming between me and all that is in my world. If expanding the notion of Shape will allow us to more knowingly and more fully enter into this dynamic, shared corporeality, it would seem fundamental for us to allow 'Shape' the infinite, and disclosing potentials it might hold as a way of *being in the world*.

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