

UP-STAIRS CLUB

Volume 2

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An Educational Group

The Open House given by the School for the Upstairs Club was a pleasant and festive gathering ending the holiday season and beginning the Club's programs for the coming year. The showing of the movie "The Titan"- the story of Michelangelo's life told with photographs of his art will long be remembered by those who braved the cold weather to come. Also shown was a short film of Melissa Hayden dancing three of the Sleeping Beauty variations - one realized how trite these dances are when shown against the magnificent Michelangelo film. These showings are in keeping with the schools policy to interest students in the other arts. One interesting bit of information uncovered by the Bulletin recently, was the whereabouts of Loie Fuller's birthplace - Fullersburg, Ill. MRS. KRYDA discovered that the unknown village is now part of Hinsdale, Ill. The best thing about the holidays are the unexpected visitors who turn up. Among these this year were GERALD BURKE who now operates his own school in Oakland California. BILL GARY from New York who has his own school and is now a leader in the tap field .. JILL De'COURTNEY spent part of her school vacation here studying .. MARY JOYCE LIND from Des Moines was here for three days .. CHUCK SCHICK in on leave from the army ... JAMES MOORE just back from Europe and the Robbins tour .. PEGGY POWELL home from Salt Lake City where she is studying with the Christiansens .. and the best dividend of all was the visit of ALBIA KAVAN COOPER from Jackson Miss. ... ALBIA was very prominent in many SC programs before she became a Ballet Theatre star to later settle down in her husband's home town- Jackson .. the very interesting exhibit of old photographs on the dressing room walls of Adolph Bolm, Thamar Karsavina, and Vaslav Nijinsky are from the collection of HELEN GARTZ HOWE .. JEANNE SCHULTZ was an after holiday caller as perk as ever .. she now has an act singing and dancing with BASIL CROSS .. DEAN DIGGINS has again been appearing at the

Empire Room .. SC alumnae spent Christmas in various parts of the world..BILL & SHIRLEY REILLY in Holland.. BUD TYGETT in Salzburg Germany.. PAT HEIM & PAT CUMMINGS were in India.. RICHARD KEMMLER in Yugoslavia.. HENRY HOLTH in Munich, Germany.. and BETTE KILDRIDE in Italy... with the holiday mail came other news... PHIL DANA is now playing a new engagement for Uncle Sam.. SPERO PASTOS has left for New York to try his wings as a singer of Folk songs.. he has successfully sung in the local clubs for a year straight ... JOHN CARBO another student now has an Espresso Coffee Shop at Chicago avenue & Rush called the "OBLIQUE" where they have Folk Singing with John at the banjo ... GAIL & EMANUEL WINSTON are expecting sometime in the early summer.. SHIRLEY GOTTLIEB SABLE had a baby girl early in December and shortly after Christmas, WINI & PAUL BOKOR a boy.. VALRI INMAN is to be married in Phoenix Arizona Jan. 23, to David Hahne.. Chicago dancers lost one of their best friends when EDITH BARSTOW passed away in Sarasota Florida Jan. 8, of a brain hemorrhage at 53.. She was always ready to help any dancer from Chicago and when "POWERAMA" was produced here a few years back 33 SC dancers worked for EDITH & her brother RICHARD BARSTOW.. The Chicago Opera Ballet left on its annual tour January 10, with a few last minute surprises- very unexpectedly MR. STONE was on the bus.. BILL MALONEY who was dancing STONE'S roles this season fractured two bones in his ankle and had to remain behind.. the last three days MR. STONE was very busy rehearsing with MELISSA HAYDEN & VERONICA MLAKAR.. he is expected to do only the larger cities... MEL SPINNEY at the last moment was added to the entourage as an extra boy.. ETTA GALLER is Ballet Mistress of the company. BARBARA STEELE & DOLORES LIPINSKI are leading soloists and KAROLY BARTA and WILLARD GLUCK are corp members.. MISS PATRICIA HUTCHINSON a faculty member of a well known College in London England,

was an enthusiastic visitor recently in our school .. she's interested in the freedom with which our students move and their expressiveness .. In New York she studied with Martha Graham and also watched classes at Robert Joffreys .. Just recently GORDANA ARSENIYEVICH won a five year art scholarship in the Fire Prevention contest .. RUTH ANN KOESUN leaves early in March for Ballet Theatre rehearsals .. JOHN KRIZA joins them at the end of the Chicago Ballet tour.

ON THE TEACHING OF AN ART...

By William Maloney

In any teaching of an art, basic principles must be passed on together with the historical background and traditions of the field. In academic circles, the transferral of this material can provide a sufficient - if limited - and self-perpetuating cycle; in the teaching of art, which is by definition creative, it must be only a framework within which the individual is encouraged to develop to the limits of his ability. Otherwise, creativity is filtered out and the art deteriorates into a craft.

In America this deterioration is aggravated by several factors. An expanding population and an increasing interest in self-improvement, together with a lag in the number of physical plants and qualified instructors, have combined in our schools to produce over-crowding and under-teaching. The size of the student body precludes attention to individual needs and puts time at such a premium that maximum information must be supplied during a minimum period. Basic principles can scarcely be enunciated, let alone reiterated, before more advanced material is presented with but cursory attention to the varying learning speeds of the student body. Unfortunate as these pressures are in the teaching of academic subjects, their effects are even more disastrous in the art schools, where successful teaching depends as much or more upon the development of individual expression as it does on the transmission of facts and theory.

Yet, in spite of these characteristically modern pressures, some schools still manage to supply instruction of the highest quality and inspiration. Of these, the Stone-Camryn Ballet School is one. Situated in the Chicago Loop district at 185 West Madison, its physical attributes are immediately conducive to an excellent atmosphere of good teaching. Occupying the upper two floors of an old building formerly a restaurant and lodge hall, it is clean, bright, and spacious. The first floor of the studio holds the office, dressing rooms, waiting room and rest rooms, physically separating the brouhaha of conversation and class preparation from the serious business of taking class. The second floor comprises the actual dance studio; large, well lighted and equipped with mirrors and barres. The floor is even, well sanded and quick. The studio section, as well as the first floor, is kept always neat and clean. Students are required to match up to this standard in their personal cleanliness and are of their practice costumes. Carelessness is not tolerated on any level.

Influenced by high standards, no less apparent in the condition of the physical plant than in the teaching, the average student responds to the Stone-Camryn school with an intense interest and enthusiasm. The majority are seriously interested in dance as a career and work hard at becoming dancers, attending class regularly and putting their utmost effort into each session. In Chicago, it is customary for the student to remain an extended period of time at the same studio. Accordingly, the teacher learns the strong and weak points of each pupil and can approach the task of individual correction with the confidence that time and effort will have a beneficial effect. The character of teaching is therefore not totally abstract; technique can be presented and repeated in accordance with the requirements of the student, rather than as an implementation of an ideal program or preconceived plan. The student receives instruction corresponding to his needs and this attention develops in him a closer personal relationship with the teachers and the school. This regular

attendance also encourages the growth of a more stable relationship among the students themselves. At the same time, a real competitive spirit exists, ameliorated by the knowledge that classmates are friends rather than strangers.

Needless to say, a school of this dimension does not just happen. It is the product of careful planning, long years of experience and hard work, and most of all, the determination and realization of the character and principles of its teachers. Both Mr. Camryn and Mr. Stone have had long and successful careers in performing as well as in teaching. Mr. Camryn, a native of Montana, had his early dance training in Chicago, successively from Adolph Bolm, Vecheslav Swoboda and Laurent Novikoff. He danced for ten years with the Chicago Civic Opera Company during its most brilliant period, appearing in major operatic and ballet roles. Mr. Stone, also from the Middle West, began his career on Broadway, studying and working with such respected teachers as Albertieri, Rambert, and Novikoff. He has been associated with leading European as well as American companies, joining the Chicago Civic Opera as premier danseur in 1934. In their school the best balletic traditions, extending back from their teachers through Bournonville, Cecchetti and Gerdt to sources such as Vestris, Noverre, Blasis and Dupre are continued; directed and enriched through their own wide professional experience.

However, mere breadth of background is no guarantee of superior teaching. From this varied background Mr. Stone and Mr. Camryn have synthesized, on the basis of prolonged observation and study of movement in relation to the body, the best elements of each school, investing the product with the imprint of their original personalities. The technique which they teach cannot be ascribed exclusively to any particular school. Primarily Russian, it contains many characteristics similar to what is taught as the Cecchetti method. The French influence is also apparent. The synthesis of these methods does not alone explain the uniqueness of the school; rather, its individuality is

implicit in the presentation of the resulting technical system.

The ballet classes are separated by the level of student development. No class is allowed to become a routine repetition of the same exercises. From pliés at the barre through the final allegro combination of the class, the repertoire of classical steps is ingeniously presented in unusual combinations, requiring constant active attention from the mind of the pupil. Their classes are designed to develop swiftness and accuracy of observation as well as complete control of the physical apparatus. Each step and its method of execution is accompanied by a more or less detailed explanation of its muscular execution and the specific function of the step and the way they wish it to be done on the development of the muscles, the increase of muscular control or the esthetic appearance of the completed movement. Although their dance training is highly technical, the mastery of a particular technical problem is never regarded as the final product. The overall demands of dance as an art - roles in ballet or total effect of a specific dance concept - is constantly reiterated. In addition, during every class the student has always the example of Mr. Camryn or Mr. Stone's own dancing.

Students at Stone-Camryn have not only the advantage of contact with a broad and logical system of classic dance carefully taught, but in Mr. Camryn's character class are led to explore movement and expression beyond the limits of classical technique. His character work arose from his familiarity and increasing interest in native American and folk art, fostered initially in Montana from his contacts there with various national groups. It is a highly personal system characterized by elements of eccentricity, not pursued as ends in themselves but resulting from a wider investigation of the movement possibilities of the human body than those developed in classical training. In his use of national and folk sources, Mr. Camryn has expanded and theatricalized their relatively simple structure and numerically limited range in a manner

which preserves the spirit and general appearance of the source, adding at the same time sufficient variation and technical innovation to provide interest to an audience supplied with more than an anthropological curiosity. The movements also exhibit many similarities to modern dance, but their range is not rigidly separated from the influence of other, more clearly defined areas of movement. His character work is not based on any particular muscular, spatial or psychological theory, although of course, movement without respect to one or all of these is impossible - as long as the movements consort with the limits of the human body and a guiding artistic purpose, they are allowed. It is unwise to attempt a strict definition of Mr. Camryn's character dancing: one of its organic characteristics is the freedom of expression in movement.

Mr. Stone and Mr. Camryn do not regard teaching merely as a matter of developing a high level of technical accomplishment in their students. Although this aspect of dance education is never slighted, to them it is only the beginning of adequate training for the pupil. Dancing is more than the learning of steps; it is the synthesis of movement, expression, music, and design; closely related to such areas as architecture, literature, sculpture and painting. Consequently appropriate references to related artistic fields are integral to their teaching of dance. Believing themselves that the most successful teaching of any art depends upon the broadest background of interests, they attempt to encourage their students to investigate all of its forms. Music, art exhibits, theatre and literature are recommended and discussed. The student is encouraged to develop an honest and solid personal standard of taste. An active interest in areas of dance other than classic ballet is encouraged. To this end, guest teachers of modern dance are presented as a regular part of the curriculum. As an encouragement to a continued and more organized program of artistic education, the "Upstairs Club" was instituted, an organization of students, alumni and

friends. Meetings are held regularly during which various dance groups, lecturers and movies of related areas of dance and art are presented. As an adjunct, the club periodically publishes a bulletin with news of students and alumni together with articles on the dance and associated subjects.

In addition to these activities, Mr. Camryn and Mr. Stone regularly present concerts of original works, designed to give performing experience to qualified students. In their presentations the demands of the professional theatre are approximated as closely as possible. Over a period of many years, these concerts have been recognized in Chicago as important artistic events.

Nor are other dance teachers or students who are interested in becoming teachers neglected. During each summer term, a special course designed to aid the teacher is presented. During the winter, classes developed with the teacher especially in mind are regularly included in their schedule.

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The final test of any school is not in its size, its method, or the quality of its teachers; but in the quality of its product. Each school will have its quota of superior pupils, whose natural gifts will thrive on almost any instruction. It is not primarily this fortunate minority which provides the measure of effectiveness, but the accomplishments of the larger proportion of students, unblessed perhaps with a genius for the dance; possessing a talent rather, together with determination and interest. In this area, Stone-Camryn most clearly shows the value of its method. The average level of accomplishment among their students is remarkably high. They are aware of the principles which support their technical proficiency. They have been taught, or at least have been made aware, that dance involves an aesthetic as well as a practical level. Those many dancers who have been trained by them and have made careers in ballet companies, Broadway, television, and movies are recognized as products of Stone-Camryn by their facility in a broad range of dance styles, their ability to learn quickly, project

strongly and above all, by the high quality of their movement and technique. More than this, they are aware of dance as an art, and have developed a continuing interest in improving and extending their capabilities.

For those students who become professional dancers, the advantages of the school are directly incorporated into their performance; those who become teachers approach their responsibilities with a thorough knowledge of technique and an enriched vision to pass on to their pupils. For the remainder, whose interests lead them into other fields, the habits of observation, analysis and application demanded of them as dance students are invaluable in any circumstances. Whether or not the students continue dancing, they are left with an active interest in dance as well as in other arts.

The conception of dance and dance training is probably the most influential contribution of the Stone-Camryn school. Through their concert works and classroom education, this conception is translated into an increasingly large, discriminating and informed audience for the dance. Artistically, the most striking vindication of their ideas and methods is in the great number of artists who owe a large portion of their success to Stone-Camryn training.

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ON CLOTHES

Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months.

Oscar Wilde.

There are some on who fine clothes weep.

Montaigne.

Modesty died when clothes were born.

Mark Twain.

To most people a savage nation is one that doesn't wear uncomfortable clothes.

Finley Peter Dunne.

A Sarong is a simple garment carrying the implicit promise that it will not long stay in place.

E. B. White.

One good thing about having one suit of clothes you've always got your pencil.

Kin Hubbard

Neatness is the asepsis of clothes.
Sir Wm. Osler.

ANNA PAVLOWA - 1882-1931.

Almost 30 years have passed since the miracle of Anna Pavlowa's dancing finally came to an end but the heritage of this great artist is still a moving force in the dance today. Her name is still a household word and we owe most of the popularity of ballet today to her. She appeared on most of the stages of the world, leaving a memory of her art in the great theatres of the largest cities and in the smaller towns too. Pavlowa performed with most of the great dancers of her time - Mordkin, Novikoff, and Volinine of the Imperial Ballet of Moscow; Fokine, Bolm, Nijinsky and Vladimiroff of her own St. Petersburg Academy.

Theodore Stier, her musical director from 1910 to 1925, in giving an account of the extensiveness of their tours together, wrote that in the course of his sixteen years association with Pavlowa he travelled 300,000 miles, conducted 3650 performances and over 2000 rehearsals.

Cyril W. Beaumont, London critic and writer wrote, "Pavlowa danced with her whole body, from the crown of her head to the tip of her toe. She danced with such abounding vitality, with such ecstasy of the spirit; she surrendered herself so completely to the mood of the dance; that she became a being transformed."

"She was first and last a great individual artist, a complete unity in herself, who had the supreme power of not only being able to breathe into a dance her own flame-like spirit, but, no matter how many times she had danced it before, to invest it with an air of spontaneity, novelty, and freshness, as though it had but just been born. She was something more than a great artist-dancer. She made her features speak and her body sing."

THE 1950's

The following original ballets were created and performed by the Stone-Camryn Ballet during the past decade.

Created by Bentley Stone.

"REUNION" - with an original score by
Lora Aborn
"FOOFOORAW" Strauss
"LES ENFANT PERDUS" Ravel
"THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL" Gluck
"THE WALL" Auber
"A FRIEND IS SOMEONE WHO LIKES YOU"
. Delius

Created by Walter Camryn.

"ALICE IN WONDERLAND" Rossini
"STAGESTRUCK" Arrangement
"HANSEL AND GRETEL" Humperdinck
"TRIO VARIATIONS" Schubert
"THE STORY OF FERDINAND" Bizet
"FOLK FESTIVAL" Folk Music
"LIKE A WEEPING WILLOW" - with an original score by Norman Curtis.