Desert Journey: A Religious Dance-Drama and an Evaluation of its Effect on a Selected Latter-Day Saint Audience

Frank W. Hatch
Brigham Young University - Provo

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd
Part of the Dance Commons, and the Mormon Studies Commons

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/4775

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
DESERt JOURNEY:
A RELIGIOUS DANCE-DRAMA AND AN EVALUATION
OF ITS EFFECT ON A SELECTED LATTER-DAY SAINT AUDIENCE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Dramatic Arts
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Frank W. Hatch
September, 1965
... and I looked and beheld a tree like unto
the tree my father say...
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Justification</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>PRODUCTION OF &quot;DESERT JOURNEY&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Script</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conception</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrangements with the MIA General Board</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casting and Costuming</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearsals</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>EVALUATION OF &quot;DESERT JOURNEY&quot;</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction of Questionnaire</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of Responses to Questionnaire</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF RELIGIOUS DANCE-DRAMA</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dramatic Material</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casting</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearsals</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A.</td>
<td>Questionnaire on the dance-drama &quot;Desert Journey&quot;</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B.</td>
<td>Total single column distribution of responses to the questionnaire</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C.</td>
<td>Total single column distribution figures to graphs in Figs. 4, 15, 16, 17A, 17B</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D.</td>
<td>Written comments to the questionnaire</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND GRAPHS

1. "... And I looked and beheld a tree like unto the tree my Father saw..." ........................ i
2. "... And they did seize upon me..." .................................................................................. 14
3. "... And they did point the finger of scorn at me and those who had partaken of the fruit..." .......................... 16
4. "... For they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem..." .............................. 19
5. "... And thus shall be the destruction of all kindreds, tongues and nations that shall fight against the Kingdom of God..." ................................. 21
6. Notation of "Desert Journey" ................................. 22
7. Table 1. Responses to Question 1 ................................. 56
8. Figure 1. Responses to Question 2 ................................. 57
9. Figure 2. Responses to Question 3 ................................. 58
10. Figure 3. Responses to Question 4 ................................. 59
11. Figure 4. Comparison of responses to Questions 3 and 4 ................................. 60
12. Figure 5. Responses to Question 5 ................................. 61
13. Figure 6. Responses to Question 6 ................................. 62
14. Figure 7. Responses to Question 7 ................................. 63
15. Figure 8. Responses to Question 8 ................................. 63
16. Figure 9. Responses to Question 9 ................................. 64
17. Figure 10. Responses to Question 10 ................................. 65
18. Figure 11. Responses to Question 11 ................................. 66
19. Figure 12. Responses to Question 13 ................................. 67

v
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Figure 13. Responses to Question 14</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Figure 14. Responses to Question 15</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Figure 15. Comparison of responses to Questions 15 and 13 (Religious Worship)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Figure 16. Comparison of responses to Questions 12 and 5 (Benefit)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Figure 17A. Comparison of responses to Questions 11 and 6 (Spiritual Motivation)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Figure 17B. Comparison of responses to Questions 13 and 6 (Spiritual Motivation)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Scriptures abound in references to the use of dance as a means of worship. In I Chronicles: 15 it explains that King David chose a leader from among his people to instruct and lead the singers who would accompany the ark of the covenant into the city of David.

16. And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers. . . .

22. And Chenaniah, Chief of the Levites, was for song, because he was skillful. 1

We see here that one of the chiefs of the people was chosen to lead in praising the Lord with song; but David himself, King of all Israel, led the people in dance to glorify God.

28. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

29. And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at a window saw King David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart. 2

Some scholars consider the Hebrew word for "dancing,"

---

1I Chr. 15:16, 22.

2I Chr. 15:28, 29.
in this context to mean to "whirl around" or "rotate."\textsuperscript{1}

So, from this scripture we find that David was setting the example by doing some kind of whirling dance in praise to the Lord as his people accompanied him. Without doubt some of them followed his example as he admonished them on this occasion to:

8. Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.

10. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

23. Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.

24. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvelous works among all nations.

29. . . . Worship the Lord in beauty of holiness.\textsuperscript{2}

David worshipped the Lord with song and dance and we see that he taught Israel by example to praise the Lord not only with song and prayer but also with dance.

In 1844 an anxious father wrote a letter to the editor of the \textit{Times and Seasons}, the official organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at that time. He requested that the Prophet Joseph Smith make comment "in regard to the balls and dancing as it has lately existed in our city."\textsuperscript{3} John Taylor, who was then the editor

\footnotesize{

\textsuperscript{2}I Chr. 16:8, 10, 23, 24, 29.

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Times and Seasons} (Nauvoo, Illinois: March 1, 1844), p. 459.
}
of the Times and Seasons as well as a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles, answered the father's plea:

We have always considered that there existed in the minds of the religious community, a great deal of unnecessary superstition in relation to dancing, but perhaps this feeling is engendered more through other associations and evils connected with it, than from the thing itself. There certainly can be no harm in dancing in and of itself, as an abstract principle, but like all other athletic exercises, it has a tendency to invigorate the system to promote health. Gymnastic exercises were considered as necessary in former days as any other part of tuition, and in England, and other parts of Europe, they have been revived of late, and are considered beneficial; and even in America, in the east, we have accounts of gymnastic exercises being introduced, and practiced even by the ladies:—Wrestling, running, climbing, dancing, or any thing that has a tendency to circulate the blood is not injurious, but must rather be considered beneficial to the human system if pursued in moderation.—Therefore, looking at dancing merely as an athletic exercise, or as something having a tendency to add to the grace and dignity of man by enabling him to have a more easy and graceful attitude, certainly no one could object to it. So much then for dancing as a science.

We find by referring to the Scriptures that dancing was not only tolerated, but practiced as a religious rite in olden times. In the second book of Samuel, VI chapter, 13th and 14th verses, we have an account of a day of rejoicing when the ark of God was brought from the house of Obededom to the city of David with gladness we read: "And it was so, that when they that bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings and David danced before the Lord with all his might: and David was girded with a linen ephod." Here was a man of God engaged in one of the most solemn religious exercises, and dancing was one prominent part of the ceremony. We find also by a reference to the 21st chapter of Judges, that when the children of Benjamin had sinned against God and had been nearly destroyed, and their wives and children cut off, that they made use of a stratagem in order that they might obtain more wives, and went to Shiloh, where there was a yearly feast of the Lord: and where the daughters of Shiloh came forth in the dance.

At the time that the Lord delivered the children of Israel out of the hands of the Egyptians, "Miriam, the
prophetess, sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrel and with dances, And Miriam answered them, "Sing ye to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Exo., xv:18. In all of the above instances, it was adopted for the purpose of celebrating the praise of God. Such was the case with David on his return from slaying Goliath; "Did they not sing one to another, of him in dances saying, Saul hath slain his thousand, and David his ten thousand;" I Samuel xxii:11.—When Jephah had gained a signal victory over the Ammonites, his daughter "came out to meet him with timbrels, and with dances," and David in speaking of Israel, says; "Let them praise his name in dance; let them sing praises unto him with timbrels and harp."

From the whole of the above it is very evident that dancing was always used as part of the service of God, and not as an idle recreation; and that it was generally practiced to celebrate some signal victory, some remarkable deliverance, or on some particular days of religious festivity or rejoicing; and Jeremiah in speaking of the blessings that shall flow to his people in the last days, looks at it in this point of view and says: "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together; for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them and make them rejoice from sorrow."

This, then, is the kind of dancing spoken of in the scriptures, and if we are asked what our views are concerning dancing, we can only answer that they are just such as the scriptures set forth, and when we can see such a dance, we shall join in it heartily. We do not consider that the dancing that is now practiced is of that kind. We never heard God's name praised, nor his glory exalted in any of them. Nor do we think that there is the least desire to glorify God in the dancing of the present day. So far then as the dancing that is now practiced is concerned, we do not believe that it is a scriptural dancing; or the thing that was practiced in former days, and that it has not a tendency to glorify God or to benefit mankind. As an abstract principle, as we stated before, we have no objections to it; but when it leads people into bad company and causes them to keep untimely hours, it has a tendency to enervate and weaken the system, and lead to profligate [sic] and intemperate habits. And so far as it does this, so far it is ingurious [sic] to society, and corrupting to the morals of the youth. Solomon says that "There is a time to dance;" but that time is not at eleven or twelve o'clock at night, nor at one, two, three or four o'clock in the morning. 1

---

It would seem that there is a need to understand how the present Latter-day Saint feels in regard to the kind of dancing referred to in the Scriptures.

**Statement of Problem**

The purpose of this study and the thesis is to produce a religious dance-drama called "Desert Journey" depicting an episode from the Book of Mormon and to present it to a selected Latter-day Saint audience. The individuals' reactions to "Desert Journey" will be evaluated by means of a questionnaire in order to determine their appreciation and comprehension of the performance, and to determine their attitudes toward dance used for religious worship. The knowledge that is gained from the production of "Desert Journey" as well as the facts that are revealed by the questionnaire will be recorded in the form of a thesis and used to make suggestions for the presentation of other religious dance programs.

**Hypothesis**

It is possible to strengthen religious convictions and to communicate religious concepts through religious dance. For this reason it may be desirable to employ religious dance in programs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

**Definitions**

"Dance-drama" is a relatively new term in the
theatre arts. The authoritative *Dance Encyclopedia*,¹ printed in 1949, does not give a definition for the term "dance-drama." However, there has been a thesis written by Charles Whitman at Brigham Young University entitled, "Dance-Drama Its History, Characteristics and Methods of Production."² This study is a compilation of the opinions of major educational and professional leaders in dance and drama regarding the definition of "dance-drama." The study revealed that there is no consensus of opinion of a universal definition of "dance-drama," but that there exists a multiplicity of forms and styles of production of this art media.

"Dance-drama," as it is used in this thesis, is the telling of a story by means of dance movement accompanied by a recorded background of music and dialogue. It is recognized that there may be many other acceptable definitions of "dance-drama," although they do not suit the purpose of this thesis.

The term "dance movement" refers to movement that is symbolic, abstract and presentational, as contrasted with movement that is pantomimic, literal and representational.

The term "religious convictions" refers to a "strong


(religious) belief,"¹ while "religious worship" means any form of expression that is intended to help man know God and to understand the relationship that exists between man and God. A common example of religious worship as it is used in this study is found in Sacrament Meeting talks, the singing of congregational hymns and cantatas in church services, religious paintings and church architecture.

**Justification of Study**

An experiment needs to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of dance-drama in religious instruction and worship. If religious dance-dramas are effective as a means of instruction and worship then they should be employed in this capacity for Church services.

The prevailing attitude toward the production of religious dance in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should be determined in order to make suggestions for the improvement and extension of its use in the Church.²

If the dance directors do not think that religious dance should be used in church worship programs, a simple answer might be to develop tasteful and suitable programs that could be presented before dance directors to demonstrate the effectiveness of religious dance in worship.


²Interview with Alma Heaton, member of the General Dance Committee of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Provo, Utah, November 17, 1964.
If the dance directors of the Church feel inadequately trained to produce religious dance programs an obvious solution would be to give instruction and encouragement in the area of religious dancing to these leaders.

**Methodology**

This study will be concerned with the production of "Desert Journey," a religious dance-drama, depicting an episode from the Book of Mormon. A record of "Desert Journey" will be made with a movement notation system known as Motation, developed by Laurence Halprin\(^1\) and modified by the writer to meet the needs of this study.

"Desert Journey" will be presented to a selected group of Latter-day Saint dance directors attending the 1965 June Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their responses and attitudes toward the production will be determined with a questionnaire.

The information gained from the production of "Desert Journey" and the responses to the questionnaires will be analyzed and used to make suggestions for the effective production of religious dance-dramas in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

---

\(^1\)A description and explanation of the Motation system was received in May 1965 by the author from Ann Halprin, wife of Laurence Halprin, at 1620 Montgomery, San Francisco, California.
CHAPTER II

PRODUCTION AND NOTATION OF "DEsert Journey"

The religious dance-drama, "Desert Journey," was conceived as part of the 1964 Brigham Young University Orchesis Dance Concert. It was one number in a section of three religious dances and was allotted ten minutes, making it the longest number in the concert.

Script

A story was selected from I Nephi, chapters 6 through 11. This account is of the family of Lehi and their experiences in the desert as they fled Jerusalem in search of the promised land. The story of Lehi was chosen because it is well known to the L.D.S. people. Even in the form of movement, the plot can be easily followed and understood by most L.D.S. audiences. This story portrays a great deal of action and is written in the form of a narrative, making it ideal for descriptive dance movement depicting narrated action.

Music

An attempt was made to have a musical score written for the dance-drama; but when all efforts proved futile, the author turned to existing musical compositions and found a satisfactory musical accompaniment in the form of
"Orbit No. 1" and "Upon Enchanted Ground," by Alan Scott Hovaness.

In 1951, Olin Downes, music critic for the New York Times described "Orbit No. 1" in this way:

There is repetition and variation, but not development or archetectonics. The modal scale designs are those in the terminology of Indian classical music, of "ragas," and the fixed rhythmical structures are of the "talas." He even extends the oriental grammar of composition to include, as it may well have done in Greek times, held notes against which florid melodies expand at ease and even quental counterpoint.

It remains oriental and classical nevertheless, in structure. The music is at times strophic in phraseology and emotionally continuous, never climatic. . . . Mr. Hovaness has delved deeply into this lore, in addition to his assimilation of the living spirit of ancient Armenian religious song.

Virgil Thomson of the New York Herald-Tribune praised Hovaness' music, saying that "Its expressive function is predominantly religious, ceremonial, incantory, its spiritual content of the purest." The haunting dissonant "legato" tones of this music suggest the deep silence of the desert. The interweaving "contrapuntal" melodies of the higher wind instruments

---

1 Alan Scott Hovaness, "Orbit No. 1" (MGM Records E3164).
against the throbbing underlying meter of the plucked instruments, all in a minor key, give the regionalistic flavor of nomadic desert people. The roving thematic phrasing in this music tends to develop an atmosphere without dictating a limited rhythmic or stylized movement vocabulary to the dancer. This leaves the choreographer a freedom to create expressive movement imagery without being hampered by obtrusive musical themes and rhythms.

The Hovaness music and the text in I Nephi were carefully analyzed and cut and organized to fit the demands of a unified dance-drama. The story line was reduced to the bare essentials of the account of Lehi's sons bringing the family of Ishmael into the desert, and of Lehi's vision of the tree of life. Great care was taken to delete all repetitive statements without destroying the unique flavor and style of Nephi's original narrative. The music was rearranged and cut to thematically fit the dialogue according to the duration of the speeches and the atmosphere suggested by the thought and action of the script.

When all elements of the script and the music were satisfactorily planned, a master tape was recorded with voice and music and at this point the sound portion of the dance-drama was complete.

**Choreography**

Much of the choreography for "Desert Journey" was conceived subjectively. The director had strong motor
responses to many of the ideas in the story. Specific gestures and movement themes were conceived that fulfilled the emotional needs evoked by these ideas.

Creating dance movement in this way presents a problem. It is difficult to teach a dancer movements derived from emotions. The director solved this problem by having the dancers perform certain tasks, such as crawling through a restricted area. This process was used to evoke a specific desired emotion in the dancers such as a sense of claustrophobia or helplessness in a difficult situation. The dancers were then asked to perform a movement pattern prescribed by the director and respond to the emotion that was experienced in doing the task.

Often with this method of direction the original movement was modified by the dancers to correspond with their ability and individuality. The total effect of the movement was more satisfactory, however, than if the dancers would have unsuccessfully struggled to conform to the original movement.

This method of directing was very effective when working on group scenes where a unity of action had to be maintained in order to keep the story line clear. The dancers were given a common element in the form of a movement pattern, and then they were instructed and helped to perform the movement while responding to the same emotion. This caused a unity that must be maintained in order to
give continued meaning and lucidity to the audience. Clarity
is especially important in a dance-drama where the first ob-
jective is to communicate a story.

One section of "Desert Journey" was choreographed by
giving each dancer the same movement pattern with conflict-
ing floor patterns. The dancers were instructed to totally
involve themselves with this problem and to make locomotor
adjustments only when physical contact with another dancer
became inevitable. These instructions produced an exciting
visual experience for the audience as well as an interesting
experience for the dancers each time they performed that
particular section of the dance.

The solos of "Desert Journey" were choreographed, or
directed, in much the same way that the director of a play
blocks his actors into specific stage areas and gives them
general directions on business and action. The actor is
then expected to develop his own role under the guiding
eye of the director.

Movement ideas were suggested to the dancers playing
the roles of Nephi and Lehi and they were blocked into spe-
cific stage areas and given instructions to use the move-
ment ideas at specific music and dialogue cues. In this
way the choreography developed according to the story line
and the abilities and needs of the performers. It is felt
by the author that the degree of development achieved by
the soloists in this way was greater than if they had been
"... and they did seize upon me ..."
given more restricting choreography to execute. It must be remembered, however, that this method of choreographing was made possible by the extreme freedom found in the script and music of this dance-drama.

A detailed description will now be given of "Desert Journey" by way of Motation, a new movement notation system developed by Laurence Halprin and other members of his architectural firm in San Francisco.

Motation was originally conceived as a means of designing movement within an architectural environment and is especially adequate in describing object relationships. The system is reasonably simple and has a graphic quality which expresses at a glance the nature of what is being recorded. It is for this reason that the author chose the Motation system to make a record of "Desert Journey."

Mr. Halprin explains the system in this way:

The idea of the Motation system can be likened to the technique of the animated film in that individual pictures or "frames," separated in space, are related in time to form apparent movement. An environment is set off in divisions of space. The notator bases his record on what is to be visually inventoried at each of these divisions. The record will be conditioned by the speed of his journey and when his separate notings are read serially, they should reflect a sense of speed just as if running off still frames of a film at different speeds.¹

In order to take advantage of the strong points of this system for dance notation, an adaption of Mr. Halprin's Motation was developed. The Motation system has an "Alphabet"

and those who had partaken of the fruit also. ... and they did point the finger at scorn at me.
with a series of 26 basic symbols which by themselves or in combinations form a rational linguistic structure that is symbolic and not pictorial. For the purpose of this study, however, only parts of the Motation "Alphabet" will be used and for the most part they will be significant in a pictorial sense. This will make it possible for the novice to quickly understand the notation.

The standard Motation Form will be modified to have six vertical columns. Five of these columns are divided into tracts, much like exposed motion picture film. Starting from the left, the first column is called the horizontal track and contains a record of the floor patterns and horizontal spatial relationships of the dancers. Each dancer is notated with a specific identifying symbol which denotes his place on a horizontal plane in relationship to the other performers and the stage.

The second column is called the locomotion track and contains information about the kind of locomotive movement that is being inventoried. Symbols as well as descriptive words are used in this column.

The third column is called the vertical track and is a record of what is seen from the center of the audience looking toward the performance area. This track is the most pictorial of all the tracks and consequently is the most subjective. The figures in this track are drawn in an attempt to capture the essence of the gesture that they
represent and consequently this tract must be read with a spirit of interpretation.

The fourth column records the time or the speed with which all of the elements must be read. When the dots are close together it indicates that the reading speed is slow and when they are further apart the reading speed is relatively faster. Mr. Halprin likens it to Hansel and Gretel dropping bread crumbs as they flee the witch. "When they walked the bread crumbs fell close together--running they fell further apart."¹ A whole note symbol indicates that the counting goes on at the same rate, but the action stops.

Unless otherwise indicated, inventory is taken at approximately one second intervals. However, the notation is telescoped and inventory is taken at approximately four second intervals when it is possible to do so without losing essential information. At these times, a \( \times \) indicates that the common time of inventory interval has been quadrupled.

The fifth and last track is used to record the facing of the performers when there is any doubt as to which direction they are facing. When there is doubt about which dancer is being indicated, that dancer's symbol will be to the left of the direction. The directions are given in standard stage direction: \( \frac{1}{2}L \) means one half turn to the left from a front position. The letters F and B indicate front and back

Land of Jerusalem

"... for they were desirous to return unto the
facing respectively. A T indicates a complete turn with L or R indicating the direction.

The sixth column is used for explanatory notes and for the dialogue which is divided into phrases and placed next to the appropriate action. Additional space for notes or explanations can be found at the bottom of the form, immediately below the tracks.

The entire adapted form is read vertically from bottom to top. This inverted reading conforms to the experience of moving through an environment. This experience is close to what happens in reality when we watch action around us. Psychologically, we orientate upward rather than downward.¹

Clarifying symbols are used only when the action is not clear. When it is obvious by looking at the vertical track that a locomotor pattern is repeated the notation of the steps in the pattern is written only once. In this way the tracks are kept free of unnecessary symbols.

The following two pages contain a complete key to the symbols used in the notation of "Desert Journey." It is necessary to study them carefully before beginning to read the dance-drama notation.

KEY TO THE NOTATION OF
"Desert Journey"

**Horizontal Track**

X Nephi
O Lehi
□ Sariah
△ Laman
▽ Lemuel
Sam

The two bad daughters of Ishmael

Ishmael

The good daughter of Ishmael

The good son of Ishmael

Angel

Supernumeraries

Line of travel

Repeat

same floor pattern

**Locomotive Track**

Walk
Run
Hop
Leap

Kneel with right or left knee

Kneel with both knees

Stand from kneeling with left or right knee
Prone on the floor

Fall

**Vertical Track**

- Gestures using body and limbs
- Crossed limbs
- Kneeling position
- Walking or running to left or right

**Time Track**

- Begin
- Stop
- Increase speed
- Reduce speed
- Unit of elapsed time

**Common time. Approximately one second per frame**

**Quadrupled time. Approximately four seconds per frame**

**Facing**

- 1/2 L  1/2 Left turn from front
- 1/2 R  1/2 Right turn from front
- F      Front
- B      Back
- T      Complete turn
And now I Nephi do write only a part of the account of my father.
And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father;
For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Jacob, and be saved.
that it was not meet that he should take his family into the wilderness alone.

And now I would that ye know that the Lord spake unto my father again saying . . .
but that his sons should take daughters to wife that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.
And it came to pass that I, Nephi did again, with my brethren, go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem unto the house of Ishmael.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horizontal Track</th>
<th>locomotion</th>
<th>Vertical Track</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And it came to pass that they did journey with us down into the wilderness, and it came to pass that the Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael and also his household and
And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, Laman and Lemuel and two of the daughters of Ishmael did rebel against us for they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

It came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, Laman and Lemuel and two of the daughters of Ishmael did rebel against us for they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

As we journeyed in the wilderness, Laman and Lemuel and two of the daughters of Ishmael did rebel against us for they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.
Ye are mine elder brethren.

And now I Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, did speak unto them saying:
and how is it that ye are so hard in your heart, and blind in your minds.

What is your younger brother need set an example for you?
Now I did pray unto the Lord

that they might leave me in the wilderness to be devoured by wild beasts.

And it came to pass that when I Nephi had spokethese words unto my brethren they were angry with me and they did seize upon me and did bind me with cords
and I did frankly forgive them.

and they did cease striving to take away my life,

For behold because of the pleading of one of the sons and daughters of Ishmael my brothers did soften their hearts

and according to my faith He did deliver me from the hands of my brethren. Yea He gave me strength that I did burst the bands with which I was bound.
And we continued our journey till we came down unto the tent of my father where we did give thanks unto the Lord our God.
wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit. And as I cast my eyes round about, I beheld a river of water and it ran along near the tree of which I was partaking the fruit.

and I beheld a tree whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul with exceeding great joy;

and I beheld myself in a dark and dreary waste. After many hours it came to pass that I beheld a large and spacious field

And it came to pass that I saw a man dressed in a white robe and he bade me follow him,

And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness he spake unto us, saying: (Live) Behold I have dreamed a dream. And, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi and also of Sam.

But behold, Laman and Lemuel, I spake exceeding strongly because of you.
And I also beheld a straight and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood;

And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree by which I stood.

And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also; wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river and I saw them, but they would not come unto me and partake of the fruit.

And I looked to behold from whence it came; and I saw at the head thereof your mother Sariah and Sam and Nephi. And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them and they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.
And it came to pass that there arose an exceeding great mist of darkness;

And I saw numberless concourses of people pressing forward, that they might obtain the path by which I stood.

unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world.

River, and led to the tree by which I stood. And I also beheld a straight and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood; and it also led by the head of the fountain.
And I cast my eyes round about, and beheld on the other side of the river of water a great and spacious building and it stood as though it were in the air high above the earth.

insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, and they wandered off and were lost.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horizontal Track</th>
<th>Lexicon</th>
<th>Vertical Track</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Table Image]</td>
<td>![Diagram Image]</td>
<td>![Table Image]</td>
<td>![Diagram Image]</td>
<td>![Table Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And now it came to pass that I Nephi did there after see in a vision the things which my father had seen. For an angel did appear unto me and it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God,

And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building and after they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not. For as many as did heed them, had fallen away. And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit.
Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the Kingdom of God."

And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying:

and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceeding great.

And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world:

And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: "Behold the world and the wisdom thereof"

gathered together in a large and spacious building like unto the building my father saw.

And the angel said unto me again: Look and behold the condescension of God. And a multitude of the earth was which led to the fountain of living waters, which waters are a representation of the love of God;
Arrangements with the M.I.A. General Board

In the fall of 1964, a conversation with Alma Heaton, one of the General Board Dance Committee members, revealed that it would be possible to present a religious dance-drama at the annual MIA June Dance Conference. At that time the writer expressed an interest in such a project and asked that an appointment be made with the General Board Dance Committee to give a demonstration of "Desert Journey" and to request an opportunity to present it at June Conference.

In the spring of 1965, one section of "Desert Journey" was presented and this thesis project was proposed to the members of the Dance Committee. They agreed with the proposal and arranged for 20 minutes on the program of the general session of the dance division of the Conference for the presentation of "Desert Journey" and for the administration of a questionnaire.

Casting and Costuming

A cast was selected according to dance ability and appearance. The choreography was developed by the methods already explained in this chapter and the costumes used in the original production were prepared and fit to the dancers in their respective roles. The costumes were designed after consulting with Beverly Warner, costume director for Brigham Young University Theatre. The National Geographic
collection, *Indians of the Americas*,¹ was used as a source book for costume design.

**Rehearsals**

Over a period of five weeks, rehearsals were conducted daily at 5:30 A.M. This early hour was used to avoid schedule conflicts with the cast members. The dancers quickly adapted to this schedule and benefits came from it that would not have derived from rehearsals held later in the day. Rehearsal rooms were easy to schedule for this time in the morning and interruptions were infrequent. The dancers seemed to develop an "esprit de corps" working at this hour that helped unify the production.

A dress rehearsal was arranged through the Dance Committee to be held June 15, 1965 at the Park Stake Center in Salt Lake City. The production was previewed at that time by Dr. Melvin R. Davis, Chairman of the Dance Committee. The dancers were given an opportunity to adapt to the large stage area and to become accustomed to the floor surface. The dress rehearsal was very useful in bringing the dancers to the point of excellence that they were able to achieve in the actual performance on this stage on the 19th of June.

Performance

On the 19th of June, 1965 at 8:45 A.M., "Desert Journey" was presented in the general session of the MIA June Dance Conference to approximately 700 dance directors of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Immediately before the performance of "Desert Journey" the writer introduced the production with these words:

We would like to present to you a different view of dance. I find that in 1844 an editorial in the Times and Seasons voiced an opinion about dance in the Church. It is evident that the MIA Dance Committee had not been organized because the editorial was rather pointed about purely recreational social dance. It said, "We find referring to the Scriptures that dancing was not only tolerated, but practiced as a religious rite in olden times. . . . It is very evident that dancing was always used as a part of the service of God, and not as an idle recreation—and that it was generally practiced to celebrate some signal victory, some remarkable deliverance, or on some particular days of religious festivity or rejoicing. This then is the kind of dancing spoken of in the scriptures, and if we are asked what our views are concerning dancing, we can only answer that they are just such as the scriptures set forth, and when we can see such a dance we shall join in it heartily."¹ We now present to you "Desert Journey," a religious dance-drama.

¹John Taylor, p. 459.
CHAPTER III

EVALUATION OF "DESSERT JOURNEY"

Construction of Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to evaluate the performance of "Desert Journey" was developed with the following three objectives in mind. (1) Appreciation: did the audience like and enjoy the performance; were they spiritually uplifted? (2) Comprehension: did the dance-drama communicate the story of Lehi in the desert to them; did they learn a lesson? (3) Attitude: do they think that this kind of dance should be used; do they think that dance can be used in worship?

A limited time to administer the questionnaire was anticipated, so the questions needed to be revealing yet limited in number. The questionnaire was constructed so that it could be evaluated by an optical scanning machine. The resulting data could then be computed on the IBM computer at the Brigham Young University IBM center.

With these objectives and limitations determined, a list of possible questions was drafted. True-false questions were not used because too little information is revealed from this kind of question.1 Completion items were also avoided. They are impractical for two reasons: they

---

test vocabulary-word knowledge rather than actual knowledge and they cannot be scored accurately since more than one word usually will fit any blank accurately.¹ Multiple choice questions were found to meet the needs of this study. With five choices equally distributed along a spectrum of varying intensity of response, not only could a negative or positive response be determined but the strength of each response would also be evident. With the exception of three questions, the five possible answers to each question were the same, ranging from great to none. This enabled the respondent to establish a criteria of values that remained constant throughout the questionnaire.

The questions were tested by writing them on notecards and having people respond to them. Those questions that consistently drew a reasonable response were kept and those that were consistently confusing were discarded. This method of selection through actual testing was more conclusive than intellectualizing about the questions would have been. Cantril explains that "with respect to issues that are not clear-cut . . . armchair attempts to design alternatives may often prove extremely misleading."²

After careful testing and analyzing, fifteen multiple choice questions were selected to be used in the question-

¹Ibid.

naire. The questions were then organized to make the test valid according to testing standards. The first three questions were asked to determine the background of the respondent, to establish a semantic rapport, and to set a criteria for answering the later questions. Subsequent questions were more direct in asking for specific information about the appreciation, comprehension and attitude of the respondent towards the dance-drama, "Desert Journey."

Careful attention was given to the placement of questions that might influence the response to other questions. An example of this may be found in the questions: "To what degree do you think that dance should be used in religious worship?" and "To what degree do you think that singing should be used in religious worship?" Cantril advised that "one way to minimize interaction of related questions is to place them as far apart as possible, in hope that intervening questions will prevent a carry-over effect." It was felt that if these two questions were placed side by side, with the question about singing being first, that a spirit of fair play would prompt many respondents to rate the two questions equally. For this reason they were separated and the question about dancing in worship was placed first since a more negative response was expected for it. In this way the true reaction of each respondent was registered.

1Appendix A
2Cantril, p. 29.
At the end of the questionnaire, further comments were asked for to give those who had responses not asked for in the questionnaire an opportunity to express them. In this way, a maximum of information was gathered from the briefest questionnaire possible. One thousand copies of the questionnaire were made and equal numbers of answer sheets were provided to conduct the test.

**Evaluation of the Responses to the Questionnaire**

Immediately following the production of "Desert Journey" the questionnaire was given to each member of the audience. Approximately 700 people were in attendance and 515 responses were received. Only 7.62 per cent of the total respondents indicated that they were not a Ward, Stake, District, or General Board Dance Director, showing that the audience was highly homogeneous according to the individual's calling within the Church.

The following pages contain graphs of the distribution of responses for each question on the questionnaire. Each item will be analyzed according to the responses of ward, stake, district, general board dance directors and others. The answers to certain questions will be compared with each other to show significant trends in opinion.
Question No. 1. What is your position in the Church?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Ward dance director</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>38.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Stake dance director</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>39.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. District dance director</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. General board dance committee</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Other</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total responses 515

The total column distribution\(^1\) to question No. 2 (Fig. 1) shows that the smallest percentage (8.01) of the respondents have had "great" experience and the greatest percentage (34.38) have had no experience in the production of religious dance-drama. The mean is 3.42 and the standard deviation from the mean is ± 1.41, showing that the range of experience varies greatly.

A careful examination of Fig. 1 will show that the District Dance Directors rated themselves consistently most experienced in the production of religious dance-dramas. This means that the District Dance Directors are probably best prepared to produce programs using religious dance.

\(^1\)All total column distribution figures will be found in the Appendix.
Question No. 2. How much experience have you had as a participant or director in this type of dance presentation?

Key
A. Ward Dance Directors
B. Stake Dance Directors
C. District Dance Directors
D. General Board Members
E. Others

Fig. 1.—Responses to Question No. 2

* Percentages

A perponderance of the respondents considered that they had "moderate" or "some" knowledge of the story of Lehi before seeing the production of "Desert Journey." In Fig. 2 the total column percentages of responses of "moderate" and "some" were 35.35 per cent and 27.93 per cent respectively. The lowest total column percentage was 5.86 per cent for "none." The mean was 2.68 and the standard
deviation was ± 1.10 from the mean, showing a wide distribution.

Question No. 3. Before this presentation to what extent could you relate the story of Lehi in the desert?

![Bar chart](image)

**Key**
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General board
E. Others

**Fig. 2.** Responses to Question No. 3

* Percentages

Question No. 4 was related to question No. 3 and Fig. 3 shows that the distribution was heavily weighted towards "great." A majority of 54.49 per cent of the respondents indicated that the dance-drama clearly communicated the story of Lehi in the desert. The mean was 1.57 and the standard deviation was a relatively narrow
\[ \pm 1.79, \] indicating a high degree of consensus.

Only one respondent to question No. 4 indicated that the story was not communicated to him and only 13 others indicated that the degree of communication was "little."

**Question No. 4.** To what degree did this dance-drama communicate the story of Lehi in the desert to you?

![Bar Chart](image)

**Key**

A. Ward  
B. Stake  
C. District  
D. General Board  
E. Others

Fig. 3. --Responses to Question No. 4.

* Percentages

Fig. 4 shows the communicability of "Desert Journey" by comparing the degree of previous knowledge of the story line (Question No. 3) with the degree of understanding (Question No. 4) that the respondents rated the performance of "Desert Journey." It is interesting to note that the

\[ ^1 \text{See Appendix B.} \]
highest percentage of people that rated the communicability of the dance-drama as "great," rated their knowledge of the story as only "some." A majority of those respondents that rated their knowledge of the story as "none" considered that the story of Lehi in the desert was communicated moderately. The mean was 1.57 and the standard deviation from the mean was a narrow ± .79, indicating that "Desert Journey" communicated well the story of Lehi in the desert.

Question No. 4. To what degree did this dance-drama communicate the story of Lehi in the desert to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Great</th>
<th>B. Moderate</th>
<th>C. Some</th>
<th>D. Little</th>
<th>E. None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key** (Responses to Question No. 3--Before this presentation to what extent could you relate the story of Lehi in the desert?)

A. Great
B. Moderate
C. Some
D. Little
E. None

Fig. 4.--Comparison of Questions No. 3 and No. 4 (Communicability)

* Percentages
A large majority of the audience members voiced the opinion on Question No. 5 that they felt that the performers gained substantial moral, physical, and artistic benefits from taking part in the performance. The highest total column percentage in Fig. 5 is 69.34 per cent for "great" and the lowest is .39 per cent for "none." The mean was 1.38 and the standard deviation from the mean was an extremely narrow \pm .7.

Question No. 5. To what extent do you think the dancers benefitted from this program morally, physically and artistically?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 5.--Responses to Question No. 5.
* Percentages

On question No. 6 the weight of opinion shifted slightly down the scale. There were 44.73 per cent of the
respondents who felt that the spiritual benefit to the audience was only "moderate." This question was designed to give the respondents an opportunity to voice an opinion about others. In this way they revealed their own feelings about the subject. From the responses to question No. 6 it may be assumed that the audience members did not experience as much spiritual fulfillment as they felt the dancers did. The mean was 1.78 and the standard deviation was ± .87, showing a wider distribution of opinion than was found on Question No. 5.

Question No. 6. How much do you think that this program spiritually moved individuals in this audience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>A. Ward</th>
<th>B. Stake</th>
<th>C. District</th>
<th>D. General Board</th>
<th>E. Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentages

Fig. 6.---Responses to Question No. 6.

Questions No. 7 through No. 10 were designed to determine the quality of the production of "Desert Journey" as rated by the audience. The responses were very gratifying
Question No. 7. How effective was the music?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 7.--Responses to Question No. 7.

* Percentages

Question No. 8. How effective was the costuming?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 8.--Responses to Question No. 8.

* Percentages
Question No. 9. How effective was the dialogue?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

*Percentages

to the director. The audience's response to the production were highly favorable. The audience members indicated that they thought that the dialogue was the strongest element of the production. The mean for the question on the dialogue was 1.32, and the standard deviation was \( \pm .62 \). The music was the least appreciated element of the production. The mean for the question on the music was 1.62 and the standard deviation was \( \pm .75 \). The mean for the responses about costuming was 1.39 with a standard deviation of \( \pm .62 \); and the
mean for the question on the dancing was 1.48 with a standard deviation of ± .8. The deviation on dancing was the largest of the four questions and it shows that there was a wider range of opinion in the answers to this question.

Question No. 10. How effective was the dancing?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 10.—Responses to Question No. 10.

* Percentages

The highest total column response to Question No. 11 was 34.18 per cent in favor of using religious dance-dramas only for M.I.A. and special programs. The lowest positive response to this question was 11.72 per cent in favor of using religious dance-dramas in all of the major worship meetings of the Church. The mean was 2.55 and the standard
deviation from the mean was ± 1.03.

Question No. 11. Dance-dramas such as "Desert Journey" could be effectively used to teach the Gospel in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>A. Ward</th>
<th>B. Stake</th>
<th>C. District</th>
<th>D. General Board</th>
<th>E. Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sunday School, Sacrament Meeting, MIA, Primary, and Special Programs</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. MIA, Primary, and Special Programs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MIA and special programs</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Special programs only</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Should not be used</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 11.—Responses to Question No. 11.

* Percentages

Question No. 12, "Which of your children would you like to participate in dance programs like this?", will not be illustrated in graph form because of the high consistency of all the responses. For question No. 12, 84.96 per cent of the respondents indicated that they would like their children of "both" sexes to take part in religious dance-dramas and 6.64 per cent thought that they would like to have only girls
participate. A mere 2.73 per cent felt that "neither"
girls nor boys should participate.

It is interesting that on question No. 13 the largest
percentage of total column responses is 39.26 per cent in
favor of using dance moderately for religious worship. This
is a margin of 10 per cent over the next highest response
which is 29.3 per cent in favor of using dance only "some"
in religious worship. The mean was 2.37 and there was a
wide standard deviation of ± 1.08. Opinions varied greatly
on this point.

Question No. 13. To what degree do you think that dance
should be used in religious worship?

Key
A. Ward
B. District
C. Stake
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 12.--Responses to Question No. 13

* Percentages
Question No. 14 (Fig. 13) was designed to determine the opinions of the dance directors as to the quality of theatrical dance in church entertainment programs. Since a large percentage of the respondents (37.5%) thought that the quality needs to be improved greatly, an inference may be made that many of the dance directors feel that the quality of theatrical dancing in the church is inferior. The mean in this case was 19.3 and the deviation was ±1.09, indicating that a wide range of opinion existed on this question.

Question No. 14. To what degree does the quality of theatrical dancing in the programs of the Church need to be improved?

Key
A. Ward
B. Stake
C. District
D. General Board
E. Others

Fig. 13.—Responses to Question No. 14.

* Percentages
The responses to question No. 15 show that a large majority (60.94 per cent) of the respondents felt that singing should be used greatly in religious worship. The mean was 1.39 and the standard deviation was ± .75.

**Question No. 15.** To what degree do you think that singing should be used in religious worship?

**Key**

A. Ward  
B. Stake  
C. District  
D. General Board  
E. Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66*</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 14.--Responses to Question No. 15.  
* Percentages

Fig. 15 compares question No. 13 to question No. 15. A careful study of the graph will show that those who thought that dancing should be used greatly in a worship capacity felt the same way about singing. Inversely, those who thought that dancing should not be used in a worship capacity felt that singing should be used only moderately. This indicates that there was a general consistency in the
attitude of the respondents on these two questions. This comparison also shows that singing is a more accepted form of worship than dancing.

Question No. 15. To what degree do you think that singing should be used in religious worship?

Key (Responses to question No. 13--To what degree do you think that dance should be used in religious worship?)

A. Great
B. Moderate
C. Some
D. Little
E. None

Fig. 15.--Comparison of responses to Questions No. 15 and No. 13 (Religious Worship)

* Percentages

A cross analysis of question No. 5 and No. 12 shows that almost all (90.1 per cent) of those respondents who thought that the performers benefited "morally, physically, and artistically" from the production, wanted "both" of their
children to participate in religious dance-dramas. This is a 9.2 per cent margin over the next highest response and shows consistency in the responses to the two questions.

**Question No. 12.**
Which of your children would you like to participate in dance programs like this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key (Responses to question No. 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Great</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 16.**—Comparison of responses to Questions No. 12 and No. 5 (Benefit of participation)

* Percentages

Fig. 17A shows the relationship of the responses to question No. 6 to the responses to question No. 11. It is evident that there is a great deal of inconsistency in this comparison. It would seem logical that those who thought that "Desert Journey" moved the audience greatly with a
spiritual experience would think that similar experiences would be desirable for such worship meetings as Sunday School and Sacrament Meetings. The distribution of responses on Fig. 17A shows that the dance directors did not think this way. A majority of those who voted that the dance-drama was a spiritual experience responded that such experiences were appropriate only for M.I.A., Primary and special programs.

Question No. 11. Dance-dramas such as "Desert Journey" could be effectively used to teach the Gospel in:

Key (Responses to Question No. 6--How much do you think that this program spiritually moved individuals in this audience?)

A. Great
B. Moderate
C. Some
D. Little
E. None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>16*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentages

Fig. 17A.--Comparison of responses to Questions No. 6 and No. 11 (Spiritual Motivation)
The responses to question No. 6 are compared with those of question No. 13 in Fig. 17B. It shows the relationship between the respondents' attitude toward dance as a worship media and their opinion of how much the audience was spiritually moved by the performance of "Desert Journey." Again it is found that the respondents did not correlate well the relationship between the power of the religious dance-drama to spiritually move individuals and its worthiness as a religious worship media.

Question No. 13. To what degree do you think that dance should be used in religious worship?

Key (Responses to question No. 6-- How much do you think that this program spiritually move individuals in this audience?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Great</th>
<th>B. Moderate</th>
<th>C. Some</th>
<th>D. Little</th>
<th>E. None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 17B.--Comparison of responses to Questions No. 13 and No. 6 (Spiritual Motivation)

* Percentages

Only 7.62 per cent of the respondents made additional written comments on the back of their answer sheets. These extra responses show a trend that verifies the data gathered
from the questionnaire. A revealing statement made by one of the dance directors was:

This type of dancing is wonderful for its special purpose, however it takes a certain amount of professional training to do it well (it is not lovely unless done well). This creates a problem for people in a community who do not have access to this (both in dancing and in teaching it).¹

This statement seems to echo the sentiment of many of the dance directors. They liked the performance but they did not feel adequately prepared to conduct similar programs.

Another attitude that seems to prevail in the data from the questionnaire is expressed in these statements.

I feel dance is very important as this type and the use can be great. I don't feel it should be in Sacrament. For firesides at the church it could be very good.

and,

I love theatrical dancing—telling a story with dance. However, I wouldn't care for it in anything but special performances.

A large majority of the respondents thought that the performance of "Desert Journey" was spiritually uplifting and a good religious experience. Nevertheless, few of them thought that this kind of experience should be extended to a religious worship level in the same way that singing and public speaking have been.

More positive notes were sounded in such statements as these:

¹See Appendix D for all written comments.
Dance and drama many times reach people that talking will never do. They are God given talents—they will teach. Why not use them more. There was nothing sacr-rigious [sic] in your performance. Teenagers would "listen" to this much more than they would to reading or preaching.

and,

I enjoyed the dance immensely. In my opinion this type of dancing will make gospel lessons live in the minds of our young people.

While these statements do not express majority opinions they do show some of the optimism and acceptance that is evident in the data from the questionnaire. It is thought that any negative trends in the responses can be traced to a lack of experience with religious dance. The data from the questionnaire seems to point to the conclusion that we as a people have learned to worship vocally and are unfamiliar with and afraid to use the vocabulary of movement in worshipping.
CHAPTER IV

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF RELIGIOUS DANCE-DRAMAS

It should be understood that there is no "correct" way to produce religious dance-dramas. A dance-drama may consist of more dance than drama or vise-versa. A production can be done with or without music, in or out of period costuming, with or without spoken dialogue. Whatever best suits the purpose of the production is the correct way.

Experimentation and continuous analysis of the experiments will help an inexperienced director to become a proficient choreographer of dance-dramas. There are a number of suggestions, however, that will help and serve as guideposts to the beginning director.

Dramatic Material

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a vast historical heritage from which to draw dramatic material. The standard works of the Church\(^1\) have a seemingly endless source of materials from which to draw. Personal journals of great leaders, historical accounts of the pioneers and traditional stories of grandparents are within

\(^1\)The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints considers the Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price as the standard works of the church.
easy access of anyone who is interested and are good sources for dramatic material. Many religious plays have also been written that adapt very well to dance-drama.

The main problem in selecting a story or a script for a religious dance-drama is to find the kind of material that will adapt easily to the dance-drama media. Since dance-drama is made of movement and action, those stories that portray action are the most adaptable.

Much of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price is written in first person and the form is that of descriptive narrative. In many cases, the literature simply needs to be deleted of unnecessary words and phrases to be usable as a religious dance-drama script. It is wise to adhere to the unity of action or in other words to tell only one story at a time. It is also important to keep the story line as uncomplicated as possible. This will help to make the dance-drama clear and understandable to the audience.

Music

Music is often the most difficult problem to solve in the production of religious dance-dramas. Good taste should always be practiced in making decisions about musical accompaniment. Often when the right music cannot be found, the best policy is not to use any music. Very fine and expressive dancing can be done in silence or to a spoken accompaniment.
When music is used it should conform to the mood, style, tempo and character for which it is being used. Care should be taken not to use music that is so familiar to the members of the audience that they will have past associations with the music that do not further the purpose of the production. In Chapter II of this thesis there is an explanation of how the music from "Desert Journey" was selected. It should be noted that care was taken to find music that would not dominate the creative impulses of the director. The music in "Desert Journey" served mainly as a background for the movement and dialogue.

**Dialogue**

The main objective in religious dance-drama is to communicate a story and the most direct means of communication yet devised by man is the spoken word. The author believes, nevertheless, that there are many experiences which are non-verbal and some of them can best be expressed in movement. Movement and vocal expression can effectively enhance each other.

The questionnaire on "Desert Journey" revealed that the audience thought that the dialogue was the most effective element of the production,\(^1\) and that the dancing was the next most effective element of the production.\(^2\) This

---

\(^1\)Refer to Fig. 9, page 64.

\(^2\)Refer to Fig. 10, page 65.
shows that the dialogue in "Desert Journey" was important and did contribute greatly to the enjoyment and significance of the production.

Choreography

Dance movement can be conceived in many ways. If the director is an experienced dancer, he may give a movement vocabulary to the dancers in the cast and then drill them until they can perform the movement well. An inexperienced director may discover a movement vocabulary by verbally leading his dancers through a movement experience based on a dramatic situation. Other choreographic methods are described in Chapter II of this thesis.

It should be remembered that simple locomotor steps such as the walk, run, hop, jump, and leap are the basic steps of any dance. Combinations of these steps become dance when they are made to express ideas and concepts. The choreography of a religious dance-drama is conceived by manipulating and experimenting with these steps until the appropriate movement vocabulary is formed.

Casting

One of the prevailing attitudes revealed by the questionnaire on "Desert Journey" was"

I enjoyed the presentation very much. Doubt if many boys would participate because of their age and their fear of not being understood.

This statement was made by a ward dance director and it expresses one of the main concerns of the dance directors
of the Church. The question should be asked: "Do our young men hesitate to sing the male part in a good choir or do they hesitate to take a 'man's role in a well directed play?" Of course they don't hesitate when the role they are expected to play is a role that does not conflict with their image of manliness. This is true in religious dance-drama. If the men are given men's movement to do and the women given women's movement there are few youths that would not accept the opportunity to express themselves in a religious dance-drama. If the director of a religious dance-drama will let the young men know that they will be given men's movement when they are asked to dance, the stigma about dance being "sissy" will soon be removed.

By experimenting, the director will quickly find that some people have more facility to express with their body than others do. The talented movers should be given the more demanding roles since they will be able to develop these roles. The others often fit in as supernumeraries.

Rehearsals

The production of a good religious dance-drama takes the same amount of time that it takes to produce a good play. Sometimes a bad play can get by and be understood even though it has a poor script and is poorly rehearsed. This is not so with religious dance-drama. The language and symbols of dance-drama are not as familiar to an
audience as they are in a purely verbal play. For this reason in order to be communicative a religious dance-drama must be composed of a carefully chosen expressive movement vocabulary that is clearly articulated by the performers.

It takes time for even the best of choreographers to accomplish the task of producing a dance-drama that communicates clearly to an audience. It requires the kind of sacrifice and hard work that adds upon the stature and enhances the character of all those willing to take part. The production of religious dance-dramas in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints presents an excellent means for teaching the gospel and training the youth of the Church in right principles of conduct.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The object of this study was fulfilled by the production of the religious dance-drama, "Desert Journey," depicting the story of Lehi in the desert. A record was made of the production with a dance notation system called Motion. "Desert Journey" was presented to approximately 700 Latter-day Saint Church dance directors at the annual dance session of the M.I.A. June Conference on June 19, 1965, at Park Stake Center in Salt Lake City. Following the presentation, each member of the audience was given a questionnaire to determine his comprehension, appreciation and attitude towards the religious dance-drama.

Drawing from the experience gained in the production of "Desert Journey" and the analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaire, practical suggestions were made for the production of religious dance-dramas. Dance-drama is a theatre art and is governed by the same standards of excellence that govern a play. Careful preparation of the dramatic materials and extensive rehearsal are always important in good theatrical productions and especially are they important in the production of good religious dance-dramas.

1I Nephi, chapters 7-11.
The responses to the questionnaire showed that the audience felt that "Desert Journey" communicated the story of Lehi in the desert. The data from the questionnaire indicate that the audience appreciated the performance and that individuals were spiritually moved. The performance was highly praised in almost all of the written comments that were made. Only one person that answered the questionnaire showed any dissatisfaction with the production. That person felt that the movement was too simple and repetitious. The general consensus of the audience members was that they liked the production of "Desert Journey."

There was a universal feeling that religious dance-dramas such as "Desert Journey" could be used to teach the gospel effectively, but there was a decided reluctance to consider the use of religious dance-drama in worship meetings of the Church. The prevailing attitude toward dance in the Church is that it is a recreational social activity and should not be used as a worship function in the same way that singing and public speaking are used. The respondents to the questionnaire did not correlate their enthusiasm for the effectiveness of religious dance-drama as a worship tool with their opinions as to its use in church worship services.

One respondent commenting on the idea of using dance

---

1See Fig. 6, page 62.

2See total column distribution chart, Appendix B.
in religious worship wrote: "I have my reservations in that it tends to denote rituals. Nevertheless, if the Church authorities sanction it I could also."

The writer feels that this comment offers a suggestion for the improvement of the use of dance in the Church as a means of worship. If those who are called to give leadership in dance for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints give sanction to the use of dance as a worship function and advocate and demonstrate its effectiveness, this powerful means of expression will gain the prominence that it had in the days of David of old.

The responses to the questionnaire indicate that the dance directors of the Church consider themselves to be unprepared to direct religious dance programs. They did indicate, however, a willingness to learn. One respondent wrote:

This would be wonderful but there is much need for assistance as stake and ward directors are not qualified in most instances. Is there any means available for us if we desire to engage in attempting a dance-drama?

Isolated opinions were expressed in the questionnaire "that this type of religious presentation be allowed equal prominence and recognition in all types of Church meetings." Although this is not the voice of the majority, it is representative of an optimism and a willingness to try new and better things that characterize some of the leadership of the Church dance program.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Handbook of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations. Salt Lake City, Utah: The General Boards of M.I.A., 1928.


The Book of Mormon. Translated by Joseph Smith. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1958.

Periodicals


McKay, David O. "Improper Dancing," The Juvenile Instructor (May, 1913), pp. 291-293.


Unpublished Material


Letters


Musical Recordings


Interviews

Personal interview with Alma Heaton, Member of the General Board Dance Committee of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Provo, Utah, Nov. 17, 1964.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE DANCE DRAMA "DEsert JOURNEY"

Please answer the following questions by marking the appropriate letter on the answer sheet with a soft lead pencil. Please mark only one response.

1. What is your position in the Church?
   A. Ward Dance Director
   B. Stake Dance Director
   C. District Dance Director
   D. General Board Dance Committee
   E. Other

2. How much experience have you had as a participant or director in this type of dance presentation?
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

3. Before this presentation to what extent could you relate the story of Lehi in the desert?
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

4. To what degree did this dance-drama communicate the story of Lehi in the desert to you?
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

5. To what extent do you think the dancers benefited from this program morally, physically and artistically?
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

6. How much do you think that this program spiritually moved individuals in this audience?
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

7. Music
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

8. Costuming
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

9. Dialogue
   A. Great
   B. Moderate
   C. Some
   D. Little
   E. None

10. Dancing
    A. Great
    B. Moderate
    C. Some
    D. Little
    E. None

88
11. Dance-dramas such as "Desert Journey" could be effectively used to teach the Gospel in: A. Sunday School, Sacrament Meeting, MIA, Primary and Special programs, B. MIA, Primary and Special programs, C. MIA and Special programs, D. Special programs only, E. Should not be used.

12. Which of your children would you like to participate in dance programs like this? A. Boys only B. Girls only C. Both D. Neither

13. To what degree do you think that dance should be used in religious worship? A. Great B. Moderate C. Some D. Little E. None

14. To what degree does the quality of theatrical dancing in the programs of the Church need to be improved? A. Great B. Moderate C. Some D. Little E. None

15. To what degree do you think that singing should be used in religious worship? A. Great B. Moderate C. Some D. Little E. None

Please write any further comments on the back of your answer sheet. Thank You!
##APPENDIX B

###DESERT JOURNEY QUESTIONNAIRE TOTAL

####SINGLE COLUMN DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sigma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38.87</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38.87</td>
<td>39.84</td>
<td>17.50</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.01</td>
<td>26.37</td>
<td>13.67</td>
<td>17.19</td>
<td>34.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.30</td>
<td>35.35</td>
<td>27.93</td>
<td>17.97</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54.49</td>
<td>33.01</td>
<td>8.59</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69.34</td>
<td>21.48</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.23</td>
<td>44.73</td>
<td>9.18</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.44</td>
<td>39.45</td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>30.47</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68.95</td>
<td>23.24</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61.13</td>
<td>26.95</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.72</td>
<td>33.40</td>
<td>34.18</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>84.96</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.82</td>
<td>39.26</td>
<td>29.30</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>28.32</td>
<td>20.90</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.94</td>
<td>28.52</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of cards = 512
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPATION
TOTAL SINGLE COLUMN DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>84.96</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Sigma 2.83 0.71

Number of cards = 512

COMMUNICABILITY OF DANCE
TOTAL SINGLE COLUMN DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54.49</td>
<td>33.01</td>
<td>8.59</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Sigma 1.57 0.79

Number of cards = 512

SPIRITUALITY MOTIVATION
TOTAL SINGLE COLUMN DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.72</td>
<td>33.40</td>
<td>34.18</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.82</td>
<td>39.26</td>
<td>29.30</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Sigma 2.55 1.03

Number of cards = 512

SINGING VS DANCING AND WORSHIP
TOTAL SINGLE COLUMN DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.94</td>
<td>28.52</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Sigma 1.39 0.75

Number of cards = 512
APPENDIX D

WRITTEN COMMENTS TO QUESTIONNAIRE

I believe dancing expresses stories and history very well. This type of dancing is unusual, but very artistic and should be taught and practiced more.

Dance and drama many times reach people that talking will never do. They are God given talents—they will teach. Why not use them more. There was nothing sacraligious [sic] in your performance. Teenagers would "listen" to this much more than reading or preaching.

My first feeling was, I wish my own 4 children had seen it, next, if I'd known I would have had our 36 dance festival participants here for a few minutes to see it.

This dancing was very impressive.

I feel dance is very important as this type and the use can be great. I don't feel it should be in Sacrament. For firesides at the church it could be very good.

I look forward to seeing more of this type of dancing in our MIA program.

I love theatrical dancing—telling a story with dance. However, I wouldn't care for it in anything but special performances.

This type of dancing is wonderful for it's special purpose. However, it takes a certain amount of professional training to do it well (it is not lovely unless done well). This creates a problem for people in a community who do not have access to this (both in dancing it and teaching it).

I loved it. It gave me goose bumps.

I feel more dancing could be used in religious worship if the quality was as good as shown here today.

This would be wonderful but there is much need for assistance as stake and ward directors are not qualified in most instances. Is there any means available for us if we desire to engage in attempting a dance-drama?

If No. 13 refers to church services I have my reservations in that it tends to denote rituals. Nevertheless if the Church authorities sanction it I could also.
I think this type of dancing is good for special programs by experienced dancers--I do not think this type of dancing will lend itself to the general body of the Church.

This form of dance is very colorful. The music and story should be studied to a greater extent to avoid repetition and express the story properly.

Creative dance gives us a chance to use our own ideas. We need more chance to do this.

It would seem to me that the main use of dancing such as we saw so beautifully demonstrated would be in religious pageants and musicals or road shows. To be effective the directors would need professional training.

I feel this type of dancing is very expressive but I feel this type of dancing would take more practicing and preparation for than the average directors and dancers have to put into a program of this type. I feel this is fine for professional teachers to teach.

I think this is real fine way of teaching the gospel. It will stay with one a long time.

This type of dancing could and should be used beneficially in the Church. Hope some "Dance-dramas" can be sent to wards to be used.

Dancing should receive a higher place in the Church than it does, and should be considered more of an art than it is.

I think this would be useful for M-Men and Gleaners groups, particularly those who have been using or doing it in college and/or high school--it may draw them in more.

Introduced slowly in the program.

This type of dancing is something that would help teach us the gospel more--I do feel it is new and sometimes it takes a while to change ones minds to accept it.

This was very interesting. I liked it very much. Very effective.

I enjoyed the presentation very much. Doubt if many boys would participate because of their age and fear of not being understood.

I don't believe we could get boys to do this type of dancing and not many girls. P.S. I doubt if I could teach it.
The demonstration was perfect. It was very effective and should be used in our Church.

I love the way you make feeling go through people. Keep up the work.

We just want lots of dancing, mostly social!

Dancing has just as much value in religious worship as singing.

I enjoyed the dance immensely. In my opinion this type of dancing will make gospel lessons live in the minds of our young people.

More variety needed in mood movements--

The performance was outstanding! I'm happy to see something is being done in this line of dance in the Church.

Possibly, the dancing itself could be a little more related to the dialogue. I realize this is Modern Dance and movements do not always relate but you left me with a feeling of nonfulfillment in places. Such as--

1. The great and spacious building
2. When the Angel appeared to Nephi

Also a little more smoother movements instead of so many dynamic movements all together.

Is this script etc. available?

That this type of religious presentation be allowed equal prominence and recognition in all types of Church meetings.

There was too much repetition of movements. The same movement was used to portray different moods, etc. Without narration this would have meant nothing to me nor told me any story.

I personal think that you should have more slow descriptive movements instead of 8 or 16 bars of one kind of step.

I feel you need a professional teacher to teach these and it would be difficult to get the boys to participate. It would be wonderful if this could be accomplished.
DESERT JOURNEY:
A RELIGIOUS DANCE-DRAMA AND AN EVALUATION
OF ITS EFFECT ON A SELECTED LATTER-DAY SAINT AUDIENCE

An Abstract of a Thesis
Presented to the Department of Dramatic Arts
in the College of Fine Arts
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Frank W. Hatch
September, 1965
INTRODUCTION

The Holy scriptures abound in references to the use of dance as a means of worship. It would seem that there is a need to understand how present day members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints feel in regard to the kind of dancing referred to in the Scriptures.

Statement of Problem

This study will be concerned with the production of "Desert Journey," a religious dance-drama, depicting an episode from the Book of Mormon. A record of "Desert Journey" will be made with a movement notation system adapted from Motation, an architectural movement notation system developed by Laurence Halprin of San Francisco.

"Desert Journey" will be presented to a selected group of Latter-day Saint dance directors attending the 1965 June Quarterly Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their responses and attitudes toward the production as a means for religious worship will be determined with a questionnaire.

The information gained from the production of "Desert Journey" and the responses to the questionnaires will be used to make suggestions for the effective production of religious dance-dramas in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It was found that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a vast historical heritage from which to draw dramatic material for dance-dramas. Many stories, both scriptural and traditional, portray sufficient action and are written in such a style that they can be used for religious dance-dramas with little or no adaptation being necessary. The writer found that care must always be taken to make the story line of a dance-drama as uncomplicated as possible since the language of movement is not as universally understood as the language of words.

The use of a dialogue in religious dance-drama proved to be a helpful factor in the production of "Desert Journey." The dialogue seemed to relieve part of the responsibility of communication from the choreography. The audience indicated that the dialogue in "Desert Journey" added greatly to the production.

It was found that in order to be communicative, a religious dance-drama must be composed of a carefully chosen expressive movement vocabulary that is clearly articulated by the performers. Solo movement seemed to be the most communicative and unison group movement helped make group scenes understandable.

The responses to the questionnaire showed that "Desert Journey" communicated the story of Lehi in the desert to the audience and individuals were spiritually
moved by the performance. There was a universal feeling that religious dance-dramas such as "Desert Journey" could be used to teach the gospel effectively, but there was a decided reluctance to consider the use of religious dance-drama in worship meetings of the Church. This attitude may be the result of a lack of experience and precedence in the employment of dance in a worship media in the Latter-day Saint church. It is believed that if the leadership in the dance program of the Church will give sanction to the use of dance as a worship function and advocate and demonstrate its effectiveness, this powerful means of expression will gain the prominence that it had in the days of King David.

The production of religious dance-dramas in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints presents an excellent means for teaching the gospel and training the youth of the Church in right principles of conduct.

APPROVED:

[Signature]
Chairman, Advisory Committee

[Signature]
Member, Advisory Committee