

# ***Revisioning Purpose: Children, Dance and the Culture of Caring<sup>1</sup>***

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## **ABSTRACT**

***This paper draws widely on theoretical sources, the voices of young people today, and my own interpretations to highlight enduring purposes of dance that cross boundaries of history and culture. Some perennial and emerging problems in children's dance are also examined. The role of dance for children is considered in light of the reality that millions of young people today are being deprived of basic human rights, including the time, space and energy to dance. Inspired by futurist Robert Theobald and other visionary writers, the paper concludes on an optimistic note, proposing that with young people in the lead, dance's ancient meanings can be revisioned to help create a "culture of caring" for children worldwide. The conference presentation will be supported with many visual***

***examples, including images provided by daCi members.***

## **RESUME**

***Ce dossier s'inspire largement de données théoriques, de la voix des jeunes gens d'aujourd'hui et de mes propres interprétations pour faire ressortir les objectifs à longue échéance de la danse qui franchit les limites de l'histoire et de la culture. Quelques problèmes, éternels et émergents, que les enfants rencontrent avec la danse seront aussi examinés. Le rôle de la danse pour les enfants prend en compte la réalité, celle de jeunes gens qui, de nos jours, les droits les plus fondamentaux sont refusés, tel que le temps, l'espace et l'énergie pour pratiquer la danse. Inspirée par le futuriste Robert Theobald et d'autres écrivains visionnaires, l'étude se termine sur une***

## daCi Conference 2000

*louche optimiste, en emettant l'hypothese qu'il faudrait pousser les jeunes a l'avant de la scene pour que les significations des danses anciennes puissent etre reinterpretees et aident a creer "une culture protectrice" pour les enfants du monde entier. La presentation faite a la conference sera alimentee par de nombreux supports visuels et notamment des images fournies par des membres de dad.*

### Soumario

Este documento se refiere principalmente a fuentes teoricas, a las voces de la gente joven de hoy en dia, y a mis propias interpretaciones para destacar aquellos propositos permanentes del baile que cruzan las fronteras de la historia y de la cultura. Algunos de los problemas constantes y emergentes acerca del baile de los ninos van a ser examinados tambien. El papel del baile para los ninos es considerado a la luz de la realidad que muestra a millones de gente joven que en la actualidad son privados de sus derechos humanos basicos, incluyendo el tiempo, el espacio y la energia para bailar. Bajo la inspiracion del futurista Robert Theobald y de otros escritores visionarios, este documento concluye con una observacion optimista, proponiendo que con gente joven en la linea de avanzada, los significados del baile antiguo pueden ser revisados para ayudar a crear una "cultura de preocupacion" por los ninos a traves del mundo. La presentacion en la conferencia tendra el apoyo de muchos ejemplos audiovisuales, incluyendo imagenes proporcionadas por miembros de DaCi.

### REFLECTIONS ON A JOURNEY

As a novice children's dance teacher in the mid-1970s, I came to a conscious decision that children knew more about dance than me. In my desire for objectivity,

legitimacy, and frameworks for dance teaching, I was starting to fear that I might lose something of the dance that 'moved me' as a child. I remembered that dance as being full of impulses, emotions, personal fantasies, contagious rhythms, music, and social excitement. It was also about making up dances that I could repeat and share. I saw these phenomena in my young students and wanted to affirm them - for empathic, artistic, and ethical reasons. I tolerated a lot of chaos and noise as I struggled to facilitate freedom and structure in group dance (all those impulses, all those private fantasies and power struggles!). I'd go home from classes tired but happy.

A few years later, as a novice dance teacher educator in Australia, I began to talk about 'receiving the dance of the child' as a developmental, humanistic basis for working in early childhood dance. At the same time, European researchers in bioaesthetics were studying children's spontaneous play dances for insights into the origins of dance as aesthetic behaviour (Siegfried, 1988). I knew nothing about bioaesthetics in the 1970s, but my doctoral work with young nonverbal deaf-blind children during the '80s convinced me that we humans must be 'wired for dance' (Bond, 1994a). These children, with multiple impairments of vision, hearing, motor function and general health, and little interest in socialising, showed an affinity for dancing. They blossomed within a dance program that was receptive to each child's unique personal style, that drew on their own movement vocabulary for content, that met them one-to-one and as part of a group process. Despite his personal constraints, one child showed a talent for choreography. I called him Terpsichore.

Fifteen years later, I still hold that kids know more about dance than me, and maintain a commitment to representing young people's perceptions and values in

dance. I also embrace the notion that humans have evolved to have dance as part of their birthright. As Ellen Dissanayake (1999) asserts, "I think it is not too much to say that we were designed as a species to satisfy our needs for identity, belonging, meaning, and personal competence through the arts."

Ever since I was invited to be a keynote speaker for daCi 2000, my intention has been to offer a new century/new millennium perspective on children's dance, to connect past and present with an eye towards the future. This project has been arduous and humbling. I have searched earnestly for documented history of children's dance and found it is largely an unsung story. Particularly absent is the child's point of view, their 'lived experience' of dance.

From my own childhood heart sprang a great enthusiasm, an enduring fascination for dance. I consider myself fortunate to be involved in a form of human endeavour that draws on so many capacities: emotional, physical, social, mental, aesthetic and spiritual. Yet this unabashed love affair with dance continues to collide with the reality that many young people today are deprived of basic human rights, let alone the time, space and energy to dance and play. My great desire is to join with others in creating a role for dance this century that will enhance the lives of children worldwide.

I find myself asking how an organization devoted to promotion of dance and the child on a global scale can accomplish its mission. Specifically, what can dance offer to a world where children are in crisis? Drawing on a range of sources, this paper highlights some enduring purposes of

dance that appear to cross boundaries of history and culture. It concludes that with young people in the lead, these ancient meanings might be revised to foster a "culture of caring" (Theobald, 1998) on a global scale. Some perennial and emerging problems in children's dance are also examined. I will first situate the study in its developmental context by addressing the question, "What is a child?"

#### CHILD CHILDREN AND CHILDHOOD

In keeping with daCi practice, this paper will employ the terms 'child, children, childhood, kids (a term used commonly by the young), and young person/people' to denote the age group 0-18 years. However, like 'dance' and 'religion,' the term 'child' resists definition. *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) defines the concept somewhat ambiguously as 'every human being to the age of 0-18 unless majority is reached earlier by local law. If we think of childhood as a period of extended dependence in which going to school is a feature, the concept becomes a modern invention, dating in the West to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but only for children of wealthy families (Bel Geddes, 1997). One of daCi's stated objectives is to advocate for the inclusion of dance in schools worldwide, but more than 130 million children are growing up without any access to basic education. Worldwide, girls represent 60% of children out of school. (UNICEF, 1999)

While attitudes towards children have varied over the centuries from adoration and reverence to indifference, jealousy and hatred, love for children appears to be universal in human societies. Still, society has often been the enemy of young people

(Wiesel, 1990) and of dance. In Antiquity we sacrificed children to the gods. For at least 2,000 years we have sold them into slavery and committed other abuses that continue today. We make up stories like *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* that portray dancing as dangerous. We humiliate children, we send them to war, and we starve them to death in a world where malnutrition contributes to more than half of the deaths of children under five in developing countries (UNICEF, 2000).

Throughout history adults have said and written incredibly nasty things about kids. I'm sure the reverse is true, too, but on the whole children's comments have not been published, unlike this well-known quote from W. C. Fields: "Anyone who hates dogs and small children can't be all bad ... I never met a kid I liked." (Bel Geddes, 1997: 5). I don't know anyone personally who doesn't love their children, but we may tend to love our own more than we love others'...our own offspring, our own students. Inspired by Elie Wiesel (1990), I use the term 'we' throughout this discussion to repersonalize our connection to young people, to encourage a willingness to see all children as our own.

Most of the earth's young people live in its poorer parts, where childhood is shorter in terms of dependency on adults. The 19<sup>th</sup> century, with its rapid industrialization, had a brutal effect on children in the West. Village dancing suffered as well, as families left the country for work in urban factories (Rust, 1969). Child labour is still widespread, with more than 250 million children between 5 and 14 years of age working in developing countries (International Labor Organization, 1998). This figure does not include home duties. Large numbers of working children are exposed to hazards that result in injuries and impairments. Finally, in alarming numbers, we are sending young people to fight our adult wars. UNICEF (1999) reports that in 25 countries (more than the

number of daCi member countries), thousands of children under the age of 16 have gone to battle in recent years. Women and children constitute the majority of civilian casualties of war. What does dance have to offer a world that is waging undeclared war on women and children?

## WHY DANCE?

In seeking a 21<sup>st</sup> century global vision for children's dance, I started with an historical lens. I'd like to be able to suggest that the longevity and weight of children's dance history provides a solid platform for advocacy. However, once again we owe young people an apology, this time for our failure to record their history. This is unfortunate since children were probably the first dancers of our species. It appears that, in general, few histories have been so ignored as that of children and childhood. It's as if childhood has been treated as a form of pre-history. Countless achievements of young people have gone unnoticed or been credited to adults, including invention of the telescope and the discovery of Stone Age caves at Lascaux, France, which contain evidence of early dance (Bel Geddes, 1997). A revisioning is needed; I hope this will constitute the next wave of revisionist histories in dance. It is vital also that we research the present and future of children's dance.

In a quest for enduring purposes in children's dance, I explored scholarly literature from history, anthropology, sociology, bioaesthetics, cultural studies, and dance education. I reviewed dance research journals, daCi conference proceedings, and other relevant materials. A broad approach was necessary because so few dance history writings refer to children in any depth, or at all. I began to survey children's literature and to cast my eye towards the vast resource of visual art history when I realised the project was expanding beyond feasibility, and yielding

very little. The following narrative on purposes and problems in children's dance - past, present and future - interweaves historical and contemporary literature with the voices of young people today and my own interpretive commentary.

### **EMOTIONS, SELF AND COMMUNITY**

If there is one word that stands out in my current understanding of what dance means to English-speaking young people today, it would have to be 'fun.' Sue Stinson (1997) has illuminated this realm in adolescent dance. Subsequent research shows that kids of all ages use the word to cover the range of dancing pleasures from excitement and relaxation, to the enjoyment of contact in a social group, to the multi-sensory and intellectual satisfactions of creating, performing and watching dances (Bond and Stinson, 2000). I have also observed qualities of 'fun' in the dancing of non-English speaking children and young people with disabilities. It seems to me that a world which takes young people seriously would have to include 'fun' or pleasure as a criterion for most (perhaps all) decisions made on their behalf.

However, Ellen Dissanayake (1999) excludes pleasure from her description of why the arts are necessary in human life, stating: "...in a puritan culture that is suspicious of pleasure, I cannot make a case for the arts being necessary simply by saying they are often pleasurable." Yet is it not our human capacity for pleasure, joy, and interest that allows us to experience caring, learning, celebration, and relationship. In ancient Greece, Plato observed that dance is a fitting way to rejoice as it is impossible to remain still in this state (Davies, 1984). Dancing children are often described in relation to festivals and religious celebrations. Many young people today love to perform and socialise

through dance. I think we can all agree that children are expert celebrators.

Dancing for joy is often found in multi-generational settings. During the European Middle Ages, a period characterised by war, famine, and deadly plagues, grown ups and children together danced on village greens and around maypoles. Though few people could read, almost everyone could dance and sing. Some extreme forms of dance also emerged. During the 11th to 17th centuries, children participated in dance epidemics involving "whole communities of people ... dancing and gyrating through the streets ... for days at a time..." (Kraus, 1969: 56). Children died in these mad events. Some of these phenomena have been explained as reactions to environmental toxins, but they also provide a unique, protracted example of children and adults dancing in response to fear of death and life's uncertainties. The modern field of dance therapy is based on such purposes.

Today numerous young people isolate from adults in rave parties, reaching for the "massive buzz" of "solitary, ecstatic trance" (Gore, 1995: 138). Others tell of 'superordinary' experiences that take them out of everyday reality, using metaphors like 'escape place,' 'another planet,' 'above the normal plane of living,' and 'under a mountain' to describe where dance takes them (Bond and Stinson, 2000). In *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, 1963), young Max runs away to a land of "wild things" where he dances and is crowned king. One of the places I ran away to as a child was the ballet studio, where I embodied a large repertoire of fairy dances, my favourite being *The Pumpkin Fairy*. I loved the orange tutu.

From a young age, children may show marked preferences for particular movements, colours and themes in dance, and relate these aesthetic standards to notions of self (Bond and Deans, 1997). I

created a poem from young children's 'dance talk' captured on class videos. It illustrates the irrepressible forces of self that young children can experience in creative dance. (A variation of this will be published in Bond and Stinson, 2000.)

*I WANT, I AM*

***I'll show you how coyote moves.***

***I've got a plan.***

***I want drum and music.***

***I want another turn!***

***What about me ?***

***We could do that right now if we want to.***

***I am a very good dancer.***

***I'm dancing by myself.***

***I want red! I want blue!***

***I'm going, too.***

***I've got a good idea.***

***I want to dance with you!***

***My part in dance is doing the twirl.***

***Let's dance!***

Children's 'dance talk' conveys an abundance of personal and social meanings. In the self-full focus of *I Want, I Am* we can see seeds of personal competence and of what I call 'aesthetic community' (Bond, 1994a), a place where selves-in-relationship interact to create shared values and forms in dance (I want to dance with you ..and red ..and blue!). Dancing is contagious, fostering an aesthetic of shared pleasures, including performance. I have observed the emergence of aesthetic community in a number of childhood dance settings (Bond, 1994a, 1994b; Bond and Deans, 1997).

So far this paper has focused on the emotional sources of dance and the fundamental role of joy and interest in

motivating action, imagination, and relationship. Joan Chodorow (2000) suggests that from these sources in each of us arise the highest values of human culture. We have probably always 'danced for joy,' to celebrate self and community, and to cope with the verities of human existence (Hanna, 1988; Dissanayake, 1999, 2000).

*HE PROBLEM WITH PLEASURE ...*

However, as noted earlier, humans can be suspicious of pleasure, certainly where it relates to the body. Running through the history of Christianity is a kind of love-hate duet in which dance is identified both with the Devil and with angels and altar boys (Davies, 1984). At the height of western imperialism, Christian missionaries were exporting the 'dancing is sinful' theory to indigenous cultures worldwide; and a 2,000 year religious tradition of Classical Indian dance was outlawed in Hindu temples (Devi, 1994). The history of children's dance education in the West (my limited language skills prevent me from looking further) is also scaffolded by an extended moral debate concerning the ever-present danger of sexuality and emotional excess in general (Kraus, 1969; Davies, 1984). This continues today, from fundamentalist religious prohibitions on dance in schools or mixed sex groups to the subtle "moral panic" around social dancing for youth (McRobbie, 1997:212). I wonder whether any other mode of human behaviour has been subjected to such scrutiny.

I think it is fair to say that adults have done a lot of arguing amongst themselves about what and how young people should be taught in dance, and by whom. These are vital questions that both adults and young people need to participate in. It is likely, however, that children would dance without any overlay of adult advocacy and control. Worth sharing for its rare acknowledgment in the historical literature

that children's pleasure in dancing motivates learning is the following from Rev. John Blake, author (1850) of *The Farmer's Every-Day Book* (Kraus, 1969: 125):

*In the middle of the day...let half an hour be spent in this fascinating exercise, as a reward of good conduct as scholars, and the prediction is made with confidence, that neither girls or boys will ever be tardy.*

Returning to moral issues in children's dance, daCi has a stated commitment to encourage research into all aspects of dance, yet I have never seen the topic of 'dance and sexuality' in a conference program. At the same time I have taken part in informal discussions related to perceived sexual themes and imagery in our young people's performance work at conferences. This is a delicate area, but I would like to see the discourse become more transparent, so that both the stereotyped images projected by mass media and the deeper associations between dance and sexuality can be illuminated. Canadian philosopher Francis Sparshott (1988: 136) visions a future where dance is valued as an affirmation of personal power and freedom, noting that "celebration of sexuality is a permanent possibility of dance, as it is with no other art."

### **THE PROBLEM WITH IDEOLOGIES...**

Ever since the so called Age of Reason separated mind from body and spirit several centuries ago, numerous shifts of world view have occurred, as well as a proliferation of overlapping, intersecting aesthetic ideologies. The influence of Romanticism's 19th century exaltation of the young female ballerina (a patriarchal construction), along with denigration of the 'effeminate' male dancer, may be with us still; for example in "dance's inferiority complex as a feminine art." (Daly, 1997:

112) Last century, the early Expressionists' emphasis on natural and exotic sources for dance was overlaid by the impact of relentless industrialisation. Standards of efficiency, bodily sleekness, and technical superiority infiltrated environments where young people were learning dance. Teachers began drawing polarities between 'training and education', 'performance and participation', 'technical and creative,' 'good dance and bad dance,' oppositions that lurk even at daCi conferences. In addition, technological advances have loosened cultural boundaries, allowing a robust migration of people, dance styles, and ideologies across national, racial and class lines, fostering the emergence of fusions and hybrids. To the extent that young people's expressed values and interests are not considered in such complex devolutions, children may be vulnerable to abuse in dance.

DANCING TO LEARN,

LEARNING TO DANCE

For purposes of this paper, I am less interested in mapping ideological systems than in seeking enduring values that might provide direction for the future. Children have learned dance as a natural part of growing up and for instruction in the ways of society since pre-history and continue to do so in some nonwestern societies (Dissanayake, 1999). In Ghana, West Africa, where the general level of dancing and musical ability has been described as very high, children are said to learn dance in the womb (Bull, 1997).

Dance was promoted in ancient Greece for its ability to instil habits of behaviour in harmony with nature (Cooper, 1997). More than two millennia later children show an affinity for dance themes from nature and animals (Anttila, 1997; Bond and Deans, 1997); and scholars are proposing a return to the values of classical

Greece - this has recurred in cycles since the European Renaissance (Hillman, 1992; Turner, 1995). The past three daCi conferences (including this one) have been connected thematically to young people's relationship to the environment. Zitkala Sa (India) reminisces on her childhood relationship with nature, in which I see some essences of dance (UNICEF, 1990: 212):

*I was born a wild little girl of seven. Loosely clad in a slip of brown buckskin, and light-footed with a pair of soft moccasins on my feet, I was as free as the wind that blew my hair, and no less spirited than a bounding deer. ... I was not wholly conscious of myself, but was more keenly alive to the fire within. It was as if I were the activity, and my hands and feet were only experiments for my spirit to work upon. Zitkala Sa, India*

I am concerned that the development of many urban children who have limited access to nature is being compromised. On the other hand, dance thrives in 'the street.'

#### LEARNING IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Today, young people's quest for learning and transformative experience occurs in a world that is expanding radically through advances in communication technology. Luke Kahlich (1996: 181) notes, "No part of our field has grown more rapidly than the use of technology for dance and dance education." As we proceed into century 21, it seems likely that technology will continue to influence the destiny of our children. While many artists and teachers are excited about the ways in which interactions with video and computers might enhance creativity and learning in dance, others have concerns about the impact of unbridled technological development on the future of dance. What

will happen to dance in the weightless, denatured environments of virtual reality? Will we humans stop 'jumping for joy' without the impetus of gravity? Coming from Australia, I'd like to think that as long as kangaroos exist on the planet, children will continue to jump!

In the extreme scenario, technology becomes equated with annihilation of the body, a potential nightmare for those who experience the body as central in dance (Kozel, 1995). Susan Kozel is optimistic, suggesting that "virtual reality, when experienced through dance, can be seen as an amplification of materiality, rather than an immaterial space in which our bodies are represented only visually." (1995:219) Computer technology can also democratise dance by allowing people of all ages and abilities to make dance statements beyond their bodily capacities (Knight, 1991; Bond and Morrish, 1995). The development of robotic dancers with unreachable technique could see the demise of children's dance competitions. (Some readers might applaud this, others not.) The notion that dance will rise in value as a balance to high tech has been suggested widely (Sparshott, 1988; Gray, 1991; Michael, 1998).

Economist and futurist Robert Theobald (1998a) asserts that while technology is useful for specific purposes, it is not the key to the future of a planet in crisis. He calls for a "healing century," in which we will see "a change toward a more caring and compassionate culture at all levels from the personal to the ecological." At a public seminar in Melbourne, Dr. Theobald (1998b) suggested that "choreography" is the best way to create a resilient future for our planet. I asked him if he was speaking metaphorically, and he said no, that he and friends were exploring dance as a way of conceptualising the future. Others outside of dance are talking about the importance of an embodied aesthetic vision for the future (Eagleton,

1990; Maffesoli, 1996).

I, too, would be happy to see the planet slow down its technological thrust and focus on global implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which recognizes the right of young people to participate freely in play, in cultural life and the arts. In this way young people might be able to create a world where art instead of governments will explain who and what we are. A group from Sweden made far-reaching recommendations for daCi to serve a direct lobbying function on behalf of children's artistic and other rights (Wigert, 1985). I propose we reopen this discussion at an organizational level.

#### HISTORY BECKONS

In the midst of profound global instability we find the world's children who constitute half of global population but make none of its major decisions, even though powers of reason are present from birth. Seventeen-year-old Juan from Peru expresses frustration over the neglect of youth's voice (UNICEF, 2000):

*It makes me so mad when people don't take me seriously. Just because I'm young doesn't mean I haven't got anything to say. Not only should I have freedom of expression, I should also have the right to be listened to.*

Tesmer Atsbeha, a young participant at the 1991 daCi Utah conference, expresses a desire for adult acknowledgment of children's values (Kaleidoscope, 1991):

*These children too want attention, want support, want to ... change the world ...by joining, making friends, connecting our different worlds, languages and traditions to promote dance as our way of expressing ourselves. We are not alone as we teach the professors, teachers and*

experts what we hold inside.

\* \* \*

#### **The place of dance, the centre of the universe, is within the heart. (Coomaraswamy, 1971: 77)**

And so we begin the 21st century. To gain some impressions of what kids are thinking about the future of dance and life, I tuned into children's television and browsed the World Wide Web. This was an enlightening experience that brought me full circle back to the broader context of childhood and humankind. On Nickelodeon TV a 10-year-old boy suggested that computers will help us learn to tolerate each other better since, in a virtual world, we can't hurt each other so we have to get along. Considering its long history as a peaceful pursuit (dances of war notwithstanding), I thought this could equally be a rationale for dance. I heard a 12-year-old girl talk about her love of clogging, saying, "It's like history is coming out in you ... in a powerful way." She worried, too, that "in 50 years all of this will be gone." Two 8-year-olds hoped for a future when cats and dogs will sing and dance. I was moved by this reminder from a 14-year-old African-American girl: "Don't forget to bring your souls into the future - your true self." As described earlier, young people of all ages make connections between dancing and a sense of authentic self (Bond and Stinson, 2000). These include references to heart and soul. Here are some examples from teen-agers:

- [Dance] really lets me explore my inner self, what I'm really like, who I really am.
- I think dance is—is necessary for me. ...It's important—cause it's in me.
- When I dance I'm more of a soul.
- It's my heart.

Francis Sparshott (1988: 404) lends a philosophical perspective:

*Dance, more than other arts, has to do with self-knowledge... In a world in which we do not know what we are, there is one thing we can... certainly know. We can know that we are dancing.*

To search the Internet for young peoples' ideas, I used the key phrase 'dance and the child international.' This yielded thousands of web sites (I didn't visit them all) and an interesting discovery. Among the multitude of dance pages with joyful names like 'Gotta Dance' and 'Happy Feet Folk Dance Page,' many devised by kids, were an abundance of international organizations devoted to child welfare, including such notables as "Bikers against Child Abuse International" and "Child Quest International", which searches for missing children. I perceived an intrinsic logic, a kind of 'caring culture' (Theobald, 1998a) in this Web environment that interconnects children's dance with children's well-being.

With young people leading the way, I like to think we can extend a culture of caring through dance to the countless children in the world who live with conditions that threaten human rights and sabotage development. This paper has identified a range of enduring qualities and purposes of dance: its deep sources in the inherited emotions that we all share (Chodorow, 2000); its contagious socialising rhythms; its value as a mode of learning, transformation, and nonverbal communication, including performance; its role in building community. In collaboration with children, perhaps we can reaffirm, without shame, the ancient role of dance in the amelioration of human suffering through joy and optimism. Dance allows expression of both difference and unity in a web of life that connects us all.

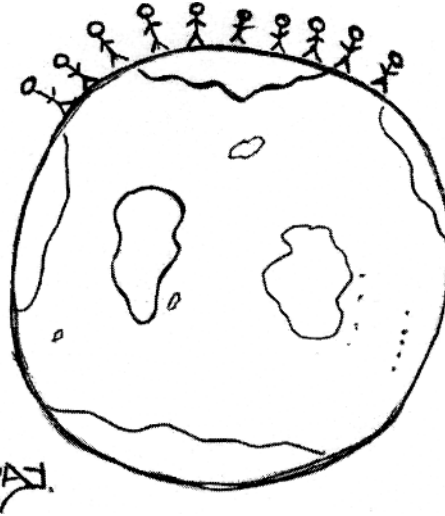
There are many ways to begin such a project. One way would be for daCi to become part of an existing initiative such as the United Nations Decade of Peace, 2000-2010. Children are already successful advocates for peace, as evidenced in the Children's Peace Movement in Colombia (Bellamy, 1999). In addition, young people have combined dance with child welfare initiatives, holding dance marathons to raise money for peace projects and for fighting global hunger (Bel Geddes, 1997). Dances for peace and other global issues have been performed at daCi conferences.

Master cellist Pablo Casals highlights the role of children in creating a peaceful world, using language which, in my interpretation, points directly to dance as a key (Bel Geddes, 1997: 3):

*To me children are worth more than all my music. ...We should say to each of them:... look at your body — what a wonder it is! Your legs, your arms, your cunning fingers, the way you move! .. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must cherish one another. You must work - we must all work - to make this world worthy of its children.*

I will conclude with an image of hope created by a 12-year-old Carolinian girl on Saipan after her first ever creative dance class (Bond, Hunt and Probst, 1997): **“I hope the kids in the world, will learn what I learn today”**

I HOPE THE  
KIDS IN THE  
WORLD<sub>s</sub> WILL  
LEARN WHAT  
I LEARN TODAY.



### END NOTE

*This paper is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Kent Wilson (1937-2000) who showed me that science, art, and heart are not incompatible; and to my first Australian mentor, pioneer dance educator, Johanna Exiner.*

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