

## Obituary

### Irmgard Bartenieff (1900–1981)

On June 24, 1981, two months before her death, *CORD* presented to Irmgard Bartenieff the first Frances Steloff *CORD* Award. The award is an honorary and titular recognition for contributions in dance research.

Bartenieff's life work crystallized in applications and developments of seminal ideas of her mentor, Rudolf Laban, and in turn generated a quiet revolution in many areas of movement science and art. Her first full-length book, written with Dori Lewis, *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment* (1980), brings together the theory and practice of Laban Movement Analysis (a confluence of Effort/Shape and her own approach to body re-education, Bartenieff Fundamentals).<sup>tm</sup>

Born in Germany, she began working with Laban in 1925. Her interests in art, biology, and dance quickly focused on a life's work grounded first in Laban's own experiments in dance writing, movement analysis, and choreography. In the US, after 1936, she worked as a masseuse and was a founder of the Dance Notation Bureau. She also co-authored the first book on Labanotation published in North America. She completed training in Physical Therapy (NYU, 1943) and began a 20 year period of work in various hospi-



Photo: Deborah Day

### Irmgard Bartenieff, 1978

tal settings with polio patients and the mentally and physically handicapped. In these settings the core of Fundamentals developed. She saw physical therapy (and all movement education) not as the training of separate levers and fulcrums, but as a process of three-dimensional connectedness. She sought to mobilize the whole

body in space and time, encouraging the total organism to support its movement.

She resumed work with Laban and with Warren Lamb in the 1950s and collaborated on the Choreometrics project, 1964–66 with Alan Lomax, et al. The first curriculum in Effort/Shape training was codified by Bartenieff with Martha Davis and Forrestine Paulay in 1965 and is now taught at the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies (LIMS) in New York as the Certificate Program in Laban Movement Analysis.

Bartenieff's professional affiliations culminated as Founder and President of LIMS. She belonged to the American Physical Therapy Association, the American Dance Therapy Association, the Dance Notation Bureau, and the Society for Asian Music. She was a registered physical therapist and a registered dance therapist (DTR) as well as a Master Member of the Laban Art of Movement Guild and an Associate Member of the International Council of Kinetography Laban. A member of *CORD* since 1967, she served two terms on the Board of Directors, 1972–78, participated in committee work and contributed as a Sustaining Member.

Irmgard Bartenieff was a pioneer scholar of human movement and of the refinement of a language to communicate its endless complexities.

Dianne L. Woodruff

have four major areas of conceptual linkage with the avant-garde of Europe 1909–29 and are discussed as four major themes in his work. *Trunk*, the second part, includes an artistic chronology and interrelationships with theoretical constructs. *Branches* has its focus on current developments such as the movement choir, therapy, and the work of Irmgard Bartenieff. N.P.

Trudy Scott is a candidate in the Ph.D. program in Performance Studies, New York University. The area of her dissertation is "Orientalism: the Influence of Asian Culture on American Dance of the Nineteenth Century." T.S.

Susan W. Stinson, Dance Division, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, is currently engaged in research on the "Implications and Limitations of Piagetian Theory for the Teaching of Dance." She will present a paper on this subject at the international conference on Dance and the Child in Stockholm, Sweden, mid-August 1982. Still in progress is a book on dance in pre-school. S.W.S.

Roland John Wiley, associate professor of music history/musicology, University of Michigan, is on sabbatical leave during the 1981–82 academic year, completing his book on Tchaikovsky and Petipa. UM School of Music

Charles Scribner's Sons announces plans to publish the first comprehensive multi-volume reference work on dance, *The International Encyclopedia of Dance*. The work will be produced under the auspices of the Dance Perspectives Foundation, an organization devoted to the encouragement of dance scholarship. The Research Materials Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency, has awarded the Dance Perspectives Foundation a grant for the editorial preparation of the work which is intended to meet the research, study, and reference needs of the serious student, the scholar, and the general reader.

Selma Jeanne Cohen, former editor of *Dance Perspectives* and one of the major forces in the establishment of dance scholarship in the United States, is editor of the project. Discussing the project, Dr. Cohen said, "The encyclopedia will bring together for the first time a vast quantity of information, logically organized and easily accessible. Much of this information has hitherto been scattered, difficult to find, or known only to a few specialists."

The International Encyclopedia of Dance will comprise four volumes plus an index volume, projected for publication in 1984. International in scope, it will cover western theatrical dance, theatrical

dance of the non-western world, ritual and recreational dance, and more. Entries will be arranged alphabetically and will range from brief definitions to comprehensive essays on historical subjects and thematic motifs. Articles will be accompanied by an extensive list of references which will include bibliographies, as well as non-book sources such as films, recordings, and notated scores. Detailed chronologies will be given wherever relevant and the encyclopedia will be extensively illustrated.

Clarification: The bibliography on Jewish dance mentioned on page 59 of the 13/2 Spring *DRJ* was prepared by Jill Gellerman and Judith Brin Ingber from sources on Jewish dance found in several collections of the New York Public Library, holdings of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and from scholars engaged in Jewish dance research. Published in the spring Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Newsletter, it bears no connection with the Jewish dance bibliography in preparation at the Dance Collection of the New York City Public Library. This was initiated by the late Fred Berk who completed most of the task of assembling and codifying information from the New York Public Library's *Dictionary Catalog of the Dance Collection*. J.B.I.