

92-039



DISCUSSION DOCUMENT



INTRODUCTION

Within this folder is a discussion document produced as part of the process of putting together a national strategy for the arts and media. It does not form part of the strategy. Neither does it express any sort of 'official' view. It was written in order to focus discussion and stimulate ideas.

WHY?

The arts and media in Britain are in renaissance. Over the last decade, they have shown a confidence and diversity never seen before. In quality of work and audience demand, the arts and media have never looked healthier or more central to people's lives. More than ever before, the arts are a source of civic pride as well as personal enrichment.

The arts and media in Britain are in crisis. Scarcely a day goes by without press stories of theatres facing closure, grants being cut or audiences declining; of a lack of good innovative work in all art forms; of the absence of a sense of direction, purpose and adventure.

These views may not be incompatible, and each has some truth. What is beyond doubt is that ideas of what is art have expanded; that demand has rightly grown for access to the arts, film and broadcasting to be the right of all rather than the privilege of the few; and that resources, both public and private, have struggled to keep up. Growth in the variety of the arts contains its own problems. So how can the strategic injection of public money, and the growth of partnership with the private sector, encourage new developments? What should the priorities be? How do we make sure that the opportunity to enjoy the arts is spread ever more widely throughout society?

This is where the national arts and media strategy comes in. In 1990, the Minister for the Arts asked the arts and media funding bodies (the Arts Council of Great Britain, the British Film Institute, the Crafts Council and the Regional Arts Associations/ Regional Arts Boards) to prepare a national strategy. One of its purposes is to provide the basic framework for their work. The Scottish and Welsh Arts Councils are conducting parallel exercises; and the local authorities and museums funding bodies are also associated with the strategy.

A further purpose is to consider whether the public money spent on the arts and media has been used to best effect, and how those responsible can do better in the future. It is important that all those with experience of and a passion for the arts and media provide support, assistance and advice to get the strategy right. Most important, it must be seen as a strategy for the arts and media, not for the bureaucrats.

HOW?

The paper in this folder is part of this process. It is one of a series of discussion documents; each is available free on request. Responses to them will be collated by the National Arts and Media Strategy Unit. Arising from this, a draft of the strategy will be prepared by Spring 1992. This too will be available for comment. The final version of the national arts and media strategy will be completed by Summer 1992. The hope is that the resulting document will be slim, challenging and readable - and that it will provide a mission statement for the arts and media over the next decade, as well as setting out clear goals and targets.

The national arts and media strategy will not write a single novel, put on a single play or make a single film. What it can help bring about, if the funding bodies receive the help of those who care about the arts and media, is the maximum opportunity for such creativity to flourish and for it to enrich the lives of ever more people. Your contribution to this process will be valuable and valued. Please send your views on this discussion document to the address below, to arrive by 30 November 1991.

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DANCE

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De uitleentermijn bedraagt een maand. Mits tijdig
aangevraagd is verlenging met een maand moge-
lijk, tenzij de publikatie inmiddels is besproken.

De uitleentermijn is verstreken op:

1 APR. 1996

NATIONAL ARTS AND MEDIA STRATEGY: DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON DANCE

This paper has been written in order to generate discussion and debate. It is not a chapter of the national arts and media strategy or a definitive statement.

We should like to hear what you believe may be the key issues throughout the area of dance over the next few years. With the paper as background, we should welcome views on all or any of the following questions, as well as on any other matters connected with dance on which you wish to comment. Throughout these questions, 'dance' should be taken as a general term including, for instance, classical ballet, African people's dance and contemporary dance. But please feel free to comment on particular forms of dance.

The paper

1. Does the paper raise and deal adequately with the key issues? If not, where and how could it do better?

Developments in the art form

2. What have been the most exciting developments in dance over the past five years, in England or elsewhere? What may be possible exciting areas for development over the next five?
3. Where and how are the edges blurring between dance and other art forms, and between different forms of dance? What does this mean for dancers, choreographers, other artists, and audiences?

Public funding

4. Is the current public funding of dance (including funding by the local authorities) spent to best effect? If not, how could it be improved? In particular, is it right that 75% of total current Arts Council dance funding should go to the three largest classical ballet companies?
5. If there were a significant increase (say, 30% in real terms) in the public funding of dance, what should be the priority areas for these additional resources? Why?
6. A common complaint is that the public funding bodies focus resources too much on arts organisations and do not concern themselves enough with artists as such. Do you agree with this view?

/...

Dance in society

7. Is enjoyment of dance related to levels of education and social class? If so, how might the effects of this be countered?
8. How do you see the relationship between the commercial and non-commercial dance sectors? How would you like to see this relationship develop over the next ten years?
9. How do you see the relationship between dance and television? How would you like to see this relationship develop over the next ten years?
10. What are likely to be the key effects on dance in this country of international developments within Europe and elsewhere?
11. What scope is there to develop the relationship between dance performance and participation in dance?
12. How do you see the relationship between dance and education (including schools, further and higher education, and informal education)? How would you like to see this relationship develop over the next ten years?
13. What are the priorities for the development of Black dance in the next decade?
14. Some forms of dance seem to appeal predominantly to women. What are the implications of this ?
15. What are the key issues relating to dance and disability?

Management, training and resources

16. What are the major needs in terms of physical infrastructure (such as buildings and equipment) if dance is to achieve its full potential? How are these needs likely to change over the next ten years?
17. What will be the major issues in the areas of training and management for the dance profession over the next ten years?

**NATIONAL ARTS AND MEDIA STRATEGY UNIT
AUGUST 1991**

NATIONAL ARTS AND MEDIA STRATEGY

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON DANCE

SUSAN HOYLE

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Preface

This discussion paper is primarily concerned with professional dance which is made and performed for artistic purposes. However, it takes account of the many other ways in which people engage with dance today. It is not a policy statement or an expression of my personal views, nor is it a comprehensive survey of the current state of the dance profession. Its intention is to provoke, stimulate debate, and prompt suggestions of ways in which dance can be developed and supported in the future.

The starting point for this paper is STEPPING FORWARD, a report by Graham Devlin, published in February 1989, which examined the national requirements for professional dance in England and reviewed the pattern of dance funding which had been introduced in the 1960s. Its recommendations (which are summarised in the appendix) form the basis of a policy for dance which has been jointly agreed by the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations.

This paper reviews the findings of STEPPING FORWARD and the effect of following up its recommendations. I have taken into account the social, political and economic developments which have occurred in the last two years, reconsidered the condition of the dance profession in 1991, its existing and potential audiences, and reviewed progress on developing a supportive structure for dance.

Responses to this paper will inform the drafting of a national strategy for the arts and media and establish a framework for the way in which the Arts Council and Regional Arts Boards plan their support for dance. I hope the strategy for dance can be based on understanding, trust and clear vision shared by artists, arts agencies and all those engaged with dance.

This paper has been produced in consultation with the dance officers of the Regional Arts Associations and the Arts Council. It draws extensively on the recent report DANCE TOWARDS 2000; on papers written by Rachel Gibson, Margaret Hurd and Lynn Maree; and on other sources listed in the appendix.

What is dance?

We can all dance, and everyone has an equal right to dance. All forms of engagement with dance are of value - whether you are a creator, performer, spectator, or all three.

Dance is central to our culture. Dance celebrates the potential of the body to communicate the full range of human experience. It is a powerful and direct means of understanding ourselves and our physical relationship to the world in which we live. Dance expresses and communicates that understanding through movement.

Dance can be appreciated for its own sake - as an exploration of body rhythms, spatial tensions and relationships. It can describe and comment on events, it can cross linguistic barriers. Dance offers creative opportunities for self-expression, interpretation, interaction and communication.

Throughout the country, young people are creating and performing their own dances, while enthusiasm for ballroom dancing, traditional folk, popular and social dances appears to continue unabated. Everyone dances in their own way - it might be disco, jazz-exercise, house, bhangra-beat or hip-hop. We should value the dance people create and perform, whatever form it takes.

Only about 10% of those who attend dance classes or workshops go to see dance performances - does that make their way of engaging with dance of less value than the member of the Royal Ballet's audience whose ticket is heavily subsidised?

In assessing the use of public funds to develop access to dance, should we take a more open approach to "dance" and how we define access? The 1987 Household Survey reported that 5.5 million people were taking part in dance, making it one of the country's leading participatory activities. In 1991, this figure is estimated as being in excess of 6 million.

Whilst this paper concentrates on those dance forms currently recognised by agencies like the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations, it questions whether our definitions of dance are too narrow. Some forms of dance are rich in innovation, experimentation and diversity, but have immediate appeal for relatively few. On the other hand, is popular appeal the most significant factor in deciding whether or not a particular company or artist should be given a grant?

Dance and dancers

Never before has dance in this country been so diverse, and so innovative in its collaboration with composers, visual artists, opera and theatre directors, and film and video producers.

Dance is established as a school examinations subject, as a university degree and a subject for postgraduate study. Audiences are demanding a wide choice of dance, including classical ballet, African People's dance, physical theatre, jazz, new dance and contemporary dance theatre. Choreographers from the subsidised dance profession are finding employment in opera, commercial theatre or rock video. Dance is well placed for international exchange, and after 1992 there should be opportunities for new collaborations with European artists and promoters.

Despite these achievements, the dance profession seems to be as deeply demoralised and nervous as it was two or three years ago, when research was underway for STEPPING FORWARD. In spite of efforts to strengthen the support system for dance, certain sectors of the population still have limited or no access to dance performances, due to social, geographical or economic barriers. In the dance profession itself, pay and working conditions for many dancers are inadequate.

Peter Brinson in his article "Towards A New Dance Policy For Europe" (Ballett International January 1991) suggests that the situation in dance replicates the wider social structure in Britain today. Only about a third of the dance profession - the members of the six largest ballet and contemporary dance companies funded by the Arts Council - receive at least the recommended Equity minimum salary all year round, have paid holidays, pension schemes, access to resettlement funds and medical expertise. These dancers are also the only ones able to enjoy regular classes and rehearsals in ventilated, heated studios at their home base. However, only the Royal Ballet companies are building-based, and even they do not have exclusive or even priority use of their "home" theatres.

Some dancers obtain work in commercial theatre, in particular musicals. Jobs are not secure, and often lack artistic challenge with long runs of one production. Choreographers and dancers tend to have low profile status within this sector, their talent largely unrecognised. Many British dancers choose to work abroad where pay, status and conditions are better than in this country.

The majority of the dance profession is denied access to basic working conditions. About a third of the profession works with companies which receive modest annual grants from the Arts Council or Regional Arts Associations. These groups have a core of dancers on salary (at least for part of the year) and have consistent administrative support, albeit often part-time. Some of them are also able to

employ musicians for some performances. They are generally performing on a regular touring circuit, and attract the attention of the national press, at least occasionally.

The remaining 30% of the dance profession is composed of those who, in Brinson's view, have done most to bring about the overall development of the art form, the expansion of dance performance and the increased interest in dance during the last decade.

However, members of this group usually work for low pay, or for nothing, rehearsing in badly equipped spaces. This is the independent sector - often unsubsidised, at best receiving occasional one-off project-funding. The South Asian Dance profession launched its own development organisation, ADiTi, in 1989; and 1990 saw the formation of the British Association of Choreographers, which joins other agencies such as the Community Dance and Mime Foundation and Dance UK. Together, these organisations have the potential to offer powerful support for professional dancers and to lobby for their needs.

Dancers urgently need improved pay and working conditions if they are to reach their full creative potential. Dancers need improved access to appropriate rehearsal and performance facilities, better health care and insurance, enhanced training opportunities, expert advice and information at a local and regional level, and professional administrative and marketing support. Independent dancers earn very little during their relatively short and irregular working lives, and need career counselling, grants for retraining and professional reorientation to help them "resettle" after they stop performing.

Supporting creativity

Is dance a victim of its own success? Dance today presents new challenges to artists and audiences. Choreographers demand more of performers - whether in technical standards, a willingness to take physical risks, or an openness to contributing to the creative process and collaborating on equal terms with performers from other art forms. A more complex use of gesture and facial expression is being explored and narrative structures abandoned in favour of montage or collage, reflecting the disrupted environment of urban living.

In spite of the diversity of British dance, promoters complain about the limited availability of high quality creative product at a price they can afford. This is partly the result of a relatively new funding policy - to fund fewer dance companies and artists, but at a level that reflects more accurately their needs.

There are those who would prefer funds to be spread more thinly, claiming, for instance, that the imprimatur of a regional or national funding logo can open up other funders' doors and inspire confidence in promoters. The demand on the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations is at least 4 or 5 times as much as the funds available - and the quantity, quality and diversity of applications is increasing. Hence many applicants are turned away - more so than ever before - and the independent sector of the profession feels demoralised. Faced with stiff competition, applicants query the criteria and process by which funding decisions are made.

Yet choreographers and dancers are often unwilling to offer a judgment on the work of fellow artists and to be empowered within the funding system. How could creative artists be more fully involved in the development of dance policy and in the funding processes?

High expectations are placed on those lucky enough to receive funding, who then feel nervous about taking artistic risks. They feel the pressure to "perform", to provide "value for money", and in so doing are in danger of stifling the creative talent for which they were awarded funding in the first place. Subsidised companies feel they must remain in the public eye. Only a small number apply for funding for research, training or choreographic awards. Funders should promote such awards in order to support the development of mature artists. At least 10% of dance subsidy should be specifically targetted at research and experimentation.

At the same time, rigorous artistic assessment must be applied. A grant is not a pension. There must be flexibility within the funders' coffers to respond to new talent and new developments in dance, including collaborative work involving other art forms.

Perhaps nowhere is the pressure greater than in African People's and South Asian dance, where the small number of artists and companies who receive funding are viewed as "flagships" for their dance form. This can place huge expectations on those few to inspire and resource the profession, and build audiences for their dance form.

The Arts Council and Regional Arts Boards must be prepared to receive an increase in applications from this area, and in the absence of additional funds, respond from within existing resources. Advisers involved in the decision-making process must have training in the aesthetics of dance emanating from our culturally diverse society. Conferences and seminars are needed to generate debate and demonstrate the strength and potential of African People's and South Asian dance. Organisations whose remit is for Black dance in all its diversity must be concerned with the art form developing, not just its artists. The establishment of national schools for training in South Asian and African People's dance must be a priority.

Training

There are over 20 accredited independent vocational schools in this country. Between them, they provide for the training of dancers and choreographers in ballet, contemporary and commercial stage dance forms, for community dance workers, ballet teachers and dance notators. Provision for dance training is unparalleled anywhere in the world with the possible exception of North America. When the relative size and population of this country is taken into account, the British picture remains impressive. Nevertheless, the future of our schools is under threat, because local authorities are curtailing or cutting grants to students. It is essential for the future of British dance that a centrally funded network of vocational schools is established.

Evidence of the quality of British dance training is provided by the increasing number of foreign students we attract (a rise of 17% in this academic year). However, there is still no broad-based dance training available which considers the holistic needs of the dancer, his or her future career prospects at the end of a performing career, and the need to develop skills of articulacy and management. More attention needs to be paid to nurturing young choreographic talent.

In-service training provision within the dance profession has focused on the needs of choreographers, dancers, and administrators. There should be increased training opportunities for other artists working in dance. The Arts Council should revive its scheme to train set and costume designers for dance, and perhaps give help to lighting designers and television directors. Better resourced dance companies should assist in the training and development of dance workers from the independent sector.

Equal opportunities

Everyone has an equal right to dance, but do they get it? Dance has pioneered important initiatives in equal opportunities in the arts, especially in the areas of education and community activity. In the mainstream of the profession, there are major areas to be addressed, including the integration of Black workers, the employment of women, and disability rights. The Arts Council and Regional Arts Boards should be more insistent when appraising the organisations they fund, and establish targets to measure the implementation of equal opportunities policies.

British dance in the twentieth century has been mainly shaped by women, but few senior managers in the large dance companies are women, there is only one woman artistic director amongst the Arts Council's revenue clients, and there are few opportunities for women choreographers in the more conventional dance forms. And yet it is predominantly women who want to train as dancers, who make up the majority of the audience, and who dominate the amateur movement and the teaching profession. Most of the talented administrators of small and medium sized companies are women. Men are perhaps not attracted to work in a field which lacks status, offers low salaries and has no career structure. Educational initiatives, the work of dance amateurs and the youth dance movement have done much to challenge the traditional image of male dancers, as have companies such as Phoenix and The Featherstonehaughs. Much more still has to be done to address the stereotypes found in narrative ballets, dancers' training and the public perception of dance.

The politicisation of the arts and disability movement has impacted on dance, and many professional companies and dance amateurs are now actively and effectively engaged in work with people with disabilities. An increasing number of performance opportunities are offered for people with disabilities by companies such as Amici and Carousel, who are changing the established dance aesthetic. Theatres which present dance still have some way to go in making performances and rehearsals accessible to people with disabilities, and touring companies must continue to press for equal access for all.

Developing dance audiences

"Supply creates its own demand". There are those who argue there is demand for dance, but not enough product available, and a lack of suitable performance spaces and expert promoters to present the work.

To seek evidence of demand from audience figures can be misleading. For instance, contemporary dance is the art form with the lowest proportion of the population attending (3.8% according to Target Group Index statistics for 89/90). Dance's strong appeal for women may have an adverse effect on audience figures

as a whole. 8.4% of women attend ballet, compared to 3.0% of men. But women earn less than men, often have child care responsibilities, are more likely to be dependent on public transport, and may not wish to be out alone at night. Should we take steps to overcome these barriers to attending dance performances? Should more attention be given to transport arrangements, creche facilities and the timing of performances?

Classical ballet can attract high attendances. For example, English National Ballet gave 261 performances in 1989/90, with audiences totalling about 330,000. However, the economic recession has led to greater resistance from ballet audiences to paying high ticket prices.

All the ballet companies have active education programmes, and want to attract audiences to innovatory work. However, at a time of economic recession, venue managers tend to play safe, audiences are offered a limited range of product and the ballet companies are unable to realise their full artistic potential. Market-led repertory can appear staid and lead to lacklustre performances from dancers who are on stage 6 or 7 times a week in the same production.

Statistics on audiences for dance other than for large scale companies are incomplete. There is no comprehensive data on the important and increasingly popular work by smaller groups and independent artists. However, there are some pointers to indicate the potential for audience growth.

Dance Umbrella's contemporary dance festival increased its audiences to an average of 77% last year; the 1991 Leicester International Dance Festival programmed 33 performances and related events; and audience figures for the first ever dance festival in Newcastle totalled 60,000. In more rural areas such as Suffolk, imaginative programming by a venue director, supported by amateur activity, can develop enthusiastic local audiences, as is evidenced by the dance following for performances at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds. In London, the Place Theatre has already proved that there is a public eager to see contemporary dance. A loyal, knowledgeable, committed audience has been nurtured, and increased dramatically over the last 3 years. Most of them are under 35, over a third attend dance classes, and about half go at least four times a year to see contemporary dance. The Place is planning to present over 130 dance performances in 91/92, and expects to attract audiences in excess of 20,000 to its small studio theatre.

Flamenco and Raqs Sharqui are attracting increasing public interest, whilst studies on South Asian dance and African People's dance have revealed their potential appeal. Research amongst attenders and non-attenders at dance performances demonstrated that the variety of "likes" relating to Black dance far exceed those relating to ballet and contemporary dance.

Ballet and contemporary dance were liked because they were professional, athletic, artistic and creative; contemporary dance was also seen as powerful and emotional. Black dance had a number of additional factors working in its favour: it was liked because it was compelling, distinct, new, expressive and not formalised. Amongst managers of 51 venues who had booked an African or Caribbean dance company the response was overwhelmingly positive. It is clear that promoters should have the opportunity to find out more about African and South Asian dance, and that the touring companies must be adequately resourced for their marketing operations.

Audiences are demanding a regular diet of dance options. We need more widely available opportunities for people throughout the country to see dance. The public's enthusiasm for dance must be exploited, and the time is right for investment in dance development. This year's Brighton Festival placed more emphasis than ever on dance within its general arts programme. Director Gavin Henderson highlighted the demand for innovative and challenging work: "There's a catchphrase I heard once which said that a festival is about knowing what the public wants before the public knows it wants it".

Dance and media

Dance intrudes into our living rooms via television, and yet there are few household names in dance.

Television offers an effective way of marketing and raising the profile of any arts event. It can provide an alternative for thousands whose access to live performance is limited. Greater attention should be paid to television viewing figures when "counting" the audiences for different art forms.

The BBC states that viewing numbers for dance on television are almost always much higher than for opera, even though dance is rarely scheduled at peak times: only 500,000 for "Cosi Fan Tutte" for example, compared to well over 2 million for Northern Ballet Theatre's "A Simple Man". Improved scheduling of dance programmes, with slots within specialist broadcasts such as those targeted at young people, could attract even bigger audiences. Dance created for television offers exciting artistic potential.

Deregulation has resulted in the most radical developments in British broadcasting since the launch of independent television in the mid-fifties. The arrival of satellite coupled with the expansion of terrestrial channels into day-time broadcasting and the possibilities of cable has massively increased the viewer's choice. Television has a voracious appetite for new material, so why does it not take more advantage of dance?

Radio and press coverage also play important roles in informing us about the choice of dance available. Editorial coverage is crucial. There is a need for strong advocates for dance in the print media. Why not produce a widely available dance magazine aimed at the youth market? There should be improved outlets for writing about dance, a more informed approach from critics about the spectrum of dance, and a readiness by the national press to cover dance activities outside London. Choreographers must be willing, and able, to talk (and write) about their work, and the profession must not be shy in promoting individual personalities across the whole range of dance activity. Commercial exploitation of dance performances through videos and soundtrack recordings, available through high-street outlets, would also contribute to this heightened profile.

The forthcoming year of dance in 1993 provides an opportunity to improve public perception of dance and to promote it as an accessible, exciting activity.

Touring

Most dance companies tour. Touring is a well-established habit, it appears, but is it necessary, or even advisable?

Attention needs to be focused on the theatres who book the companies, as well as the companies themselves. The difficulties of mixed programming are recognised - difficulties in building up a balanced repertory and in establishing an artistic identity whilst offering a choice of product for different audiences. A circuit of venues appropriate for and committed to dance presentation has yet to be identified, and properly supported. There may be a need for a number of different circuits, specialising in particular forms such as that being established in the South West for South Asian dance. The choice of venues to be included on these circuits will be dictated as much by the commitment of their programmer to dance as by the technical facilities of the theatre. Nottingham Playhouse's initiative in programming a short season of dance with Kokuma, Nahid Siddiqui, Shobana Jeyasingh and Phoenix provides a useful model for other producing theatres. On a regional basis, consortia of dance promoters should be encouraged.

Venues need to be more aware of the range of work available. Promoters' travel grants and showcases can go some way towards this. If we succeed in encouraging venues to develop high profile, more imaginative dance programmes, we must expect programmers to clamour for additional funds to commission dance artists to create work. But this can only come when a number of commissioning programmers have been identified who are committed to artistic experiment rather than being dominated by market interests.

There are many problems for the large companies. Difficulties have been caused by the management of most of the venues able to accommodate full-length ballet classics. Their programming of long runs of popular musicals, and the frequency of tours by Soviet ballet companies, some of doubtful artistic quality, restrict the availability of these venues for dance.

Companies touring to medium sized theatres (seating 300 to 1000) are under-resourced, even those who have been given additional funds to expand into this area such as Adzido, Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Theatre, Phoenix, The KOSH, Suraya Hilal, and the Siobhan Davies Dance Company. The choice and range of product is certainly greater than 5 or 6 years ago, when only Extemporary, Janet Smith and Dancers, and Mantis were receiving revenue funding to tour on this circuit.

A small-scale "safe house" network must also be established where more experimental work can be seen. Dance should no longer be shown in venues that are not equipped to present the work at its best. It is in relation to small-scale work that one wonders who really benefits from touring. In attempting to ensure people throughout the country have access to a range of high quality dance work, do we underestimate the effectiveness and value of site specific work, performances by youth and community groups, and residencies by professional companies in educational settings?

Ways other than touring are being found to ensure there is wide geographical distribution of dance. In France, choreographers were "implanted" to regional centres; in England, it seems more appropriate to move a large company which has its own built-in support system, such as the Birmingham Royal Ballet. Other companies, such as Adventures in Motion Pictures, are developing a second artistic home away from their main base. There are several alternatives to small-scale touring which might be better for both artists and their audiences.

International exchange

Dance as a non-verbal art form is ideally suited to exploit the rapidly expanding international market. Major overseas tours by ballet companies receive a fairly high profile: the two visits by the Royal Ballet to the United States this year are current examples.

Black dance forms and experimental work are doing much to raise the standing of British culture overseas. A healthy dialogue is being established between Black British dancers and artists from Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent. The artistic quality of British dance has been recognised, by prestigious international awards and by invitations to appear in overseas festivals. Informed

demand from overseas promoters is increasing. They are being educated about the quality and diversity of British dance through knowledgeable dance programmers in this country; they have access to the new library of dance videos at The Place's national dance agency; and educational videos are available produced through the "Taped" scheme, funded by the Arts Council and British Council. Ways must be found of enabling more companies and artists to produce their own videos and promotional packs. We need to demonstrate the greatest strength of British dance in the 1990s - its diversity.

The traffic cannot be all one way. Dance artists and audiences in this country must have access to artists from overseas. Dance Umbrella continues to play a vital role in promoting dance exchange, particularly with Western Europe and the United States. Val Bourne has advised on the establishment of international dance festivals in Leicester and Newcastle. There has already been exchange between youth dance groups and vocational schools, and this can be built on.

There are some major difficulties in developing international dance exchange, specifically in relation to the presentation of incoming work. Firstly, we have few large scale venues suitable for the presentation of ballet. London in particular desperately needs a theatre where dance could be programmed on a regular basis. Secondly, the expertise of British dance promoters needs to be developed. Research abroad should be financed, including attendance at arts trade fairs and festivals, and dance showcases organised. Thirdly, funds have to be made available so that British promoters can offer appropriate fees to visiting artists. Different structures and cultural perceptions will present a challenge. Finally, the restrictive practices of the Musicians Union in relation to the use of recorded music must be challenged.

The Arts Council has already deregulated its grants, and artists based overseas can apply for, and receive, funding. Programmers in Britain are now able to commission choreographers from overseas and develop partnerships for international co-productions. A scheme could be developed to offer British-based choreographers placements overseas, and invite overseas choreographers to work here for a time in exchange. The national dance agencies can take a lead in this, working together with artists, promoters and producers. The national arts and media strategy must include a policy and development plan for furthering this kind of creative exchange.

The British dance profession looks jealously at its European counterparts, and in particular the Netherlands and France, where public funding is higher and the profile of dance greater.

Last year the French Ministry of Culture's Delegation a la Danse surveyed the French dance scene during the 1980s. It recognised that dance had become a

considerable social phenomenon in France, and made increased funds available. Investment of this order might seem unlikely in this country. Nevertheless, Britain has many reasons to be proud. Mention has already been made of the diversity of dance produced here and of the quality of our training provision. Overseas funding agencies are impressed by our management placement scheme which provides administrators for small companies and independent artists, and are monitoring closely the pilot national dance agencies. In the field of dance education and amateur activity, we are at the forefront.

Education

Dance is taught in primary, secondary and special schools, in colleges and institutes of further and higher education.

For the purpose of the National Curriculum, dance is within Physical Education (PE). The PE Working Group's Interim Report describes dance as an art form, and as an essential element in a broad and balanced PE programme. It recommends a specific programme of study for dance which could be delivered by other departments such as performing or creative arts.

The educational benefits of dance are evident - enrichment of pupils' cultural expectations, their aesthetic sensitivity and creativity, dance's potential for multicultural and cross artform collaboration, its use as a stimulus for other academic disciplines and its role in developing non verbal communication skills and body awareness.

Dance requires expert teachers, with access to specialist training and INSET provision. There is a concern that dance advisory posts within some local education authorities are under threat. The loss of such posts would have serious long-term effects on the development of dance education in this country.

Historically, a number of educational initiatives have occurred within the dance profession, many of which have provided models for other art forms. Dynamic partnerships have been established between schools and the national network of professional dance companies, artists, animateurs and other agencies concerned with the promotion of dance.

However, education budgets within dance companies are potential victims of enforced economies, sometimes being seen as less central to a company's main mission of presenting professional dance performance. This perception is leading, in some cases, to a marginalisation of education officers and a consequent erosion of their status within their organisations. If we value participation, we must resist this trend.

In community dance a broadening range of dance is being created. More young people are being enabled to create and perform and to aspire to a career in dance, which makes the demise of funding for vocational training all the more poignant.

In spite of gaps in some areas, no other country in the world has such an integrated, cohesive pattern of provision for dance education.

Dance animateurs

Developed from a handful of pilot schemes in the late 1970s, today there is a national network of some 150 dance "animateurs". An animateur is usually a professionally trained dance artist who provides a range of dance activity within a specific locality. They are mediators between education, the professional arts world, and their community.

One of the great success stories of dance, they have been instrumental in raising public awareness, encouraging new audiences and new artists, and building relationships between them. Individually they work in different ways, together they have done much to develop "grassroots" dance provision.

In the main, animateur posts are established through funding partnerships between regional and local funders. Many are now permanent local authority posts, others have established independent trusts. Although there are potential new funding partners, such as the Sports Council and Health and Education authorities, many are facing a crisis in the funding of their posts, have little access to in-service training, and no career structure.

An action plan must be drawn up to ensure the continued funding of animateur posts and the development of the network. This will include the appointment of more Black dance and music animateurs. The Community Dance and Mime Foundation, which provides a development agency for practitioners, will be expected to take the lead in developing this plan, in consultation with other agencies, and to be a strong national voice for dance in the community.

Infrastructure

Much has been written about the weak "infrastructure" for professional dance. By infrastructure, we mean the human and building resources which provide a permanent framework of support - a foundation for the art form.

Dance as we know it today is a young and growing art form. Literature has a public library system, drama regional repertory theatres and amateur dramatic societies, the visual arts a chain of museums and galleries, and music a network of concert halls and orchestras. Now, six national dance agencies are being

established on a pilot basis in Birmingham, Leeds, Leicester, London, Newcastle and Swindon. They are the beginning of a national support system for dance.

An initial investment of £300,000 over two years will support only these six agencies on a seed-funding basis - increased funds will be needed if dance is to have an adequate support system throughout the country by the time of the millennium. Potentially, these agencies have a vital role in meeting many of the needs that have already been identified. They will offer training, management support, and creative opportunities for artists. Some of them will be programmers and producers themselves - others will work in close partnership with a group of promoters. They will have links with each other, with promoters and artists in this country and overseas, and with local, regional and national agencies concerned with dance. National dance agencies are essential to the implementation of the national arts and media strategy, and to the development of dance throughout the country.

National dance agencies also have a key role to play in developing spaces for the creation and performance of dance. In conjunction with local authorities and the business sector, the Arts Council and new Regional Arts Boards must find a way of encouraging initiatives in this area. Pressure must be put on government, and possible new funding sources lobbied, such as the national lottery.

Few large scale venues have rehearsal studios on site - and if they do, they rarely have sprung floors. Showers are a rarity in small scale venues, and dancers often have to perform on unsuitable floor surfaces, risking serious injury. No dance company has its own theatre. The problem is so great that a national audit of dance spaces should be commissioned, which would identify physical requirements, including areas of investment such as new dance floors, shower facilities, lighting rigs. Through this process, the commission could also help promoters, planning authorities, and others understand the particular needs of dance and dancers. The survey would of necessity include regional producing theatres, which are, in terms of facilities, amongst those venues best equipped to present dance.

One of the greatest needs is for a national dance house. For many years there has been widespread recognition that the country needs a properly equipped and resourced theatre, primarily dedicated to dance, with the facilities and seating capacity to programme visits by major British and international companies. In spite of a number of initiatives over the years, this need has yet to be met. Indeed, dance requires a network of dance houses of all sizes throughout the country, each led by a director knowledgeable and enthusiastic about dance.

Funding

Dance is a major art form, but budgets for dance at the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations are the lowest of all the performing arts, and unlike music and drama, there is only limited funding from the commercial sector of the arts profession and from local authorities. There are no West End transfers for dance companies, no lucrative recording deals or book sales, and although individual dancers may earn modest amounts from appearing in rock videos, the music business makes no investment in the dance profession.

Local authority funding for dance is relatively recent, and most evident in partnerships supporting amateur posts and national dance agencies. More substantial sums have been given by Birmingham City Council, West Yorkshire and Leeds City Council. These outstanding authorities fortunately do not share the attitude of the Tower Hamlets councillor who wrote bluntly to Chisenhale Dance Space in response to an appeal against withdrawal of funding: "Thank you for your letter. In my view the arts are a luxury. Yours sincerely..."

Dance is collaborative, and dance budgets support a range of arts activity. All the larger companies tour with orchestras or music ensembles; Rambert, for example, commissions visual artists such as Howard Hodgkin to work with the company or composers like Gavin Bryars; Michael Nyman created a new score for Shobana Jeyasingh; and The KOSH combines dance with theatre, text and acrobatics.

The Arts Council budget for dance in 1991/92 is just over £18 million, about half the size of that for drama (nearly £36 million) or music (over £32 million). Dance is allocated 11% of Arts Council spending in England, drama over 22% and music more than 20%. The Council's touring allocation devotes only a tiny fraction of its budget to dance, and almost all of that is spent on middle scale ballet.

Almost 90% of the Arts Council's dance budget is allocated to the 6 revenue clients (4 ballet companies and 2 contemporary). The rest has to cover small and middle scale touring companies, innovation, festivals, agencies, education and training initiatives, international exchange, and to respond to the full range of dance forms, many of them very popular. The dance cake is nowhere near big enough to allow a full spectrum of companies to flourish at every scale. It is vital that the largest companies are able to work properly to the highest standards, but has the Arts Council shown excessive enthusiasm for monoliths? Is it the best use of funds to devote almost 75% of the Arts Council's dance budget to three large classical ballet companies? Could funds have been better spent in last 10 years on supporting a wider range of work? Should percentage targets be set to achieve a more equitable spread of funding across all dance forms?

A healthy dance ecology means that the large companies should be complemented by a wide range of organisations with different briefs and ambitions. Additional funding of £3 or £4 million would provide a significant investment for the future of dance, supporting artistic research and development, the growth of Black dance, and building up a network of national dance agencies. A further £2 million would underpin this through financing education initiatives, strengthening the touring companies and international festivals.

The situation for dance in Scotland and Wales is not much better. The Scottish Arts Council allocates 11.5% of its budget to dance, 20% to drama and 42% to music. In Wales, dance receives less than 4%, drama 25% and music 34%. A recent survey of 10 of the current Regional Arts Associations in England is consistent with this picture. The biggest dance spender is Yorkshire Arts, contributing 6% of its budget to dance: at the other end of the scale is South East Arts, where only 2% of arts spending is allocated to dance. On average, dance receives 4% of total RAA spending, music 10%, and drama 19%. Overall, dance budgets are half the size of those for music and less than a fifth of those for drama. RAA dance budgets often support mime and new circus as well as all forms of dance.

Dance Officers within the Regional Arts Associations have attempted to increase spending on dance by bidding for central one-off funds within their Association, and by negotiating partnership funding, notably with the Sports Council, local authorities, and the education sector, and other funders including the Rural Development Commission, Business Partners in the Arts, Regional Television Trusts and the British Council. The need for dance expertise on the staff of the new Regional Arts Boards is evident - this developing art form needs nurturing by informed and articulate advocates.

London-based artists are suffering from the lack of a strategic planning authority for the city. Moreover, the Arts Council has endeavoured to shift resources outside London, for example by giving priority to funding of new dance productions which are created and premiered outside the capital. In funding terms, the move of Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet to Birmingham, and the insistence that the Royal Ballet tours for two weeks a year, have been more significant.

The dance economy

Ballet companies have had some success in attracting business sponsorship, notably London City Ballet, and the Royal Ballet (through its association with the Royal Opera House), and English National Ballet by organising special events. Such activity is labour intensive, and beyond the means of the smaller companies in other dance forms. The generosity of Digital has benefitted a wide sector of the profession through its awards for creative work. British Petroleum has supported

the education programmes of smaller companies, but on a fixed term basis, and such support is difficult to replace. ADiTi, the National Organisation of South Asian Dance, has obtained funding from the Conservative National Golf Tournament for its awards for young dancers and companies which are being launched this year. The Place Theatre has developed imaginative schemes to generate new income: The Place Portfolio persuaded individual patrons to support newly commissioned choreography as risk investment, whilst Holsten financed the recent international dance season, consequently named "Holsten Horizons".

Grant is a reducing part of touring dance companies' turnover, so they must maximise other income. There is a huge pressure on dance companies to make up funding shortfalls at the box office - box offices over which they have little control, in theatres which have their own pricing policies, local identity, artistic programme and marketing practices. Many venues have financial problems themselves, and so with the slow-down in real personal disposable income, dependence on box office earnings looks risky. The Arts Council's Research and Statistics Unit, in a report published in May 1991, suggested that we can expect ticket sales to grow only sluggishly, by around 1%. The same report estimates that costs for arts companies will grow somewhere between wage inflation (8%) and underlying retail price inflation (5 - 6%) and the projected increase in the government's grant to the Arts Council next year is 3.5%. It is extremely probable, if not inevitable, that dance companies' deficits and overdrafts will continue to rise, unless new ways can be found to exploit dance commercially.

In addition, it should be noted that the recent fascination with the world of the performing arts demonstrated by the Inland Revenue is less an indication of cultural appetite than a signal that the spectre of Schedule E is haunting the feast. All the indications are that, within a very few years, almost all performers will need to be on PAYE contracts rather than on Schedule D. If this comes to pass, either dance artists will suffer a significant drop in take-home pay, or they will be forced to leave the profession. Furthermore, subsistence payments to artists on tour have not kept pace with inflation, and the widening gap may have to be closed by a large contractual settlement.

In sum, the fragile plural dance economy is under attack at a time when the form is in desperate need. Where are the new funding partners, the new sources of income?

Conclusion

Dance is a leading participatory activity. It is highly creative, collaborative and communicative. Dance has the potential to attract large audiences, to take advantage of media technology and opportunities for increased international exchange. A network of national dance agencies is being pioneered which will support the work of artists and provide an infrastructure for the development of the art form.

But dance is in crisis. Pay and working conditions for dancers are inadequate. The small number of professional companies supported on a regular basis are fighting for financial survival. Others are queuing at the door for funds. Dance has a small share of national arts subsidy, and funding is not spread equitably across all dance forms. Historic funding patterns appear hard to break. Vocational training and areas of education provision are under threat. Animateur posts have to be secured. Positive action must be taken to support Black dance in all its diversity.

These needs and many others require urgent action. Dance has been quiet for too long. Its voice has barely been heard. The dance profession, and all those engaged with dance, must articulate the needs of dance with confidence, help devise a strategy, and demand - and take - action.

Summary

Everyone can dance, and everyone has an equal right to dance, whether as creator, performer, spectator, or all three. There are many different forms of dance being practised, including new popular dance developed by young people. All are of value.

Dance in this country is excitingly diverse, innovative and well placed for international exchange. Dance is a leading participatory activity, yet it has a low profile, and most dancers work for little money in poor conditions. More funds are needed to support research and development and to respond to the growth of Black dance. A centrally funded network of vocational schools must be established, between them offering training in a wide range of dance forms.

Progress must be made in implementing Equal Opportunities practice within the profession, particularly the mainstream companies. The popularity of forms other than ballet and contemporary dance must be recognised, and exploited through the media outlets. The dance profession must not be shy in promoting individual personalities across the whole spectrum of dance activity.

Circuits of venues appropriate for, and committed to, dance presentation should be identified, and properly supported. In the longer term, knowledgeable promoters should have an increased involvement in the commissioning of work. On the small scale, ways other than touring are being found to ensure there is a wide geographical distribution of dance.

There is scope for increased international exchange, through commissioning, co-productions and artistic collaboration. The national arts and media strategy must include a policy and development plan for this area.

No other country in the world has such an integrated, cohesive pattern of provision for dance education. One of the great success stories of dance has been the growth of a network of "animateurs". However, the future of this network has yet to be secured, and urgent action is required.

Dance lacks the support systems of other art-forms and in particular has little access to suitable building resources. The new national dance agencies have a key role to play in developing spaces for the creation and performance of dance. It is recommended that a national audit of dance spaces is commissioned, which would help promoters, planning authorities and others understand the particular needs of dance and dancers.

Although dance is a major art form, budgets for dance at the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations are the lowest of all the performing arts and, unlike

music and drama, there is only limited funding from the commercial sector of the arts profession and from local authorities.

As grants become a reducing part of the turnover of dance organisations, deficits and overdrafts will continue to rise, unless new ways can be found to exploit dance commercially.

The dance profession has complained for too long. A more positive approach must be taken. The profession, and all those engaged with dance, must recognise their achievements, articulate their needs, and advocate change.

Recommendations

1. We should celebrate loudly the achievements of British dance: its diversity, vibrancy, inventiveness and international reputation.
2. We should be more generous in our definition of dance, break down hierarchies between dance forms and include participants as valued members of the dance "audience".
3. Dance artists should be better valued - provided with safe working conditions, reasonable pay, health care and support at times of career change.
4. Artists should be encouraged to participate actively in the decision making process for dance policy and funding.
5. All young people should be given equal right to dance training. Talent should be the only criteria.
6. Positive action must be taken by all dance organisations to encourage the involvement of people of all abilities, cultures, ages and of both genders - as artists and audiences.
7. The public's enthusiasm for dance, in all its forms, must be exploited.
8. A more dynamic relationship between dance and the media should be established.
9. Throughout the country theatres of all sizes and with good facilities for dance and enthusiastic programmers should be identified and supported.
10. A national dance house is needed urgently.

11. We should welcome the challenge and creative opportunities of increasing international exchange.
12. We should recognise dance education as of vital importance in developing our dance culture.
13. Dance animateurs posts must be secured and increased.
14. The national dance agency network must be expanded. More specialised dance spaces must be provided.
15. Percentage targets should be set to improve the ratio of public funding going to dance, to match more closely the percentages to drama and music.
16. Dance needs informed and articulate advocates.

APPENDIX 1

Summary of STEPPING FORWARD

STEPPING FORWARD recognised the impoverishment of much professional dance, and suggested that a healthy dance ecology would require the strengthening of support systems throughout the country. The report recommended that this could be helped by the establishment of a national network of dance agencies. Funding should be directed to a group of "core" companies, covering a wide range of dance forms and performing in different types and sizes of venues. Greater attention should be paid to balancing the needs of artists and audiences, with support offered to promoters and producers of dance.

STEPPING FORWARD looked in detail at professional dance activity, its audiences, and the infrastructure for dance throughout the country. Whilst innovation was evident in some dance forms, others - classical ballet in particular - were seen as being in need of creative re-invigoration. The report recommended refreshing the ballet repertory, broadening recruitment policies, and addressing the social challenges of contemporary Britain. The larger touring companies were encouraged to build special relationships with particular geographic centres.

Other recommendations included the strengthening of medium-sized companies across all forms of dance, and the development of a network of venues in which they could perform - with appropriate marketing and programming support. A priority for additional funding was African People's and South Asian dance artists, companies and organisations, with training seen as being of particular importance. Indeed, the report identified enhanced training provision for dance promoters, artists and managers as being a priority need across the profession.

Attendances at performances by the six largest subsidised dance companies - The Royal Ballet, the Birmingham Royal Ballet (formerly Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet), English National Ballet, Northern Ballet Theatre, Rambert Dance Company and London Contemporary Dance Theatre - were shown to be variable, and in overall decline over the 15 years to 1988, partly due to a reduction in the number of performances given by each company. Comprehensive data was not available on audiences for smaller companies and independent artists, but there had been a rapid growth in the number of artists and companies of professional status during this period, and increasing diversity in the dance available to promoters. Indications were of a growing demand for a wider range of dance. The report did not address in detail developments in media technology, including the impact of broadcasting in increasing audiences for a broad range of dance, and the important function of television in relation to education, international exchange, mixed media work and profile-raising.

STEPPING FORWARD stressed the importance of securing funding for amateurs (locally based dance artists), and the need to define criteria for assessing the quality and effect of education work by subsidised dance companies. The report recommended that established dance companies adopt positive policies and practice for equal opportunities.

One recommendation in the report was arts agencies, in particular the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations, should clarify their aims, objectives and priorities for the development of dance. Funders and professional dance workers should draw up in partnership a strategic national plan for the dance.

STEPPING FORWARD suggested that such a strategy should include breaking the London hegemony of dance activity, artists and funding; and offering increased financial resources and appropriate support for research and development by innovative artists. It was hoped that a network of agencies could, in time, offer a support system so that national dance companies of every form and scale could be based throughout the country. The report also emphasised that dance should be at the forefront of developments in international cultural exchange.

APPENDIX 2

Source material includes:

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NOTES

