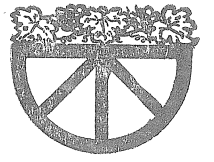


DIONYSION



Volume 1

Number 1

O WE CAN WAIT NO LONGER, ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

WE TOO TAKE SHIP, O SOUL, ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

JOYOUS WE TOO LAUNCH OUT ON TRACKLESS SEAS,

FEARLESS FOR UNKNOWN SHORES ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

WALT WHITMAN

"OH, SHE IS COMING, THE DANCER OF THE FUTURE; THE FREE SPIRIT, WHO WILL INHABIT THE BODY OF NEW WOMEN; MORE GLORIOUS THAN ANY WOMAN THAT HAS YET BEEN; MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE EGYPTIAN, THAN THE GREEK, THE EARLY ITALIAN, THAN ALL WOMEN OF PAST CENTURIES—THE HIGHEST INTELLIGENCE IN THE FREEST BODY!"

ISADORA DUNCAN

DIONYSIAN ART

UNDER THE CHARM OF THE DIONYSIAN NOT ONLY IS THE COVENANT BETWEEN MAN AND MAN AGAIN ESTABLISHED, BUT ALSO ESTRANGED, HOSTILE OR SUBJUGATED NATURE AGAIN CELEBRATES HER RECONCILIATION WITH HER LOST SON, MAN . . . NOW IS THE SLAVE A FREE MAN, NOW ALL THE STUBBORN, HOSTILE BARRIERS, WHICH NECESSITY, CAPRICE, OR "SHAMELESS FASHION" HAS SET UP BETWEEN MAN AND MAN, ARE BROKEN DOWN. NOW, AT THE EVANGEL OF COSMIC HARMONY, EACH ONE FEELS HIMSELF NOT ONLY UNITED, RECONCILED, BLENDED WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, BUT AS ONE WITH HIM, AS IF THE VEIL OF MAYA HAD BEEN TORN AND WERE NOW MERELY FLUTTERING IN TATTERS BEFORE THE MYSTERIOUS PRIMORDIAL UNITY. IN SONG AND IN DANCE MAN EXHIBITS HIMSELF AS A MEMBER OF A HIGHER COMMUNITY: HE HAS FORGOTTEN HOW TO WALK AND SPEAK, AND IS ON THE POINT OF TAKING A DANCING FLIGHT INTO THE AIR. HIS GESTURES BESPEAK ENCHANTMENT. EVEN AS THE ANIMALS NOW TALK, AND AS THE EARTH YIELDS MILK AND HONEY, SO ALSO SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL SOUNDS FORTH FROM HIM: HE FEELS HIMSELF A GOD, HE HIMSELF NOW WALKS ABOUT ENCHANTED AND ELATED EVEN AS THE GODS WHOM HE SAW WALKING ABOUT IN HIS DREAMS.

DIONYSIAN ART, TOO, SEEKS TO CONVINCE US OF THE ETERNAL JOY OF EXISTENCE: ONLY WE ARE TO SEEK THIS JOY NOT IN PHENOMENA, BUT BEHIND PHENOMENA. WE ARE TO PERCEIVE HOW ALL THAT COMES INTO BEING MUST BE READY FOR A SORROWFUL END; WE ARE COMPELLED TO LOOK INTO THE TERRORS OF INDIVIDUAL EXISTENCE—YET WE ARE NOT TO BECOME TORPID: A METAPHYSICAL COMFORT TEARS US MOMENTARILY FROM THE BUSTLE OF THE TRANSFORMING FIGURES. WE ARE REALLY FOR BRIEF MOMENTS PRIMORDIAL BEING ITSELF, AND FEEL ITS INDOMITABLE DESIRE FOR BEING AND JOY IN EXISTENCE; THE STRUGGLE, THE PAIN, THE DESTRUCTION OF PHENOMENA, NOW APPEAR TO US AS SOMETHING NECESSARY, CONSIDERING THE SURPLUS OF INNUMERABLE FORMS OF EXISTENCE WHICH THROG AND PUSH ONE ANOTHER INTO LIFE, CONSIDERING THE EXUBERANT FERTILITY OF THE UNIVERSAL WILL. WE ARE PIERCED BY THE MADDENING STING OF THESE PAINS AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN WE HAVE BECOME, AS IT WERE, ONE WITH THE IMMEASURABLE PRIMORDIAL JOY IN EXISTENCE, AND WHEN WE ANTICIPATE, IN DIONYSIAN ECSTASY, THE INDESTRUCTIBILITY AND ETERNITY OF THIS JOY. IN SPITE OF FEAR AND PITY, WE ARE THE HAPPY LIVING BEINGS, NOT AS INDIVIDUALS, BUT AS THE ONE LIVING BEING, WITH WHOSE PROCREATIVE JOY WE ARE BLENDED.

NIETZSCHE



Isadora Duncan: From a Sketch by Van Deering Perrine.

TOWARD THE NEW EDUCATION

OUR HOPE IN AMERICA FOR A GREAT ART AND A GREAT LIFE DEPENDS UPON THE FREE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR YOUTH. WE HAVE OFTEN AMONG OURSELVES SAID THAT CHILDREN MUST BE FREE, BUT TO MAKE THIS A TRUTH IT IS NECESSARY FOR US ALL TO WORK FOR IT. IN THE PAST WE HAVE THOUGHT OF FREEDOM, AND IMPOSED FRESH RULES AND REGULATIONS. IT IS TIME NOW TO TAKE OUR HANDS OFF AND TO OFFER OUR CHILDREN EVERY POSSIBLE FACILITY FOR THEIR OWN SELF EDUCATION. WE HAVE COMMENCED TO GIVE THEM FREE BODIES, BUT WE ARE STILL DISCIPLINING THEIR SPIRITS. WITH FREE SPIRITS THEY WILL GROW STRONG, ASKING THEIR OWN QUESTIONS, AND ALL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO CHILDHOOD, AND MET FRANKLY. FROM THIS SELF-EDUCATION WILL SPRING INDEPENDENT WILLS WITH POWERS OF JUDGMENT AND INVENTION, AND THEN WILL RESULT THE CREATORS OF NEW AND VIGOROUS ART, FOR THE FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS AWAIT THE CHANCE OF BEING PRESENTED THROUGH PEOPLE OF INDEPENDENT AND UNHAMPERED GROWTH. CHILDREN CAN ONLY BE EDUCATED TOWARD FREEDOM BY ABSOLUTE HONESTY IN THE ANSWERING OF EVERY QUESTION, BECAUSE THE ASKING OF QUESTIONS INDICATES THAT THE CHILD IS ALREADY AT WORK ON IDEAS. TO ANSWER SINCERELY AND INTELLIGENTLY IS TO PROMOTE NATURAL EDUCATION. A QUESTION MEANS THAT THE QUEST OF LIFE HAS COMMENCED AND IS THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.

I WAS TREMENDOUSLY IMPRESSED ONE DAY IN ISADORA DUNCAN'S STUDIO, BY THE LOOK IN THE FACES OF THE CHILDREN. AS THEY PASSED BY ME IN THE DANCE I SAW GREAT DIGNITY, BALANCE, EASE. I WAS IMPRESSED, TOO, THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE TIME BY THE FACT THAT THEY SEEMED ABSOLUTELY SECURE IN THEIR HAPPINESS. THEY APPEARED TO KNOW UNCONSCIOUSLY THAT THEY WOULD RECEIVE A FULL MEASURE OF LOVE AND PRAISE AND THAT IN NO CASE WOULD THERE BE BLAME OR PUNISHMENT. IN EACH LITTLE, UPTURNED FACE WAS A RARE LOOK OF FREEDOM—THE LOOK OF PEOPLE ON A HIGHER PLANE OF SELF CONSCIOUSNESS, AN ALOOFNESS FROM THE COMMON THOUGHT. I SAW IN THEIR EXPRESSION THE IMPRESS OF THE MEASURES OF GREAT MUSIC.

TO INSPIRE COURAGE IN CHILDREN, TO STIMULATE THEM WITH THE WORK OF THOSE WHO HAVE HAD THE COURAGE TO CREATE, TO MAKE OF THEM FRANK FACERS OF THE EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS OF LIFE, TO START THEM ON THE WAY TOWARD A GREAT CONSTRUCTIVE LIFE, WE MUST TAKE CARE NOT TO IMPOSE OUR WISDOM AND OUR IGNORANCE ON THEM, BUT TO GIVE THEM THE BENEFIT OF THE BEST WE HAVE THROUGH A FRANK RESPONSE TO THEIR NATURAL INTERROGATION.

WE MUST STAND ASIDE AND LET THEM GROW THEIR OWN WAY, FOR IN THEIR HANDS ONLY IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW LIFE, NEW ART AND THE SURE PROGRESS OF THE WORLD. THE TRUE TEACHER IS ONE WHO AWAITS WITH DEEP INTEREST THE FIRST SIGN OF THE BIRTH OF THE NEW SPIRIT, SEEING IN EVERY CHILD A NEW PROPHET.

ROBERT HENRI



Isadora Duncan: A Sketch from Memory by Robert Henri.

THREE DANCE MOTIVES

I: LETHE

Imagined for Dances of Isadora Duncan

A LONE BY A STARLESS SEA
I LAY WITH SORROW;
AND MISTS OF SLUMBER BREATHED
FROM THE MOUTH OF MY LOVER;

AND I ROSE FROM HIS NUMBING ARMS
AND MOANED: "O, RELEASE ME!
LET ME FLAME, LET ME LEAP ONCE MORE
ON THE HILLS OF VISION!"

THEN ONE BY ONE STOOD ROUND US
STARS OF THE MORNING:
THEIR LYRIC BODIES SANG,
THEIR TORCH-LIMBS BECKONED;

BUT THE FOG OF MY BLIND LOVER'S BREATH
CONGEALED THEIR BURNING
TILL THEY DROOPED ON THE BANKS OF DAWN
LIKE LILIES FROST-SLAIN,

AND I DROOPED TO HIS LETHAL LIPS
OF ANGUISH, AND LAY THERE
TILL THE SHY STARS BLOOMED AGAIN
BY SHORES OF THE EVENING

BECKONING ANEW, WITH THEIR PALMS
OF FLAME, TO REJOIN THEM
ON THE MOUNTAINS OF JOY, AND ONCE MORE
I ROSE IN MY YEARNING

AND GAZED: I AM COMING! BUT AH!
THE ARROWS OF MY GAZING
PIERCED THEM THERE, SIDE BY SIDE,
AND THEY WANED BY THE WATERS,

LYING LIKE MERMAIDS, DEAD
IN THE SHOALS OF TWILIGHT.
THEN MY SOUL WANED WITH THEM, AND KISSED
THE COLD MOUTH OF MY LOVER.

BUT STILL, THROUGH THE PULSING MISTS
OF OUR PITIFUL DREAMING,
I FEEL THEIR IMMORTAL EYES
BURNING WITH WONDER.

II: DIONYSUS

DIONYSUS!—IO!—IO, DIONYSUS!
WHO HATH ROLLED BACK THE ROCK FROM THE CAVE CIMMERIAN
AND BLINDED THE WORLD WITH MORNING?
DIONYSUS!—THOU!—IT IS THOU, DIONYSUS!
OUT OF THE NIGGARD, NUMBING DARK OF THE AGES
THOU, FROM THE DEAD, ART RESTORED!

STARK FROM THE TREE OF PAIN,
CRUCIFIED, BLEEDING, DISOWNED,
THEY BORE THE BEAUTIFUL GOD OF OUR JOY TO HIS CHARNEL:
BUT THERE IN THE FLAMING DARK, THOU—THOU, HIS SERAPH,
ROLLED BACK THE AWFUL STONE
FOR THE LORD OF LIFE—NEW RISEN.

DIONYSUS!—IO!—IO, DIONYSUS!
LO! THY GRAPES ARE THE CLUSTERING HEARTS OF CHILDREN
AND THE WINE OF THESE IS THY WORSHIP.
DIONYSUS!—ONCE MORE!—ONCE MORE, DIONYSUS,
THOU REVEALEST OUR GOD, WHO IS ONE THROUGH ALL AGES:—
THE LORD OF LIFE IS REGAINED!

III: THE CHASE

THROUGH WHAT VAST WOOD,
BY WHAT WILD PATHS OF BEAUTIFUL SURPRISE
HAST THOU RETURNED TO US,
DIANA, DIANA OF DESIRE?
COMING TO THY CALL
WHAT HUNTRESSES ARE THESE?
WHAT HALLOWED CHASE? WHAT LONG, LONG CHERISHED GOAL?

THROUGH MAN'S WAN MIND
BY RADIANT PATHS OF RHYTHMIC LIBERTY
I AM RETURNED TO YOU,
DIVINER, DIVINER OF DREAMS!
THESE HUNTRESSES THEY ARE MY HALLOWED DESIRES—
MY UNQUENCHED SELVES WITH OVERFLOWING QUIVERS.
JOY IS OUR CHASE AND GOAL:
OUR BODIES THE TENSE CROSSBOWS, AND OUR WILD SOULS THE
SHAFTS!

PERCY MACKAYE

THE GREEK THEATRE

THE GREEK THEATRE WAS BUILT NOT FOR THE AUDIENCE, BUT FOR THE ARTIST, WITH WHOM THE AUDIENCE WAS ONLY TOO PLEASED TO COLLABORATE. THE GREEK THEATRE, MOREOVER, REPRESENTED A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ARCHITECT, THE DRAMATIST AND THE THEATRE ARTISTS.

THE ARCHITECT SAID TO THE DRAMATIST, "WHAT FORM OF THEATRE DO YOU WISH FOR YOUR WORK?" AND THE DRAMATIST REPLIED, "THAT FORM IN WHICH THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE CAN SEE, HEAR AND FEEL AT THE SAME MOMENT WITH THE SAME INTENSITY AND EQUAL PROPORTIONS."

THE ARCHITECT SAID TO THE DANCER, "WHAT FORM?" AND THE DANCER, SPREADING HIS ARMS IN A GREAT CIRCLE, REPLIED: "THAT FORM WHICH ENABLES ME TO TAKE A VAST AUDIENCE INTO MY ARMS—THE FORM OF A THEATRE IN WHICH ALL THE PEOPLE SITTING THERE WILL FEEL THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A SIMPLE GESTURE IN EQUAL VISION OF FORM AND PROPORTION—A FORM OF THEATRE IN WHICH MY MAGNETIC FORCE CAN GO FORTH FROM ME COVERING THE PEOPLE IN UNINTERRUPTED RAYS AS THE SUN'S LIGHT COVERS THE EARTH."

AND TO THE ACTOR: "WHAT FORM OF THEATRE?" THE ACTOR REPLIED: "THAT FORM IN WHICH A SIMPLE TONE OF MY VOICE, GOING ON THE NATURAL CURRENTS OF ITS SOUND WAVES, WILL STIR THE HEARTS OF A VAST MULTITUDE SITTING BEFORE ME IN PLACES ONE NOT MORE FORTUNATE THAN THE OTHERS—IN WHICH THE EMOTION I GIVE WILL FLOW FROM ONE TO ANOTHER—INFECTIOUS ALL-COMPELLING WAVES OF EMOTION GOING FROM ME TO THEM AND RETURNING TO ME."

AND SO WAS THE GREEK THEATRE BUILT. THERE WERE NO "BOXES," NO GALLERY, NO BALCONIES, NO PARQUETTE. THE GREEK WAS ESSENTIALLY A DEMOCRATIC THEATRE. AS ARTISTS ARE THE PRIESTS OF A RELIGION, SO ALL PEOPLE BEFORE A GREAT ART MANIFESTATION SHOULD BE EQUAL. RICHARD WAGNER HAS WRITTEN A BOOK ON THIS SUBJECT.

GREEK TRAGEDY SPRANG FROM THE DANCING AND SINGING OF THE FIRST GREEK CHORUS. DANCING HAS GONE A LONG WAY ASTRAY. SHE MUST RETURN TO HER ORIGINAL PLACE—HAND IN HAND WITH THE MUSES ENCIRCLING APOLLO. SHE MUST BECOME AGAIN THE PRIMITIVE CHORUS AND THE DRAMA WILL BE REBORN FROM HER INSPIRATION. THEN SHE WILL AGAIN TAKE HER PLACE AS THE SISTER ART OF TRAGEDY, SHE WILL SPRING FROM MUSIC—THE GREAT, IMPERSONAL, ETERNAL AND DIVINE WELLSPRING OF ART.

ISADORA DUNCAN

THE DANCE

THE GREEKS IN ALL THEIR PAINTING, SCULPTURE, ARCHITECTURE, LITERATURE, DANCE AND TRAGEDY EVOLVED THEIR MOVEMENTS FROM THE MOVEMENT OF NATURE, AS WE SEE EXPRESSED IN ALL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GREEK GODS, WHO, BEING NO OTHER THAN THE MANIFESTATIONS OF NATURAL FORCES, ARE PRESENTED IN A POSE EXPRESSING THE CONCENTRATION AND EVOLUTION OF THESE FORCES. THIS IS WHY THE ART OF THE GREEKS IS NOT A NATIONAL OR CHARACTERISTIC ART, BUT HAS BEEN AND WILL BE THE ART OF ALL HUMANITY FOR ALL TIME.

THE SCHOOL OF THE BALLET OF TODAY VAINLY STRIVING AGAINST THE NATURAL LAWS OF GRAVITATION OR THE NATURAL WILL OF THE INDIVIDUAL, AND WORKING IN DISCORD IN ITS FORM AND MOVEMENT WITH THE FORM AND MOVEMENT OF NATURE, PRODUCES A STERILE MOVEMENT WHICH GIVES NO BIRTH TO FUTURE MOVEMENTS, BUT DIES AS IT IS MADE.

THE EXPRESSION OF THE MODERN SCHOOL OF BALLET WHEREIN EACH ACTION IS AN END, AND NO MOVEMENT, POSE, OR RHYTHM IS SUCCESSIVE OR CAN BE MADE TO EVOLVE SUCCEEDING ACTION, IS AN EXPRESSION OF DEGENERATION, OF LIVING DEATH. ALL THE MOVEMENTS OF OUR MODERN BALLET SCHOOL ARE STERILE MOVEMENTS BECAUSE THEY ARE UNNATURAL; THEIR PURPOSE IS TO CREATE THE DELUSION THAT THE LAW OF GRAVITATION DOES NOT EXIST FOR THEM.

THE PRIMARY OR FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENTS OF THE NEW SCHOOL OF THE DANCE MUST HAVE WITHIN THEM THE SEEDS FROM WHICH WILL EVOLVE ALL OTHER MOVEMENTS, EACH IN TURN TO GIVE BIRTH TO OTHERS IN UNENDING SEQUENCE OF STILL HIGHER AND GREATER EXPRESSIONS, THOUGHTS AND IDEAS.

THIS MAY SEEM A QUESTION OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE, A QUESTION OF DIFFERING OPINIONS ON THE BALLET AND THE NEW DANCE. BUT IT IS A GREAT QUESTION. IT IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF TRUE ART, IT IS A QUESTION OF RACE, OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEMALE SEX TO BEAUTY AND HEALTH, OF THE RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL STRENGTH AND TO NATURAL MOVEMENTS OF WOMAN'S BODY. IT IS A QUESTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERFECT MOTHERS AND THE BIRTH OF HEALTHY AND BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN. THE DANCING SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE IS TO DEVELOP AND TO SHOW THE IDEAL FORM OF WOMAN. IT WILL BE, AS IT WERE, A MUSEUM OF THE LIVING BEAUTY OF THE PERIOD.

MAN'S FIRST CONCEPTION OF BEAUTY IS GAINED FROM THE FORM AND SYMMETRY OF THE HUMAN BODY. THE NEW SCHOOL OF THE DANCE SHOULD BE THAT MOVEMENT WHICH IS IN HARMONY WITH, AND WHICH WILL DEVELOP, THE HIGHEST FORM OF THE HUMAN BODY.

I INTEND TO WORK FOR THIS DANCE OF THE FUTURE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER I HAVE THE NECESSARY QUALITIES: I MAY HAVE NEITHER GENIUS NOR TALENT, NOR TEMPERAMENT, BUT I KNOW THAT I HAVE A WILL; AND WILL AND ENERGY ARE SOMETIMES GREATER THAN EITHER GENIUS OR TEMPERAMENT.

TO EXPRESS WHAT IS THE MOST MORAL, HEALTHFUL AND BEAUTIFUL IN LIFE—THIS IS THE MISSION OF THE DANCER, AND TO THIS I DEDICATE MY LIFE.

ISADORA DUNCAN

THE FAREWELL TO IPHIGENIA

Translated for Isadora Duncan

IV

2nd Chorister:

O SHARP-VOICED OCEAN-BIRD, HEARD IN THE FOAM
LOW BY THE ROCKY LEDGE
SINGING A NOTE UNHAPPY HEARTS CAN HEAR,
THE SONG OF SEPARATION FROM THY MATE,
THE MOAN OF SEPARATION,
I HAVE NO WINGS TO SEEK LIKE THEE, BUT I
CAN SING A SONG LIKE THEE,
A SONG OF SEPARATION FROM MY MATES.

3rd Chorister:

AT HOME IN HELLAS NOW ARE GATHERING
MY KINSMEN. ARTEMIS
BLESSES THE NEW-BORN FROM HER CYNTHIAN HILL
AND SOOTHES THE MOTHERS WITH THE COOLING PALM
AND BAY AND OLIVE-TREE,
WHERE ONCE LATONA LOVED THE WINDING STREAMS
AND WATCHED THE ROUNDED POOLS
WHITE WITH THE SONG-LIKE MOTION OF THE SWANS.

4th Chorister:

ALAS THE FALLING TEARS, THE TOWERS FALLEN,
THE TAKING OF OUR TOWNS!
ALAS THE RUSH OF BRIGHT AND ANGRY SPEARS
THAT BROUGHT ME CAPTIVE TO AN ALIEN SHIP!
FOR I WAS SOLD AWAY
TO BE AN EXILE HERE, A HANDMAIDEN
WITH AGAMEMNON'S DAUGHTER
IN RITES AND SERVICES TO ARTEMIS.

BUT AT THESE ALTARS WHERE THE SACRIFICE
IS NOT OF SHEEP BUT MEN,
I ENVY THOSE UNHAPPY FROM THEIR BIRTH.
FOR TO BE BRED AND SEASONED IN MISFORTUNE
IS TO BE IRON TO IT;
BUT THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE PANG OF CHANGE
MORE THAN THE HEART CAN BEAR—
UNHAPPINESS REMEMBERING HAPPINESS.

3rd Chorister:

LADY, A SHIP IS HERE TO TAKE THEE HOME,
AND IN THE ROWERS' EARS
PAN SHALL BE SOUNDING ALL HIS POINTED NOTES,
GREAT MOUNTAINS ECHOING TO HIS LITTLE REED,
AND PHOEBUS ON HIS LYRE
SHALL STRIKE PROFUND THE SEVEN STRINGS AND SING
TO THEE OF ATTICA,
SHALL SING TO THEE OF HOME AND LEAD THEE THERE.

1st Chorister:

OW AFTER OW SHALL DIP AND CARRY THEE,
LADY, AWAY FROM ME,
OW AFTER OW SHALL PUSH THE EMPTY SEA
WIDER, WIDER, LEAVING ME LONELY HERE,
LEAVING ME HERE WITHOUT THEE.
AND FORWARD OVER THE UNCEASING BOW
THY SAIL SHALL FASTER RUN,
EVER REFILLING WITH THE UNSPENT WIND.

2nd Chorister:

O TO GO SWIFTLY LIKE THE WINGED SUN
UPON HIS DAZZLING TRACK
AND NOT TO LET MY GOLDEN WINGS BE FOLDED
UNTIL I TOUCHED MY HOUSE, MY ROOF, MY ROOM!
THEN I SHOULD GO AGAIN
TO NOBLE MARRIAGES AND TAKE MY PLACE
IN THE BRIGHT COMPANY,
GIVE THEM MY HANDS AND CIRCLE ROUND AND DANCE.

AND I SHOULD STRIVE TO BE THE LOVELIEST
IN ALL MY LOOKS AND WAYS,
IN MY UNTARNISHED BRIGHTNESS OF ATTIRE,
AND IN THE MOTION OF MY HANDS AND FEET;
AND MY EMBROIDERED VEIL
I SHOULD HOLD CLOSELY ROUND ME AS I DANCED
AND I SHOULD HIDE MY CHEEK
IN THE SOFT SHADOW OF MY CLUSTERING CURLS.

WITTER BYNNER

THE PARTHENON AND BROADWAY

ISADORA DUNCAN HOLDS WITHIN HER GENIUS THE GREATEST ART OF THIS AGE, AN ART FITTED, LIKE THE SCIENCE OF EDISON, TO OPEN UNTOLD DREAMS OF MAN. INDEED NO GREATER ART EVER EXISTED IN ANY AGE, AND NONE IS MORE NEEDED BY OUR YOUNG EARTH, WHERE FEET AND LIVES DRAG HEAVY WEIGHT.

ISADORA DUNCAN HAS REDISCOVERED THOSE LAWS OF THE GREEKS, MADE EVIDENT IN ALL THEIR ARTS, ESPECIALLY MADE VISIBLE TO US THROUGH THEIR PLASTIC ARTS OF SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE. HOW MUCH GREATER SHOULD OUR HARVEST BE, COULD WE BUT BUILD ON THESE LIVING LAWS OF SUPREME HARMONY THE BEAUTY MISS DUNCAN'S SCIENCE UNFOLDS. IF UNDERSTOOD AND PUT TO USE BY OUR PEOPLE, IT WOULD WELD US IN BODY AND SPIRIT. IT IS THE LAW "FROM THE CENTER OF OUR UNIVERSE" TOWARD THE CIRCUMFERENCE.

IF OUR NEW LIFE IN OUR NEW WORLD ALLOWED LESS OF THE STRENUOUS, AND MORE OF A TRUCE WITH LIFE, MORE OF THE BUILDING WITHIN, AND LESS OF THE BUILDING WITHOUT, ALLOWED THE BEAUTIFUL AS SOMETHING BEYOND A COMMERCIAL VALUE, COULD SEE A TRUTH AS STRONGLY AS WE DESIRE FICTION, WHAT AN AWAKENING IN THE ARTS AND FIRE IN ALL THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO LOVE THE BEAUTIFUL WOULD COME THROUGH ONE WOMAN'S GIFT TO US.

ISADORA DUNCAN HOLDS THE ART OF THE SOUL'S EXPRESSION UNDER SUCH CONTROL "SHE GIVES" ONLY THE BEAUTIFUL, AND OUR "NEW WORLD" ACCEPTS HER ALONG WITH THE MULTITUDE ANNUALLY IMPORTED FROM THE OLD WORLD STOCK OF PROFESSIONALS—DRAWING A LEVEL THROUGH HER ART AND THEIRS. NOTHING CAN BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

HERE BEFORE OUR EYES TO READ AS SHE RUNS, IS THE LIVING LAW OF THE BEAUTIFUL MADE MANIFEST, POETICAL, MUSICAL, PLASTIC, PURE, AS PURE AS THE FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON AND AS GREAT, YET EVER CHANGING, EACH AND EVERY MOVEMENT A MASTERPIECE TO OUR EYES, AN ART TO DRAW ALL ARTS TOGETHER UNDER THE TRUE LAW OF EACH; ISADORA DUNCAN IS ART, IS A LAW THAT NONE OTHER SINCE THE GREEKS HAS GRASPED.

HER DANCE IS TO THE BALLET AS LIFE TO DEATH, AS TRUTH AGAINST IMITATION. TO CONFUSE HER ART, HER DANCE, WITH OTHER DANCES, IS LIKE MOVING THE MARBLE GODS OF THE PARTHENON UPON A BROADWAY VAUDEVILLE STAGE. LET US ACCEPT AS A TRUTH THE LIVING LAW OF THE BEAUTIFUL WHICH ISADORA DUNCAN MAKES MANIFEST.

WHY CANNOT WE OF THE NEW WORLD, THE NEW EPOCH, GRASP THE FACT, THAT ONE OF OUR OWN CHILDREN COMES ENDOWED WITH THE SACRED FIRE (OF INTUITION), HOLDING FORTH TO US, NOT THE DEAD COPIES OF DYING GREEK ART OR DEAD ROME, BUT THE LIVING LAWS WITHIN THE LIVING BODY.

GEORGE GREY BARNARD



From a Sketch of Isadora Duncan by Antoine Bourdelle.



Sketch of Isadora Duncan by Van Deering Perrine.

ISADORA DUNCAN'S SCHOOL

A GREAT SPACE, SILENT AND HIGH, SEPARATED FROM THE WORLD BY CURTAINS OF BLUE; SOFT LIGHTS STREAMING DOWN ROSE SCARVES; BACK IN THE SHADOWS LOW COUCHES IN BRILLIANT COLORS—THIS IS THE SETTING FOR ISADORA DUNCAN'S SCHOOL IN THE HEART OF NEW YORK.

A MAN (A MUSICIAN, AN ARTIST) SITS AT THE PIANO. A GREEK FIGURE OF AGELESS BEAUTY, OF AGELESS TRAGEDY STANDS NEARBY.

WITH THE FIRST CHORDS OF THE MUSIC, LOVELY FIGURES OF YOUTH APPEAR, OUTLINED AGAINST THE BLUE, MOVING WITH GRACIOUS FREEDOM; SPLENDID WHITE LIMBS GLEAM THROUGH GREY VEILS; UPTURNED FACES ARE REMOTE WITH ECSTASY. AS THE MUSIC FLOODS THROUGH THESE FLUENT FORMS, THEY ARE NO LONGER SEPARATE DANCERS, BUT THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH BEARING TO THE WORLD RICH GIFTS OF BEAUTY. THROUGH THESE LIBERATED BODIES FLOW THE MELODY OF ALL THE WORLD, THE JOY OF ALL THE AGES, BRINGING HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF ALL RACES.

ISADORA DUNCAN "TEACHES" HER PUPILS BY A GESTURE, A GLANCE, A SOFTLY SPOKEN WORD; AND THE RESPONSE IS MAGIC. FOR SHE GIVES UNSPARINGLY FROM HER OWN SPIRIT OF INSPIRATION, COURAGE, EXALTATION, AND THE MESSAGE IS RECEIVED BY FREE SPIRITS IN FREE BODIES.

WHY SHOULD NOT THE RAPTURE WHICH TOUCHES THESE CHILDREN INTO INEFFABLE BEAUTY BE THE BIRTHRIGHT OF EVERY FREE CHILD IN EVERY LAND?

ISADORA'S "CHILDREN" USUALLY COME TO LIVE WITH HER WHEN THEY ARE VERY YOUNG, NOT MORE THAN FOUR OR FIVE YEARS OLD. AND THEY STAY, IF THEY ARE HAPPY LEARNING TO BE BEAUTIFUL, UNTIL THEY ARE TWENTY-ONE. FROM THE START THEY BECOME REALLY "HER CHILDREN." NOT ONLY DOES SHE LEAD THEM BY THE HAND UP THE BEAUTIFUL ROAD OF SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL LOVELINESS; BUT THEIR HEALTH, JOY, COMFORT AND MENTAL DEVELOPMENT ARE HER CEASELESS INTEREST AND RESPONSIBILITY. IT IS NOT ENOUGH THAT THEY LEARN TO MOVE WITH THE ECSTASY OF ALL FREE CREATURES; THIS GRACE MUST SPRING FROM JOY, AND JOY FROM EXALTATION. THE CONSTANT SOURCE OF THEIR INSPIRATION IS MUSIC—THE GREAT MUSIC OF THE WHOLE WORLD BROUGHT TO THEM BY THE GREAT SINGERS, THE GREAT PIANISTS AND VIOLINISTS. FOR THE BEAUTIFUL SPIRITS OF THE ART WORLD LOVE TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR SHARE OF INSPIRATION TO THESE CHILDREN.

THE POETS, TOO, ARE THEIR FRIENDS—WHITMAN, SHELLEY, KEATS ARE THEIR DAILY FOOD. GREEK DRAMA IS AS FAMILIAR TO THEM AS SHAKESPEARE, HAUPTMAN, BRIEUX, AND EACH DRAMATIST IS UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE. INDEED THE ART OF THE WORLD IS POURED INTO THE SPIRITS OF THESE CHILDREN, FLOODING THEIR MINDS AND BODIES AND FLOWING BACK AGAIN INTO THE WORLD THROUGH EXPRESSION AND GESTURE, TO ENRICH AND RENEW LIFE.

MARY FANTON ROBERTS

AMERICA'S TRIBUTES TO ISADORA DUNCAN

ISADORA DUNCAN AND WALT WHITMAN

IN SEEING ISADORA DUNCAN DANCE, I AM ALWAYS REMINDED OF THE GREAT VOICE OF WALT WHITMAN. BACK OF HER GESTURE I SEE A DEEP PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM, AND OF DIGNITY, OF SIMPLICITY AND OF ORDER. SHE IS ONE OF THE PROPHETS WHO OPEN TO OUR VISION THE POSSIBILITY OF A LIFE WHERE FULL NATURAL GROWTH AND FULL NATURAL EXPRESSION WILL BE THE AIM OF ALL PEOPLE. WHEN I SEE HER DANCE IT IS NOT ONLY THE BEAUTY OF HER EXPRESSION THAT FILLS ME WITH EMOTION, BUT IT IS THIS PROMISE SHE GIVES OF A FULL AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE FOR THOSE WHO ARE TO COME.

ROBERT HENRI

ISADORA DUNCAN AND LIBERTY

THE ART OF ISADORA DUNCAN, LIKE ALL GREAT ART, APPEALS DIRECTLY TO THE CREATIVE IMPULSE IN OTHERS. IT IS VITAL, SPONTANEOUS AND, CORRESPONDING TO THE HARMONIES OF MUSIC, IT CONSTANTLY CREATES NEW EXPRESSION THROUGH RHYTHMIC MOTION, FORM AND COLOR.

IT IS NOT DANCING, THO' DANCING IS OF IT. IT IS VITAL MOTION, EXPRESSING EMOTION. UNLIKE THE ORDINARY DANCING, IT HAS NO SET PATTERN OR SUBORDINATE MOTIF INCREASINGLY REPEATED.

IT HAS STRUCTURE AND DESIGN, BUT SO CLOSELY ALLIED TO ITS BEAUTY AND GRACE THAT IT CAN ONLY BE PERCEIVED, NOT SEEN. IT IS TRUTH EXPRESSED THROUGH NEWER HARMONIES.

NOT MERE GRACE OF MOVEMENT AND OF FORM, BUT A NEW PHASE OF EXPRESSION OF OLD TRUTHS—THE WORD OF LIBERTY MADE FLESH.

THIS IS ISADORA DUNCAN'S GIFT TO THE WORLD.

BOLTON HALL

ISADORA DUNCAN'S "CHILDREN"

ISADORA DUNCAN DRAWS ON VERY DEEP SOURCES OF LIFE; SO DEEP AS TO BE ALMOST STRANGE AND FEARFUL. YET THEY ARE NEAR AT HAND FOR ALL. THEY LIE "TOO DEEP FOR TEARS," YET LIKE THE VISION OF STARRY HEAVEN THEY ARE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERY MAN AND CHILD.

IS IT SOME MAGIC—SOME UNREPRODUCIBLE BREATH OF GOD WHICH SHE BRINGS? I THOUGHT SO ONCE, AND SUFFERED FROM THE THOUGHT; BUT THE OTHER DAY, MANY LITTLE CHILDREN DANCED . . . DANCED? NO; THEY THROBBED AND LIVED, AND MAGIC BREATHED FROM THEIR LIVING. HERE WAS THE BREATH OF GOD, YES, THE BEATIFIC VISION WAS IN THESE LITTLE ORDINARY HUMAN SOULS. THESE WANDS OF SIMPLE AVERAGE CHILDHOOD STRUCK THE ROCK, AND THE WATERS OF LIFE GUSHED, THE HEAVEN OF BEAUTY UNVEILED. THIS ART, THIS HOPE, THIS WAY OF LIFE COULD BE OUR OWN! THEY WERE ISADORA DUNCAN'S "CHILDREN."

JOHN COLLIER

VALUE OF MISS DUNCAN'S ART

I THINK MISS ISADORA DUNCAN'S WORK MUST BE A REVELATION TO ALL THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND THE GREATNESS OF HER ART. AMERICA MUST BE INDEED PROUD TO HAVE PRODUCED HER.

JULIA CULP

AMERICA'S TRIBUTES TO ISADORA DUNCAN

A COMMUNAL DRAMA

THE ART OF ISADORA DUNCAN IS MORE THAN A RENNAISSANCE OF GREEK ART; IT IS A FAR HAPPIER THING—A REVELATION PROPHETIC OF THAT "BRIGHTER HELLAS," WHICH LIES BEFORE US, NOT BEHIND. IN HER DANCE AN ELEMENTAL AND ENERGIZING FIRE CREATES FORMS OF IMAGINATION LOVELIER AND MORE VAST THAN THE EXPRESSION OF ANY ONE PERSONALITY—IMAGES MOULDED BY A LIFE-FORCE CAPABLE OF EXPRESSING A WORLD COMMUNITY. IN HER "DIONYSION," POETRY, MUSIC AND THE DANCE UNITE TO BUILD ANEW THE ARCHITECTURE OF A COMMUNAL DRAMA. THUS AT A TIME OF WAR AND DESTRUCTIVE INDIVIDUALISM, ISADORA DUNCAN ILLUMINES OUR NEW AGE WITH THE NOBLEST OF THE ARTS OF RECONSTRUCTION.

PERCY MACKAYE

ISADORA DUNCAN'S INFLUENCE

THE INFLUENCE OF ISADORA DUNCAN'S WORK IS NOT CONFINED TO AMERICA; IT AFFECTS THE ART EXPRESSION OF THE ENTIRE CIVILIZED WORLD. ITS MEANING IS IN ACCORD WITH THE MODERN TENDENCIES TO GIVE MORE DIRECT EXPRESSION TO THE FEELINGS, PASSIONS AND MOODS OF THE HUMAN SOUL, UNFETTERED BY THE CONVENTIONAL ACADEMIC DOGMAS AND TRADITIONS INTO WHICH WE HAVE DRIFTED. SHE HAS RESCUED THE ART OF DANCING FROM PRACTICAL BANISHMENT, AND HAS INSTILLED INTO IT A NEW BLOOD AND LIFE.

KARL BITTER

THE INSPIRATION OF ISADORA DUNCAN'S DANCING

WHEN I FIRST SAW ISADORA DUNCAN DANCE IN HER STUDIO I WAS OVERCOME. I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT DANCING WAS A LIGHT PLEASURE, A JOYOUS THING, SOMETIMES A VULGAR THING, OFTEN A THING THAT PROVOKED THE SENSUAL INSTINCTS THAT OUR HEBREW MORALITY HAS TRIED FOR AGES TO SUPPRESS. BUT I SUDDENLY SAW SOMETHING VERY BEAUTIFUL, AND I FOUND MYSELF WEeping. SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME THAT WILL CHANGE MY WHOLE LIFE. THERE WAS AN EXALTATION AND INSPIRATION IN HER. ALL SEEMED TO BE INSPIRED WITH THE SPIRIT OF MISS DUNCAN. I HAD WHAT SEEMED TO ME WAS A PEEP INTO A NEW PARADISE AND THEN I FELT THAT EVERYTHING THAT I HAD TO THIS TIME SEEN—I HAD NOT SEEN; AND, EVERYTHING THAT I HAD TO THIS TIME HEARD—I HAD NOT HEARD. IT WAS A NEW WORLD. I SAW THAT SHE WAS ONE OF THE RARE PERSONS OF THIS WORLD, AND THAT HER ART COULD, IN SOME STRANGE WAY, BRING COMPLETENESS TO WHAT WAS OTHERWISE SO DISCOURAGINGLY INCOMPLETE.

JACOB ADLER

ISADORA DUNCAN AND AMERICA

IT IS MY BELIEF THAT ISADORA DUNCAN'S EXQUISITE WORK WILL FIND THE RECOGNITION IT DESERVES. IT SHOULD BE A NEW STIMULUS FOR CHILDREN TO GIVE EXPRESSION OF BEAUTY AND POETRY IN THEIR LIVES, SO MUCH OF WHICH, AS A RULE, REMAINS UNEXPRESSED.

ELENA GERHARDT



COMMITTEE
FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF
ISADORA DUNCAN'S
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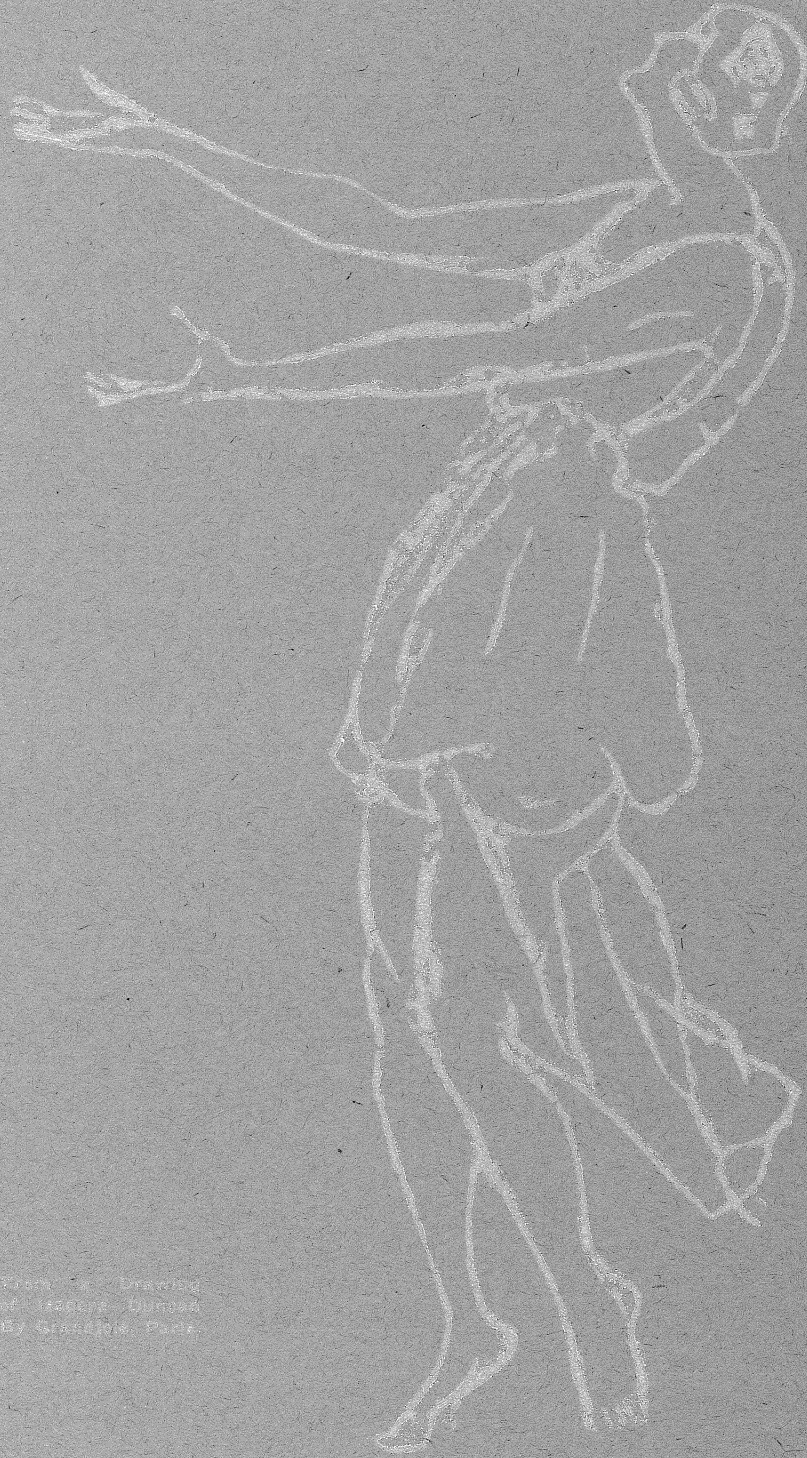
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From the Drawing
of "The Dance"
by Leonardo da Vinci