

Carry on...

Spring 1992

The CHARLES WEIDMAN Newsletter

We Dedicate This Issue To The Memory Of Louise Allen

SUMMER WORKSHOP IN WEIDMAN TECHNIQUE

The Charles Weidman Dance Foundation will offer a two-week workshop in Weidman technique and repertory starting June 15th at the Dance Theatre Workshop, centrally located in Manhattan. Tuition will be \$200 for the course.

The course will be taught by Janet Towner, who was the leading dancer and assistant to Mr. Weidman during his final six years. The course will meet from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. each weekday.

Following the success of the one-week Christmas course which we gave in 1990, which also was taught by Ms. Towner, it was decided to extend the time to two weeks and give it in the Summer when it will be available to more students.

We plan to offer a limited number of scholarships to deserving students, as we did with our earlier workshop. We are seeking funds for that purpose.

We plan to make the course an annual event in order to provide dance students and others the opportunity to experience the Weidman technique and dances. We also hope to expand their appreciation of these works and of an earlier period in dance.

For additional information and to register, please write to the Foundation or call (212) 924-4015.

If you are interested in receiving college credit for the course, please consult appropriate personnel at your school. We will cooperate in any way possible.

PANEL AND PERFORMANCE ON RECONSTRUCTION

"REDIVIVIO," a performance and panel discussion relating experiences in reconstruction, will be presented on May 10th at 3:00 p.m. at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York City. Dances by Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, José Limón and Eleanor King will be seen. They will be danced by Jacqueline Pugliese, Stuart Hodes, Susan Bernhard, members of the Limón Company and students at the Juilliard School.

The panelists will be Jack Anderson, Letitia Coburn, Ray Cook, Annabelle Gamson, Peter Hamilton, Stuart Hodes, Jane Sherman and Sarah Stackhouse. Maria Grandy will moderate. Participants will discuss their experiences in reconstruction. In addition, they will address basic issues in reconstruction, such as the appropriate level of authenticity, handling gaps in information, and the propriety of editing.

A reception will follow the program. Proceeds from this event will be used to support our project in reconstruction and documentation of Weidman dances as described immediately below.

NEW PLANS FOR RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

In 1991, the CWDF submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts its proposal to preserve, notate and teach two Weidman dances. Although the NEA in February rejected our proposal, the Board has decided to undertake a scaled-down version of the endeavor on its own. The NEA encouraged us to pursue this project

and was very regretful that it could not offer monetary support.

Under our revised plan, we will ask Peter Hamilton to reconstruct David and Goliath and to teach it to 10 dancers. In addition, we will ask Doug Nielsen to teach On My Mother's Side, which Hamilton reconstructed. We will explore the possibility of adding a third dance, perhaps Engulfed Cathedral. The dances will be presented as part of a Humphrey-Weidman benefit program being planned for the Spring of 1993. The dances will be labanotated and, if funds permit, analyzed in Laban/Bartenief Effort. If financially possible, performances of the works will be videotaped, in keeping with the original mission of the project, which was to preserve a segment of the Weidman dance heritage. The videotapes and all other documentation will be made available through the Dance Collection at the Lincoln Center Library in New York City.

The Board will seek other funding for the project from corporations, foundations and government agencies. The scope of the project will evolve as funding develops and personnel are identified. One option to be explored is to set the piece on an appropriate dance company or a school for addition to its repertoire.

WEIDMAN SHOWINGS AND PERFORMANCES

Last April 28th, "Charles Weidman; On His Own," our video, was shown at the Dance on Camera Festival 1991 and was awarded a silver certificate. It was also seen in several venues in Europe over the past 12 months, including Amsterdam and Vienna. Continued sales of the video will help us to pursue our important work in reconstruction and other projects.

We are pleased to report that Carol Mezzacappa, Deborah Carr and Janet Towner performed Weidman works during the past year, including

Lynchtown, Brahms Waltzes and Christmas Oratorio. In addition, dance students at Michigan State University, Ohio State University in Columbus and Montclair State College in New Jersey performed Brahms Waltzes from notation. Ms. Mezzacappa set Lynchtown for the SUNY Purchase dance department. After University performances, the dance was performed in Amsterdam, Holland.

IN MEMORIAM: LOUISE ALLEN (1911-1991)

Louise Allen (Haviland), first president and leading activist in the reorganization of the Charles Weidman School of Modern Dance (now the Charles Weidman Dance Foundation), died on December 14th at the age of 80, after a battle with emphysema.

Born in Topeka, Kansas, she came to New York to study dance with Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis. She joined the Humphrey-Weidman Dance Group in 1935 and also worked in a company led by Eleanor King. Subsequently, she taught dance, worked as a social worker and was active in community affairs in many parts of the country.

The Charles Weidman Dance Foundation is deeply indebted to Louise for revitalizing the Charles Weidman School of Modern Dance as a viable organization to perpetuate the work of Charles Weidman, for her success in achieving the settlement of the Weidman estate, and for so ably steering the group as president from 1982 to 1985.

During her tenure as president we were awarded funds by the National Endowment for the Arts in support of a biographical videotape of Charles Weidman. Two important events occurred during the same period: a concert of Weidman dances and dances influenced by him and an exciting panel discussion and video showing.

Louise compiled a chronology of Weidman dances which is more

complete than any in existence. It is a valuable research tool which the Board would like to develop further.

Louise is survived by a daughter, Beverly J. Haviland, a son, Brian L. Haviland, and two sisters, Josephine A. Johnson and Florence A. Paine.

She was a colleague and good friend and is missed very much.

IN MEMORIUM

William Bales, 1910-1990, was a featured dancer in the Humphrey-Weidman Dance Group from 1936-1940. During that period, he also had many commercial dance jobs to help support himself. While the work of modern dance companies was artistically very significant in the 1930's, earnings were practically non-existent. The major channel for his creative work was the Dudley-Maslow-Bales Trio, 1942-1952. Folklore and humor characterized many of the trio's dances and Bill Bales choreographed some 16 of them.

Later in life, he was best known as a teacher and administrator. He taught in many schools and colleges including the Humphrey-Weidman studio and Bennington and Connecticut summer schools. From 1940 to 1967 he directed the dance program at Bennington College, where he influenced a great many young dancers, among them, Ethel Winter, Kathy Posin and Linda Tarnay. He left to serve as dean of dance at SUNY Purchase where he established a major dance school and was instrumental in the building of a marvelous physical plant for dance.

He touched many in his long and varied career and left the field a great deal richer.

Sam Harris, 1952-1990, was a leading member of the Deborah Carr Theater Dance Ensemble, where he created solo and other important roles in many Weidman dances. The most frequently seen were in Brahms

Waltzes, Christmas Oratorio, Traditions and Flickers. His career in dance also included performance in the José Limón Company and the company of Gary Masters and Fred Mathews.

Mr. Harris was a talented costumer. He designed many of the costumes used by Deborah Carr's company and was a partner in a company which designed and executed costumes for other dancers.

Jeffrey Graff, a gifted dancer, died recently. He performed Weidman works, among others, as a member of the Deborah Carr Theater Dance Ensemble.

Nick Vanoff, 1930-1991, started his long theatrical career as a dancer. He performed with the Charles Weidman Dance Theater in the late 40's and 50's and was a principal dancer in the New York City Opera. His most significant role there was in Prokofiev's Love For Three Oranges. He served on the Board of the Charles Weidman School of Modern Dance as late as 1969 and was named by Weidman as a legatee of his estate.

He then studied directing and went on to an illustrious career in theater, film and video production. His work was honored with many important awards in all three fields.

He is survived by his wife, Felisa Conde, who also danced with Charles Weidman and in the New York City Opera Ballet when Weidman directed the dances there.

BOARD TERMINATES LICENSING ARRANGEMENT WITH WEIDMAN ESTATE

After reconsideration of its role in the effort to preserve Charles Weidman's work, the CWDF Board and Charles Wilson, administrator of the Weidman estate, have terminated their agreement. That agreement required the CWDF to collect

royalties and licensing fees for performances of Weidman works. The Board wishes to focus its efforts on service as a clearing house for knowledge and maintenance of the Weidman legacy.

In this capacity, the Board will continue to keep the Weidman population informed of performances of Weidman works, reconstructions, writings about Weidman or his techniques and other efforts to carry on his choreography. The Board appreciates being notified of upcoming or past performances and other information germane to the preservation effort, for dissemination and for archival purposes.

The Foundation, through the knowledge of individual board and advisory board members and its archives, is a repository of information about Charles Weidman. The Board is glad to share its information and to be of any help possible. For example, if you are interested in performing a particular work, the Board might help you contact someone to set the piece or advise on technique and style if you need such help. Similarly, the Board might sponsor or participate in a Weidman related project. In addition, the Board through this newsletter can relay information to more than 2,000 individuals who share an interest in Weidman.

All inquiries concerning permission to perform Weidman work, as well as royalties and licensing fees, should now be directed to Charles Wilson, Administrator, at 58 Van Reypen Street, Jersey City, New Jersey 07306.

LOUISE ALLEN FUND ESTABLISHED

In order to recognize and perpetuate the lifelong work of Louise Allen, the CWDF has established a Fund in her name. The purpose of this Fund is to pursue the completion of the chronology of Weidman works which Louise compiled.

This chronology was a project dear to her heart; lack of funds prevented us from undertaking this project during her life.

If Louise were to direct the project, the chronology would include information on music, costumes, set designs, first performances and names of dancers involved. We would like to fulfill her goal.

Contributions to the Louise Allen Fund are encouraged. Please make checks payable to The Charles Weidman Dance Foundation and put "Louise Allen Fund" on the memo line.

If the contributions to the Fund exceed those necessary to complete the chronology, excess funds will be used to provide a scholarship for one or more participants in the CWDF annual workshop on Weidman technique and style.

Carry on...

The CHARLES WEIDMAN Newsletter
Volume 6, Number 1 Spring 1992

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Charles Weidman often signed his letters "Carry on..." We appropriate his valiant and optimistic slogan as we carry on his legacy

**Assisted by
Dance Theater Workshop**

WRITINGS ON WEIDMAN

We are pleased to report that Jonette Lancos has completed a thesis entitled The Movement Style and Technique of Charles Weidman.

Jonette's two-part thesis, completed in 1991, was in fulfillment of her master's degree at the College of Brockport, and includes a 20-minute videotaped demonstration of the Humphrey-Weidman technique composed and coached by Nona Schurman. Nona and Jonette have been working together at SUNY Geneseo (in upstate New York) since the mid-1980's. Jonette continues to teach at the University. Jonette may be reached at the Department of Dance & Drama at SUNY Geneseo for information on her thesis project.

An earlier work, the dissertation, A Biography of Charles Weidman with Emphasis Upon his Professional Career and his Contributions to the Field of Dance, written by Sylvia Pelt Richards in completion of her coursework at Texas Woman's University in 1971, is available to the public at the Dance Collection of the Lincoln Center Library in New York City. This work chronicles Weidman's life as well as artistic endeavors.

In 1990 Janet Towner completed her thesis, Charles Weidman's Choreographic Process in the Creation of 'Visualization or From a Farm in New Jersey,' giving a detailed account of the process in the creation of his final work, as was reported in our Spring 1991 issue of "Carry On."

All three of the above-mentioned writings highlight different aspects of Weidman and provide insight into his character as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and humanist. The CWDF would like to keep a current record of the locations of such materials in order to steer dancers, students, teachers, scholars, and the general

public in the right direction. If you have a written record of your personal experiences with Charles, or know of such materials, please contact the CWDF.

In addition, the labanotation segment of Nona Schurman's book Modern Dance Fundamentals has been updated and is available for purchase. Although basically Humphrey-Weidman fundamentals of movement, these exercises and studies are adaptable for all styles of modern dance. The Dance Notation Bureau may be contacted for additional information on this invaluable guide.

1991 SPRING RAFFLE WINNERS

1. Tickets to Jacob's Pillow concert, Roselle Warshaw Mironer, NY, NY
2. Tickets to Paul Taylor concert, Barbara A. Scott, Salt Point, NY
3. Tickets to Alvin Ailey concert, Cleo Atheneos Stark, Sharon, CT
4. Charles Weidman video, Douglas H. Dunn, NY, NY
5. Mary Wigman video, Mary E. Redgate, Bridgeport, CT
6. Barton Mumaw book, Ray G. Cook, Poughkeepsie, NY
7. Doris Humphrey book, Cleo Atheneos Stark, Sharon, CT
8. Limón Company poster, Dorothy Samachson, Oak Park, IL
9. Merce Cunningham poster, Rita Rector, NY, NY

Items for Sale • Raffle

The Charles Weidman Dance Foundation

VIDEOTAPE RAFFLE!!!
 \$2 per chance!!!
 Enter often!!!
 Order form below

Charles Weidman • On His Own

DANCE VIDEO

This is a documentary videotape about the career of the American dance pioneer, Charles Weidman, narrated by Alwin Nikolais. The tape presents Mr. Weidman's life and work from his childhood in Lincoln, Nebraska to his last work, choreographed one year before his death in 1975. Along the way we are given an image of the Weidman personality; his charm and wit, his warmth and his humanity. Charles, himself, talks about modern dance. We also see him teaching a class in mime, including Kinetic Pantomime. Included are very early film clips of Weidman dancing with Doris Humphrey and members of his company. The technique is performed and basic principles explained. Among contemporary performances on the tape are excerpts from "Brahms Waltzes," "On My Mother's Side," "Christmas Oratorio," "Flickers," the Mens dance from "New Dance" and a complete performance of "Lynchtown."

60 minutes, color and B&W, 1990. \$49.95 plus \$4.00 shipping.
 Add \$2.00 shipping for each additional copy.

Postcard Series

a group of six representative photos of Charles in dances from the 1920's -1940's

Videocassette



Narrated by Alwin Nikolais

Available in both VHS and Beta.



T-Shirts

Charles Weidman, Dancer 1901-1975
 Available in red or white
 Sm, Med, Lg, XLg

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Videocassette • Beta	_____	\$49.95 ea.	\$ _____	\$ _____
• VHS	_____	\$49.95 ea.	\$ _____	\$ _____
Raffle Tickets	_____	\$ 2.00 ea.		\$ _____
<i>Tickets for the June 29 drawing will be provided. One for each chance you purchase.</i>				
T-shirts Color: _____ Size: _____		\$14.50 ea.	\$ _____	\$ _____
<i>T-shirts are only \$12 each if you buy 10 or more.</i>				
Postcard Sets	_____	\$5.50/set	\$ _____	\$ _____
Contribution	_____			\$ _____

Make checks payable to the Charles Weidman Dance Foundation and mail in the envelope provided. You may use a single check for all items.
 The Charles Weidman Dance Foundation • JoAnn Luehring, Treasurer
 38 Walnut Place * Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510

TOTAL ENCLOSED



April, 1992

Dear Weidman Fans:

Thank you for your generous support in 1991. Your response to our appeal last Spring was gratifying. Thanks to your contributions as well as your purchases of the video, postcards and T-shirts, we replenished our operating capital by more than \$5,000, which has enabled the Board to look at future planning with renewed vigor.

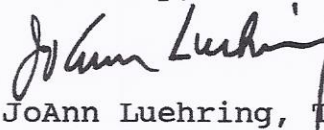
While the year was quiet in terms of concrete activities, the Board worked diligently to define and refine our mission and future projects. As a result, the Board is presenting in 1992 a May 10th panel discussion on reconstruction, a summer workshop on Weidman technique, and a reconstruction project of Weidman dances to be undertaken this Fall. A Humphrey-Weidman benefit will follow next Spring. These activities are described in greater detail elsewhere in the Newsletter.

These projects are ambitious undertakings which we on the Board feel will contribute importantly to preserving the works of Charles Weidman and other pioneers of American modern dance. Unfortunately, they will require funds in excess of our current bank account, especially since we want to proceed with the reconstruction project despite not being awarded the NEA grant.

While we will seek other grants, we will need support from individuals. One of our perennial needs is funding for our operating budget. Having even a part-time director would enable us to pursue our activities more effectively. Our limited funds have forced us to consume our budget through active projects rather than hiring personnel.

Please continue your support of Charles Weidman's legacy at the highest level you can.

Sincerely,



JoAnn Luehring, Treasurer

P.S. All contributions are fully deductible for Federal income tax purposes.

Special Benefactor (\$5,000 & above)
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Patron (\$250 - \$499)
Friend (under \$50)

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