**UNESCO WORLD DANCE CONGRESS**

**ATHENS 2022**

**JULY 2022**

**Registration and all payment one month before (6th June 2022)**

DARREN ROYSTON

UNESCO CID member & Trustee LABAN GUILD INTERNATIONAL

PRESENTATIONS:

–  **Lecture-demonstration** (presentation of a subject using Powerpoint) 20 minutes (including questions)

**THE BASSE DANSE 15th century :**

**Notations for dramatic interaction at the royal courts of Europe. Interpreting historical sources with Laban Movement Analysis.**

In honour of Ann Hutchinson Guest who died this year. Ann suggested a way to examine historical dance notations in her seminal work *DANCE NOTATION: The Process of Recording Movement on Paper* (1984), and considered how notation itself could include signifiers of the particular historical period when it was constructed. This year, (2022) the Brussels Royal Library will publish a new facsimile of the 15th Century dance manuscript (MS 9085), to which I have contributed to the introduction and notes, as an offering of how to physically interpret the dance notation. This lecture demonstration will consider all the elements a choreographer / dance historian needs to examine to understand why such a dance form was created and continued to be danced, and how dancers today can create a physical staging from this notation. I have published an explanation of my methodology as *DRAMATIC DANCE* (Darren Royston, 2014, Methuen/Bloomsbury). This textbook includes a Video reconstruction of *La Dame* Basse danse by Nonsuch History & Dance at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London. The historical notation is a sequence written on a blank page in a Catholicon (a form of dictionary) printed in Venice in 1497, now in the library of Salisbury Cathedral.

How can historical writings about dance be used to generate performance, and what is the dancers experience when physically interpreting the notations today? Rudolf Laban’s introduction to *Modern Educational Dance* (1948) suggested the need for modern dance to be studied with an understanding of the historical world, including analysing the architectural dynamics and aesthetics which gave the social and political context surrounding earlier dance forms. How can this Laban movement analysis give body to the paper notations and what other current methodologies can be used?

Recent publications related to the Movement for Actors offer other perspectives such as neuroscience (*RETHINKING THE ACTOR’S BODY,* Dick McCaw, 2020) and training the articulate body (*TRAINING THE ACTOR’S BODY*, Dick McCaw, 2018), so that the “historical imagination” can govern the choices made by the dancer in the moment of performance.