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THE WORK OF LOIE FULLER
AND TURN OF THE CENTURY ART
by
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INTRODUCTION

The beginning and development of American Modern dance around the turn of the twentieth century can be traced through the work of one of its leading pioneers, choreographer and dancer, Lois Fuller. Born in Fullersburg, Illinois, 1862 Fuller did not deliberately set out to revolutionize the dance world but in no preconcieved manner she did win fame and respect for her ingenuity and innovation.

The thirty year period stretching from 1890 spanned the height of Fullers career. It marked an age of flourishing exploration and discovery in many fields. Albert Einstein and Marie Curie were pioneers in Science. Jung and Freud set significant waves of change in pyschology, some of the major names in literature included James Joyce and W.B.Yeats and in Theatre G.B.Shaw and J.M. Synge while Kandinsky, Brancusi and Rodin amongst others dominated the visual arts. Perhaps the most influential for the world of dance was the music of Stravinsky, Schubert and Prokofiev. This all provided an appropriate and exciting backdrop for the rebellion against classical ballet and for Fullers unique creations.

The influence of classicism, previous to this; had been manifest throughout the history of western art. Changing trends in artistic activity during this era, however, especially in the applied arts, prompted a change in public attitudes. Art Nouveau, emerging from its viennese roots in the middle of the nineteenth century undoubtedly aided the integration of the arts into the general fabric of life.

This became a very strong line of development. There are many similarities in Fullers work and the pure and applied arts in terms of style and content and she proved to be a strong influence to many artists. The human body is the pivotal point from which a message is directed through many media; whether design, paint or performance. Audience is an essential factor in its communication; the examination of the relationship between the observer and the observed.

CHAPTER 1.

The formal aspects of the dance of Loie Fuller and links with Art Nouveau.

Too often, the dance is a pretext for an exhibition of young girls always smiling in very short costumes or for exhibiting young ladies. The moment you attempt to give dancing a trained element naturalness disappears. Nature is truth and art is artificial. For example, a child will never dance of its own accord with the toes pointing out.

(Mazo;1977,p.12)

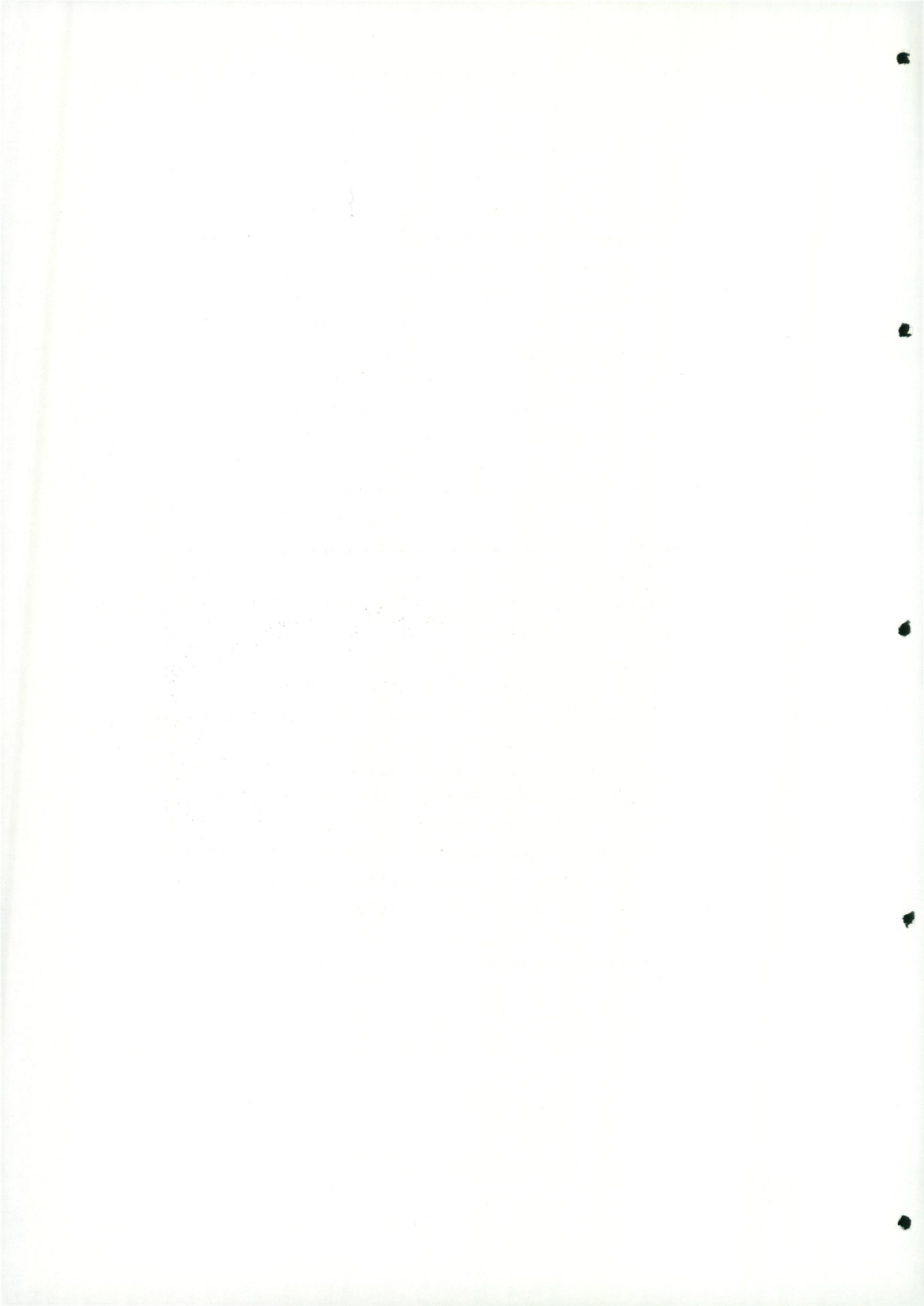
Loie Fullers creative dance performances formed part of a revolutionary movement which broke with convention and the codified techniques of classical ballet. As a leading pioneer in America, she exploited the freedom in expression and in motion in her work to produce a unique style of her own. Freedom is a key term in understanding the new dance forms. It allowed her and her contemporaries to introduce, experiment with and develop their own language for the art in accordance with their individual needs. Martha Graham

for instance was inspired by the contraction and release of energy from the breathing rhythm of the body. Others like Twyla Tharp believed in the traditional values which, were established by the classical ballet and retained these in their work. Fuller however, rebelled against formalism, nostalgia, rigidity, decadence and stereotype shaped by images of dainty airborne creatures on stage. She denounced the manner in which they were seen through a romantic haze to swoon gracefully or die of a broken heart.

Much revolution was occurring in the traditional arts on the international stage during this period. Many similarities can be drawn between the formal elements of Fuller's dances with the strong artistic renewal of Art Nouveau which emerged at the turn of the century. It too demanded freedom of expression in a two dimensional medium and like the revolution in dance it incorporated other fields in art into its sphere such as music and the theatre. This particular principle reflected its aspiration to find the total artwork. In its beginnings with the 1903 Wiener Werkstätte the efforts of painters, architects and designers joined force with this intention. Many of the pioneers of the new style paralleled Fullers art in that significance was placed on invention and experimentation as well as quality.

Art Nouveau began to develop before Loie Fuller conquered Paris, however both gained importance simultaneously and there is strong evidence to suggest that they drew influence from each other. In France the Art Nouveau movement found its most direct expression in architecture and the applied arts. Dance became one of the most recurrent motifs in the movements ~~of~~ symbolism. The design by Henri Sauvage for the sculpture on the facade of the Paris Theatre, 1900 was dedicated to Loie Fuller. (Plate 1). It described the sinuous and fluent movement of the dancer's drapery in a decorative manner. René Lalique designed a bronze parapet for the Loie Fuller theatre in that year (Plate 1).

Loie Fuller provided a great source of inspiration. In fact, no other dancer was more frequently portrayed in as many diverse treatments. George de Feurre, Raoul Larche and Bernard Hoeteger depicted her in bronze. Jules Cheret and Toulouse Lautrec endeavoured to capture the magic of Fullers performances in the form of posters (Plates 3 & 4). Manuel Orazi too, in an atmospheric and vapourous handling of the dancer made a poster for the Theatre (Plate 5).



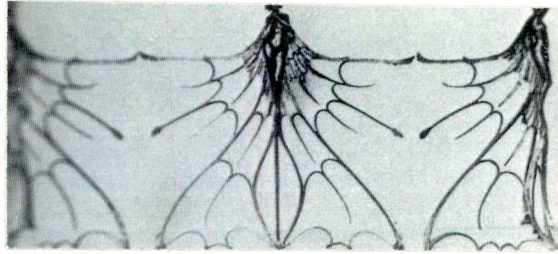


Plate 1: Rene Lalique, bronze parapet for the Loie Fuller Theatre, Paris, 1900.

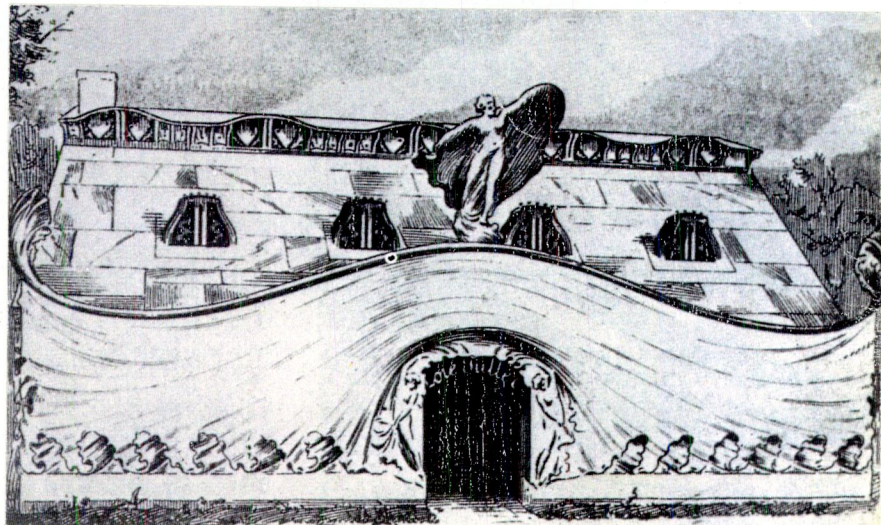


Plate 2: Henri Sauvage; project for the Loie Fuller Theatre in Paris.

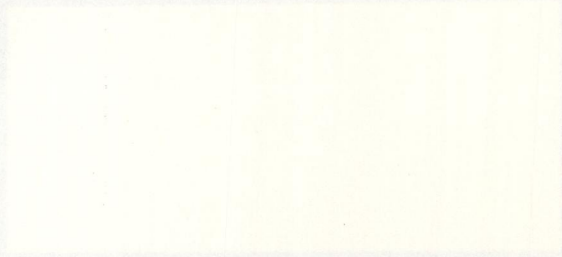




Plate 3: Jules Chéret. La Loie Fuller, Folies Bergeres poster. 1893.

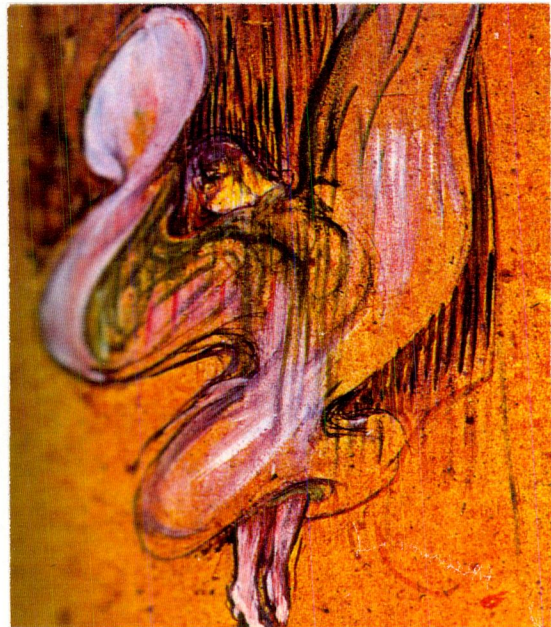


Plate 4. Henri De Toulouse Lautrec, Loie Fuller. 1893

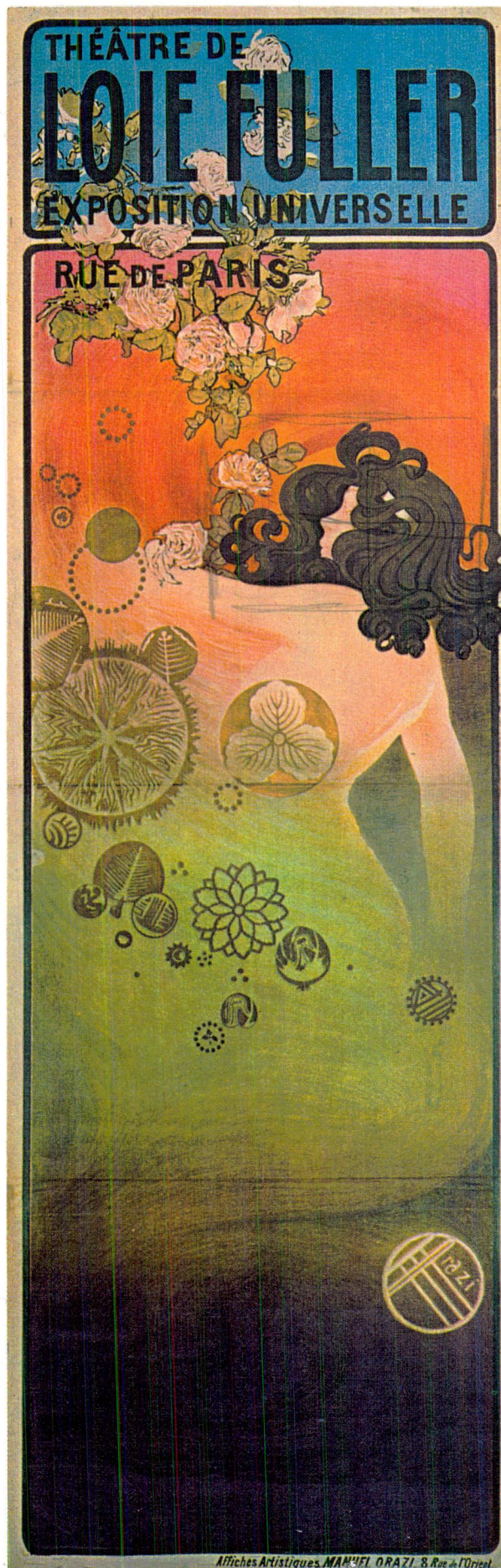
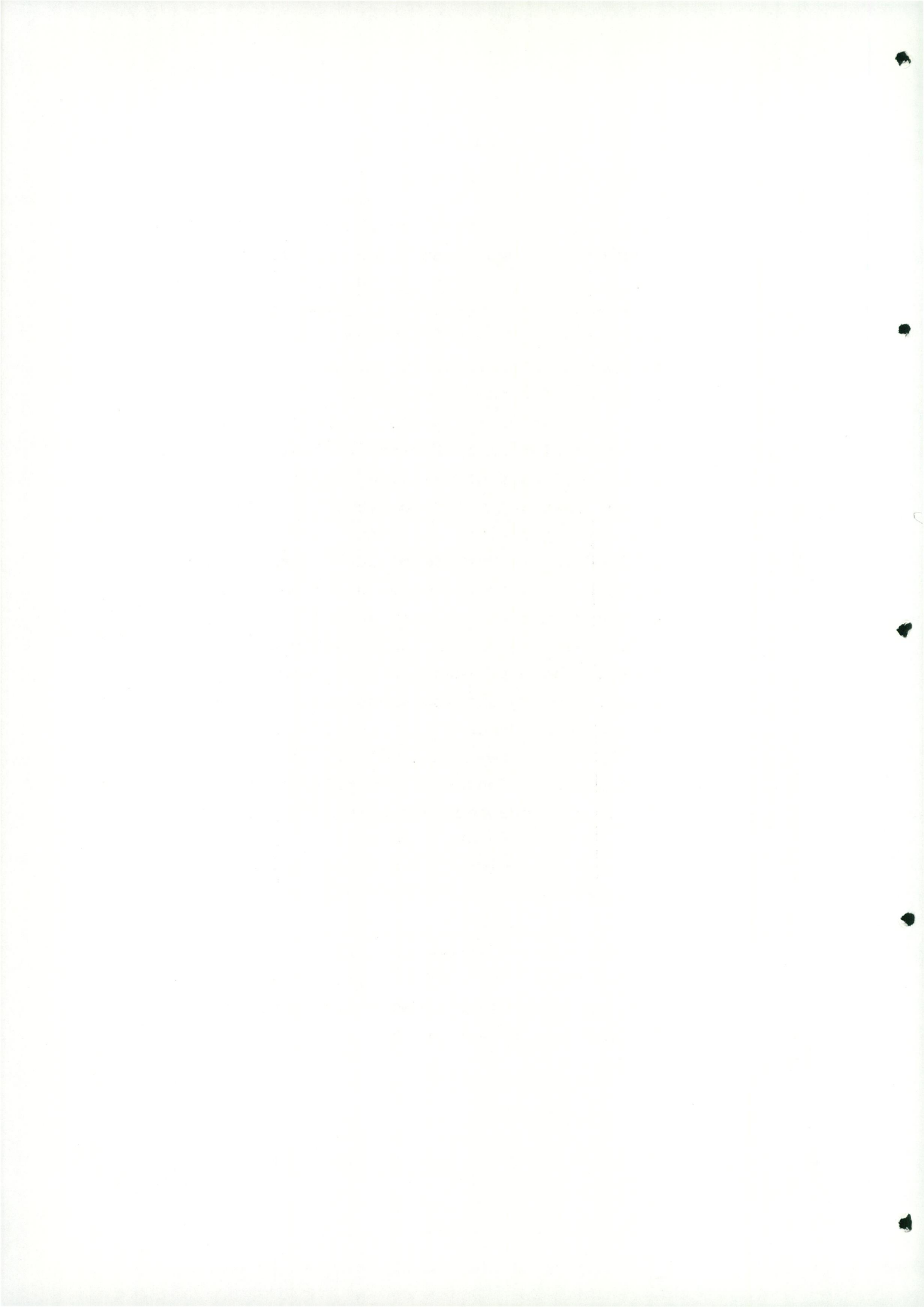


Plate 5:
Manuel Orazi;
Poster for the
Loie Fuller
Theatre.



Return to Nature. The recurrent theme in dance carried throughout the career of Loie Fuller was the return to nature. Nature proved just as essential in Art Nouveau designs. Pioneers Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Hans Hoffman brought to the new style in Scotland and Austria influences from the past. Among the many sources of Art Nouveau must be observed the denunciation by Ruskin, William Morris and their followers of the same misuse of styles of the past and their convictions concerning the reinvigoration of organic forms in the applied arts. The use of nature was nothing new in decoration in western Art but Morris believed that Art Nouveau should approach its interpretation not in the traditional, representational manner but in recreating it without losing its wholeness and vitality. Nature became reduced to essential lines wholly evocative in themselves. In this there is a close alliance to Loie Fullers work. Fuller too accepted that principles of form could challenge the often established one. This is particularly evident in such dances as 'The Serpentine'.

The Art Nouveau exponents illustrated and designed heavily stylized, ornamental forms as seen for example in a decorative panel by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, 1902, (Plate 6).



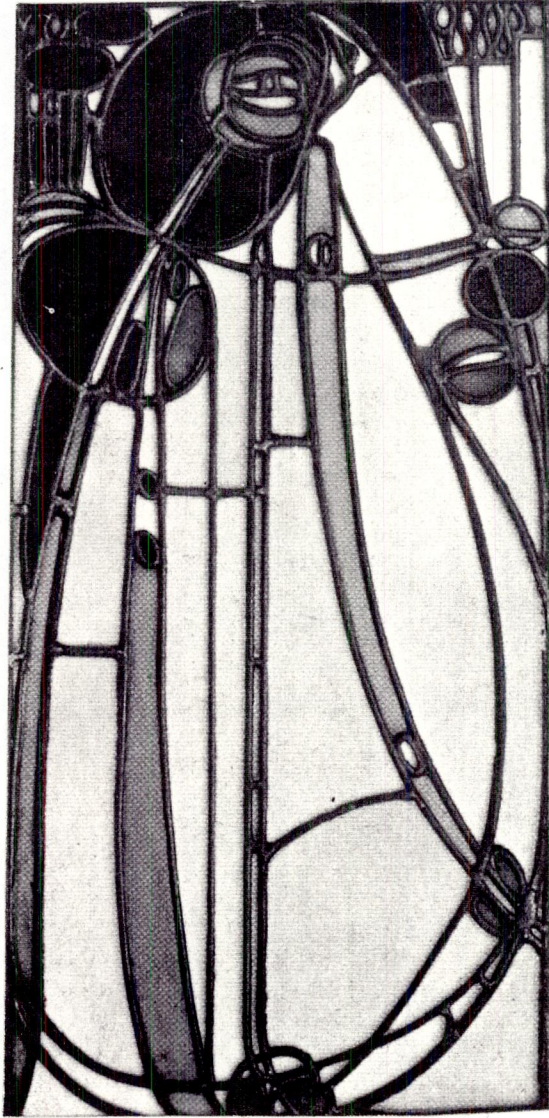


Plate 6: C.R. Mackintosh; decorative panel,
1902.



He and his contemporaries, while considering functionalism in vernacular elements and integrity in their use of materials interpreted their ideas first in a curvilinear abstract pattern, a style adopted by Loie Fuller in depicting floral and animate forms. This later developed into flatter geometric shapes. Attention was paid to symmetrical motifs in design, especially the creeping plant motif. The rose became a typical incorporation into the productions by the Glasgow school. A chair design by Mackintosh shows this (Plate 7). Fredrich Ahlers - Hesterman embodied the real basics of Art Nouveau in terms of interior and domestic design.

The vision which the words Art Nouveau engenders in us is ridiculous and dreadful. Plant like reptiles wind themselves around remodelled sofas, improbable masses of hair on concave womens heads make ashtrays and a few sea-roses have succeeded in establishing themselves on coloured tilted ovens.

(Lorenz: 1985,p.7)

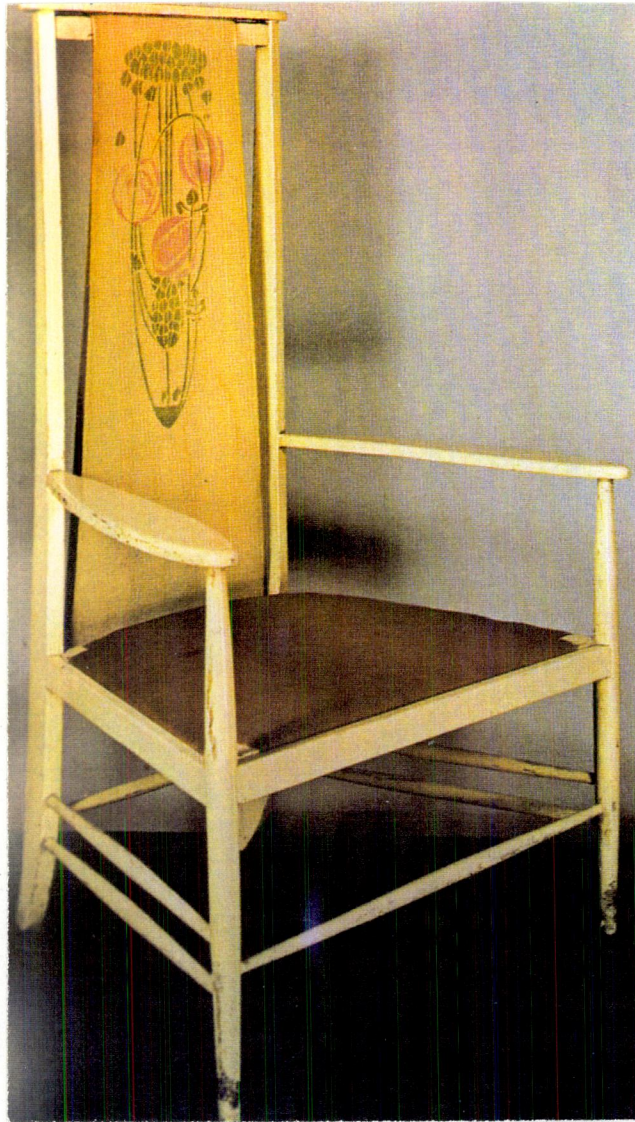


Plate 7: C.R. Mackintosh; chair 1902.

New lithographic posters which appeared in public advertised these kinds of products. They advertised the new style and in doing so brought art to the masses. After all, Art Nouveau was the first style in the decorative arts to receive widespread publicity. French socialist architect, Frantz Jourdain supported 'art in the street' (Haslam: 1989, p.110). He fully encouraged architects to reject the language of classicism, just as many pioneers of American modern dance had. He believed these were comprehensible only to a small elite section of society and that buildings should be adorned with decorations derived from nature. These ideas were in keeping with the belief of William Morris, that art will transform dull streets with all the beauty of the countryside. The theory materialized in such projects as the building designed by Olbrich which housed the secessionist exhibitions of the early 1900s. It paid homage to nature in its curvaceous lines and elaboration. Loie Fuller's popularity with so many artists was probably due to the fact the characteristic flowing line with its pulsating movement and tension matched the treatment of naturalistic detail in her choreography and performance.

'The Serpentine'

Art Nouveaus characteristic linear form-language in the eighteen ninties incorporated organicism, assymetry and the combination of rectilinear and curved forms. Overriding all, however was the overemphasis on flowing line in every aspect of their work. These particular traits manifest themselves in Loie Fullers moving sequences; namely in one which was an important influence in the history of the new style 'The Serpentine Dance'. This performance was the inspiration behind designer William Bradley's 'The Serpentine Dancer' which perfectly illustrates the importance of line and its precedence over the depth and perspective qualities of the new style (Plate 8).

'The Serpentine' as it became very well known is an excellent example in considering the formal aspects of Fuller's work. It was a display in her ability to allow the body's innate beauty and power to create a new method of self expression. She liberally discarded the technical feats, precision and highly controlled sense of balance which became no longer the order of the day. Her technique did not aim to conceal the effort in movement, therefore it did not require an idealized physique to convey effects.

She exploited the curves, fragility and strength, eloquence and dynamism of the female form in this dance, not strenuous exertions of the limbs. Fuller skillfully accentuated the form by combining fluid line with imaginative use of stage props and of course simple draperies on which she heavily relied. These factors remained dominant in defining the rhythm of 'The Serpentine Dance'.

The deep interest in nature is a thematic aspect in Fuller's work. Her dances became metaphors for floral and animate subjects. Similarly with Art Nouveau natural objects appeared as abstract patterns. An account by contemporary dancer, Isadora Duncan, (1878-1927), of Loie performing The Serpentine illustrates this;

Before our very eyes she turned
to many coloured, shining orchids,
to a wavering sea flower, and at
length to a spiral like lily, all
the magic of Merlin...

(Mazo: 1977,p.30).

The evocative force of line in Art Nouveau formed images of aquatic plants such as the water lily.

The inspiring Serpentine, 1889 was made up of forms disguised and constantly changing with twirling expanses of silk. These worked in harmony with the human movement. Long flimsy gowns, sinuous fluid lines, transparent gauze flashed momentarily under the play of colourful lights. Fuller created fantastic illusions which profoundly astonished her audience in New York. Incredibly convincing floral forms such as an orchid and a butterfly were transformed from a swirling skirt and simple wavering scarves and headdress. This skirt, painted with butterflies proved to be a huge success with its influence on fashion as imitations appeared on women on the streets of Paris. To them she was 'La Loie', a genius, held in particular high esteem and it should be noted that it was in Europe not the United States that Fuller gained her fame and admiration.

"The Serpentine" provides evidence that Fullers manipulation of cloth was no doubt unique. She was extremely successful in proving that this was as much a part of a modern dance as the human movement itself. Charles Rennie Mackintosh, then well aware of Fullers stage designs painted fluid studies of nature in watercolour, which bore resemblance to the luminous effects of Loie's skirts.



Even though the idea of skirt dancing had been used before no one actually paralleled her individual genius in this field.



Plate 8: William Bradley: 'The Serpentine Dancer' 1894-95.

CHAPTER 2

Style, Technology and Techniques.

Lois Fuller was an artist whose vision was shaped as strongly by science as it was by art. She enjoyed the excitement of the developing modern technology and industrial achievement which marked the era and employed the tools newly available to her in this field. These catered for her fertile imagination and creativity and they also held important implications in the printing and design processes for Art Nouveau. Fullers innovation and originality brought a mass of richness and enlightenment to the contemporary dance world and to other developments in art.

Following the development of photography in 1839 the question of how to depict motion proved a preoccupation for both artists and scientists. Research was undertaken into how to break down motion and with the introduction of high speed film emulsion in 1889 and consequently, ^{with} instantaneous photography, results began to emerge. One must look to Loie Fuller in the field of dance photography. She seemed to have understood what photography could do to give durability to an art that by its nature is evanescent.

She facilitated its progress when new photographs offering a plastic representation of the dance were made when instantaneous photography encountered her work. They documented her undulating movement of draperies recording images of variatingly defined areas.

The discovery of radium by Pierre and Marie Curie lent itself as exciting scope for Loie Fullers ideas. Radium possessed an attractive illuminating glow which excited her. New and dynamic, it proved to be a challenge particularly because it was thought that it may prove impractical, expensive and dangerous. Despite this, Loie pursued the idea unrelenting. In the first dance using this tremendously powerful medium she included colour images projected on silk. Her venture proved not only a success but a sensation. She delighted her audience, not deliberately setting out to shock them through. Like many of her contemporaries she used the components at her disposal often going to extremes such as this unique creation to make a point. Seemingly effortless, she integrated dance and music and design with expertise to produce multi media spectacles in a theatrical style.

Loie Fuller - Evangelist of Light.

The discovery of electric light which burst onto the worlds stage in the latter half of the nineteenth century proved to be Loies most valuable asset in her dance. During her childhood and before, attempts had been made to produce light in another form than gas or oil. Electricity's potential as a form of illumination had been known long before its practical implementation which in America came with Edison's practical light bulb in 1878. Fuller more than anyone else was to investigate the aesthetic possibilities of the new electricity and use them in hew work.

It was a London theatre in 1882 which was the first to use phosphorescent bulbs. Following this, Steele Mackaye became the first manager to apply electricity to an american stage. This quickly became more widespread. Fuller pioneered the artistic use of the incandescent filament bulb. By introducing this she proved extremely resourceful and original. Her performances in the Folies Bergerés of dancing instruments of light inspired numerous artists and sculptors in the field of Art Nouveau lighting effects in paper and metal. The lamps by Raoule Larche, for instance, (Plate 9).

The last decades of the nineteenth century, being a thriving era for invention and discovery provided the perfect backdrop for an artist with as much zest and enthusiasm for new machines, gadgets and experimentation as Fuller. It was thought that even an exhibit in the major Paris science and art exhibition of 1900, a telescope through which one could see the moon inspired Fuller in future performances. Sir Humphrey Davys carbon arc lamp of 1808 provided special lighting effects for her on stage in combination with carefully arranged mirrors for example to create ambiance and extra dimension. Fuller worked with her own team of electricians. Not only did she use colour and materials available readily, but by concocting her own dyes with which to colour fabric she rendered her work even more unique. Large scale projections through her specially designed slides and coloured gels used to change lighting effects, were aids in highlighting and enhancing her moving dancers. Fuller found that in addition to colouring fabric in her own dyes that phosphorus salt treatment gave fabric a glowing quality, hence displaying a power of its own. Light remained the most important element in enabling Fuller to transform and distort images and create the fantastic illusions for which she became best known.





Plate 9: Raoul Larche; Ormolu Lamp.



The 'London Sketch' was a resplendent performance in The Casino theatre 1900. The show was comprised of individual dances beneath different coloured lights. The technicalities in the 'Fire Dance' composition of 1885 clearly demonstrates the artists use of light, props, and technology. In a way this supports the opinion of Andre Levinsohn that Loies dancing was 'ordinary' (Mazo, 1977.p.23). The critic did however appreciate her resourcefulness and skill in creating stage effects. This particular dance did after all did involve Loie simply twirling round and round. Light flooded the stage dramatically from all angles to illuminate her figure which seemed ablaze on a sheet of glass. The glow was reinforced by under lighting which shone upwards (Plate 10). She moved to the rhythm of the music among flickering colours:



Plate 10: Photographic of Loie Fuller from the Dance collection of the New York public library.



Violet, orange, purple and mauve succeeded in rapid succession until a rich deep red dominated the dancer and she became for one brief moment a living rose... The hues of the rainbow came from all sides and ranged themselves upon the ever moving draperies. Every fold had its tint and scheme of colour intensified by the surrounding darkness until the eye could scarcely bear to look...

(Mazo, 1977, P.23)

Oskar Schlemmer and the Triadic Ballet 1922

The costume, spatial and lighting effects can be recalled in the performing arts of Oskar Schlemmer. These traits can be seen in the Triadic Ballet which took place in Stuttgart 1922, over twenty years after Loies 'Fire Dance' was staged. It was one of his most significant works at the Bauhaus. Schlemmer shared Loie Fullers approach to nature. It proved vital as inspiration and resembling her illusions he conveyed natures qualities through abstract forms. The ballets he conceived were extremely stylized and this particular performance, like Fullers work exploited the importance of movement in space and the dynamism it could produce. The body of the

dancer was emphasized by using props, in creating certain shapes in conjunction with tricks of the light. Technology had its role to play but primarily the figure and its relationship to the surrounding space was foremost. Schlemmer wanted to convey through freedom of movement, an ideal of simple self awareness. Priority given to these aspects of his choreography reflects references to the notions of Wassily Kandinsky and his essay 'Concerning the Spiritual in Art', 1912.

The Triadic Ballet was comprised of three acts, each dominated by a different coloured backdrop which would evoke a certain mood. This clever use of light is echoed throughout Fullers performances. Each of the colours that Schlemmer used was associated with specific music and gestures of the dancers.

In the first act, yellow projected burlesque and the comical; this was followed by rose and the opposed mood of solemnity and ceremoniously... finally, black provided for an atmosphere of heroic monumentality in which the conflict was resolved in the last sequence.

(Baltimore Museum of art. 1986, p.132)

Both Fuller and Schlemmer's work costume played a significant role. Schlemmer minimized and simplified in design the limits of dancers to geometric shapes. Cylindrical, spherical, spiral and elliptical forms accentuated curves and the moves of the dancer in 'The Spiral' (Plate 11). To Schlemmer this was

the first consequential demonstration of spatially plastic costumery...they were coloured and metallic sculptures which worn by dancers' move in space, whereby physical sensation is significantly influenced in such a manner that the more the apparently violated body fuses with the costume, the more it attains new forms of dance expression manifestations.

(Baltimore Museum of Art; 1986,p.132)

Schlemmer himself performed in scene one of the final act 'The Abstract' using a costume based on the principle of disequilibrium. Thickly cushioned areas of the body were counterbalanced against sharp lines radiant against the dark, one weight balancing the other (Plate 12). These examples echo Fullers awareness of the function of costume in articulating form by the process of abstraction and metamorphosis.



Plate 11: 'The Spiral' in The Triadic Ballet.1922.



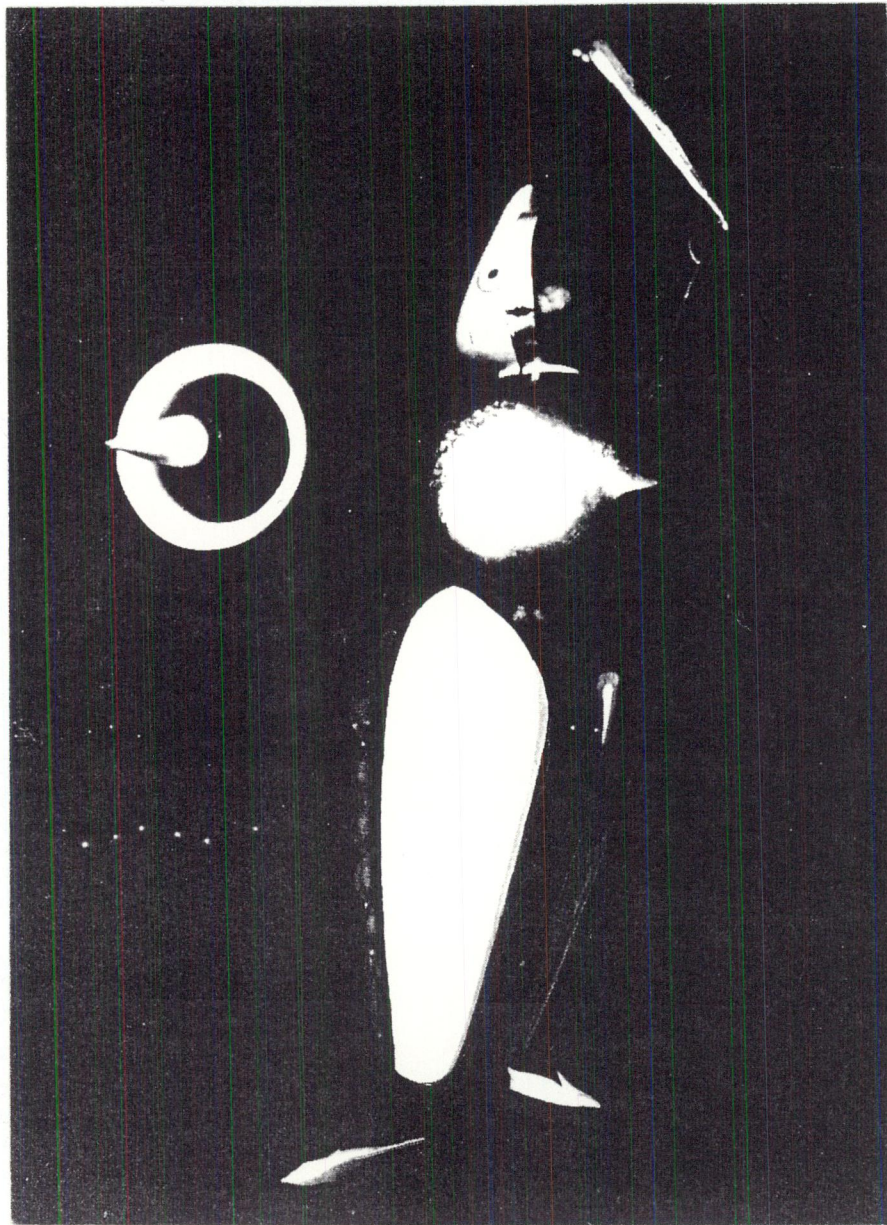


Plate 12: 'The Abstract'. The Triadic Ballet
1922.



At this time Fuller brought her dances with shadows to London and New York. These strongly suggest that she was aware of Schlemmer's work at the time. Her sequences using camouflage in darkness with only certain elements of brightness showing is strongly likened to his performances.

The fascination with multi-media may have led one to assume that the creators of dance would consequently neglect the human based element of their work but it certainly was not sacrificed in any way by either Schlemmer or Loie Fuller. The composition of the 'The Serpentine' did not deny the human element, but enhanced it. Emotional connotations changed the powerful images created by motion. The voluminous shapes, constantly stretching, twisting and leaping possessed a certain intangibility. However the more abstract the kinetic medium became, the more pronounced and active it was in creating its own powerful qualities.

The amination and organization of space, in particular negative space was a strong aspect in producing Fuller's coherent compositions. She challenged it to work for its own sake just as she did with line and movement. In this she sought steps of translation to reveal itself in creative dance.

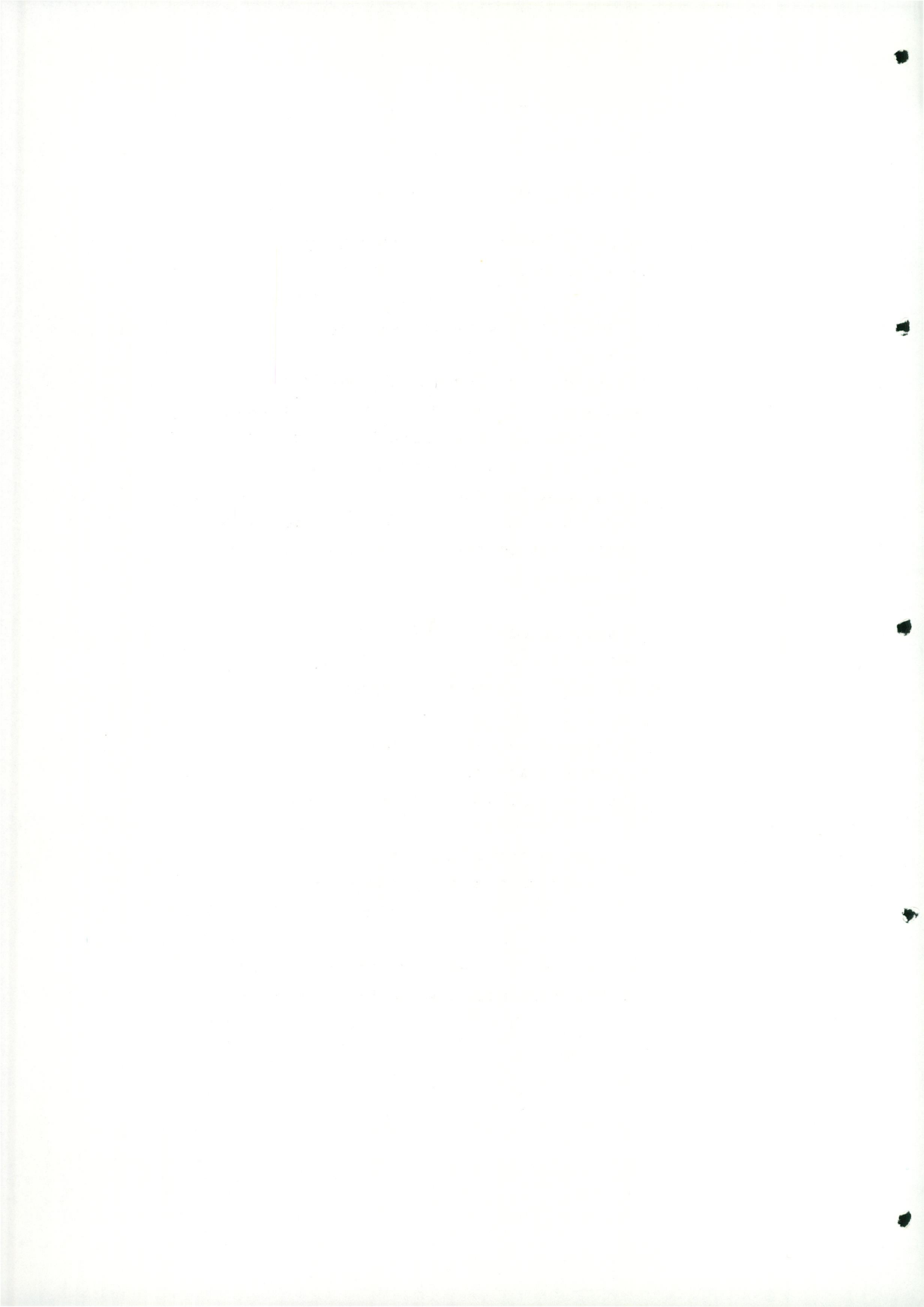
The narrative compositions typical of classical ballet is far removed from the work of Fuller. She made a strong, visual statement that anything can follow anything in dance. She demonstrated that the aspect of narrative, the concept of a definite beginning, middle and end was not necessary. Rather than story telling Fuller perceived the actual components of the dance as a springboard for expression. Simultaneously, however she did not abandon the appeal to her audience due to her ability to establish interaction through gesture.

The simplification to find the truth or the essence of the kinetic art brings into question the timebased element. The ephemeral, the transitory depends on the musical medium because rhythm has control over the dance. The realm of hearing and that of sight are combined to share the experience.

The dancer expresses in gesture what he feels as the emotional content of music.

(Langer: 1979, p.235).

Music suspends time. It offers limitless possibilities for the constant sequence of movement which is perceived successively by the audience.



Dance as a force in time and space does not convey its meaning as a lived in experience but instead suggests a number of separate 'objective' factors with no unifying centre or wholeness. It must be conceived rather as force time space, an art form which involves both expression on the performers part and evocation of feeling on the part of the audience. (Langer; 1979 p.235),

On close examination form and colour reveal themselves to be a strong link to music in interpretation and association and Fuller's dances interpreted music through music. It was an important factor to her in early works but later she used sources from works by Beethoven, Debussy, Chopin, Schubert and Stravinsky amongst others were considered progressive musicians of the era

CHAPTER 3

Content

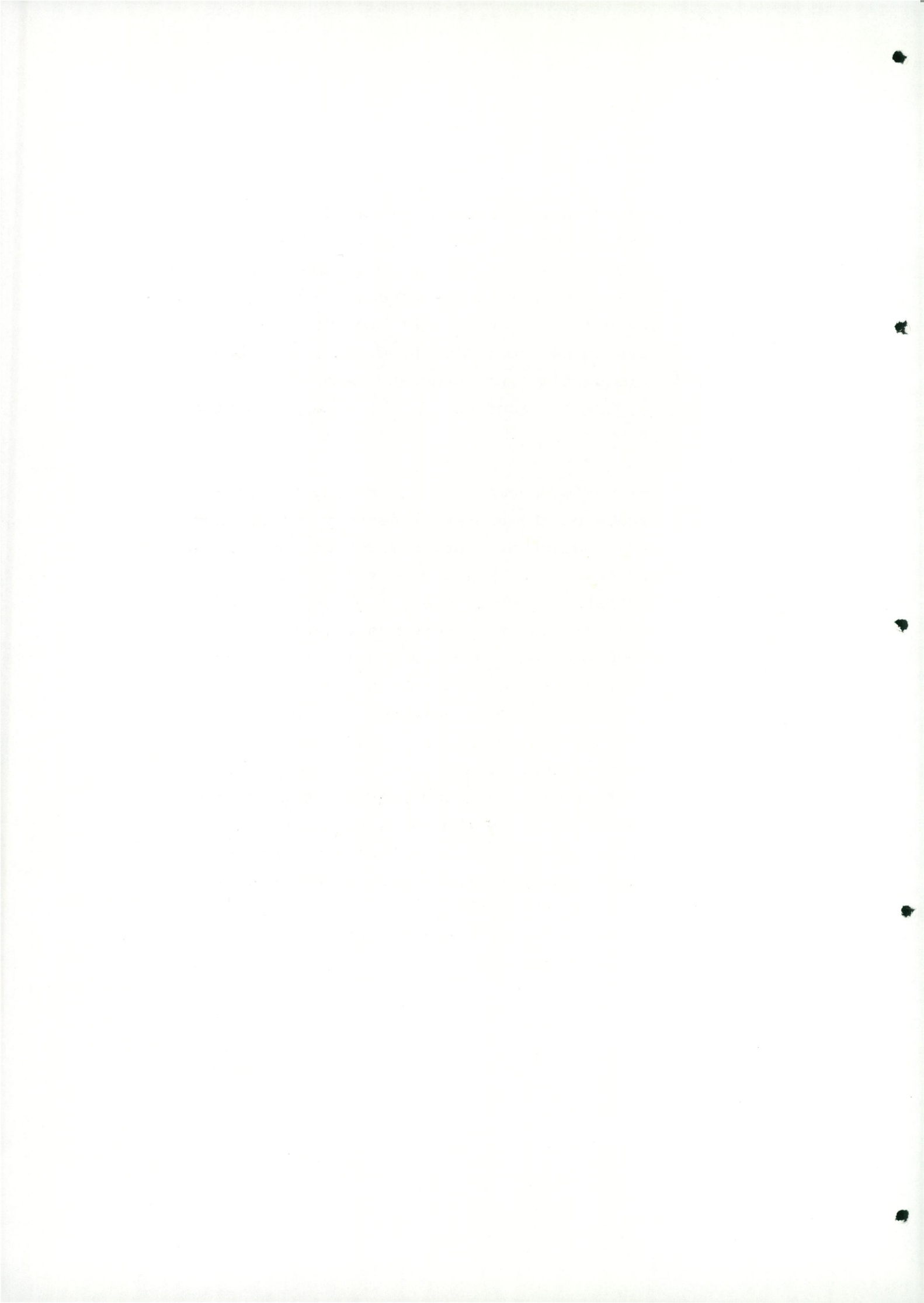
Loie Fullers highly individualistic and diverse form of artistic expression in dance is demonstrated through the instrument of the human body and the medium of movement. The stylistic means through which she achieved this have been considered. But what did she seek to convey?

'The Serpentine' for example, leaving aside technical display and entertainment, evokes a deep sense of feeling through gesture. Fuller effectively integrated the physical and the emotional. Sound, movement, line, pattern, form, shape, space, rhythm, time, light and energy were vehicles to convey inner subjective experience. The moveability, the dynamic sequence manifest eloquently her challenging movement and the possibilities of line increased the subjective emotional expression in her work.

This was done by the manner in which Fuller transformed her innate rhythm into an active rhythm which responded in a particular way to personal music and sent strong impulses to the viewer; irrational, emotive, impulsive and intuitive.

Due to varying methods of improvisation, movement manifested itself in different ways as one awareness seemed to automatically lead to another during the dance. Loie Fuller successfully proved that one image did not have to be about one thing. It could jump through time and space and each distinct gesture or image could fuel a new sensation or emotion.

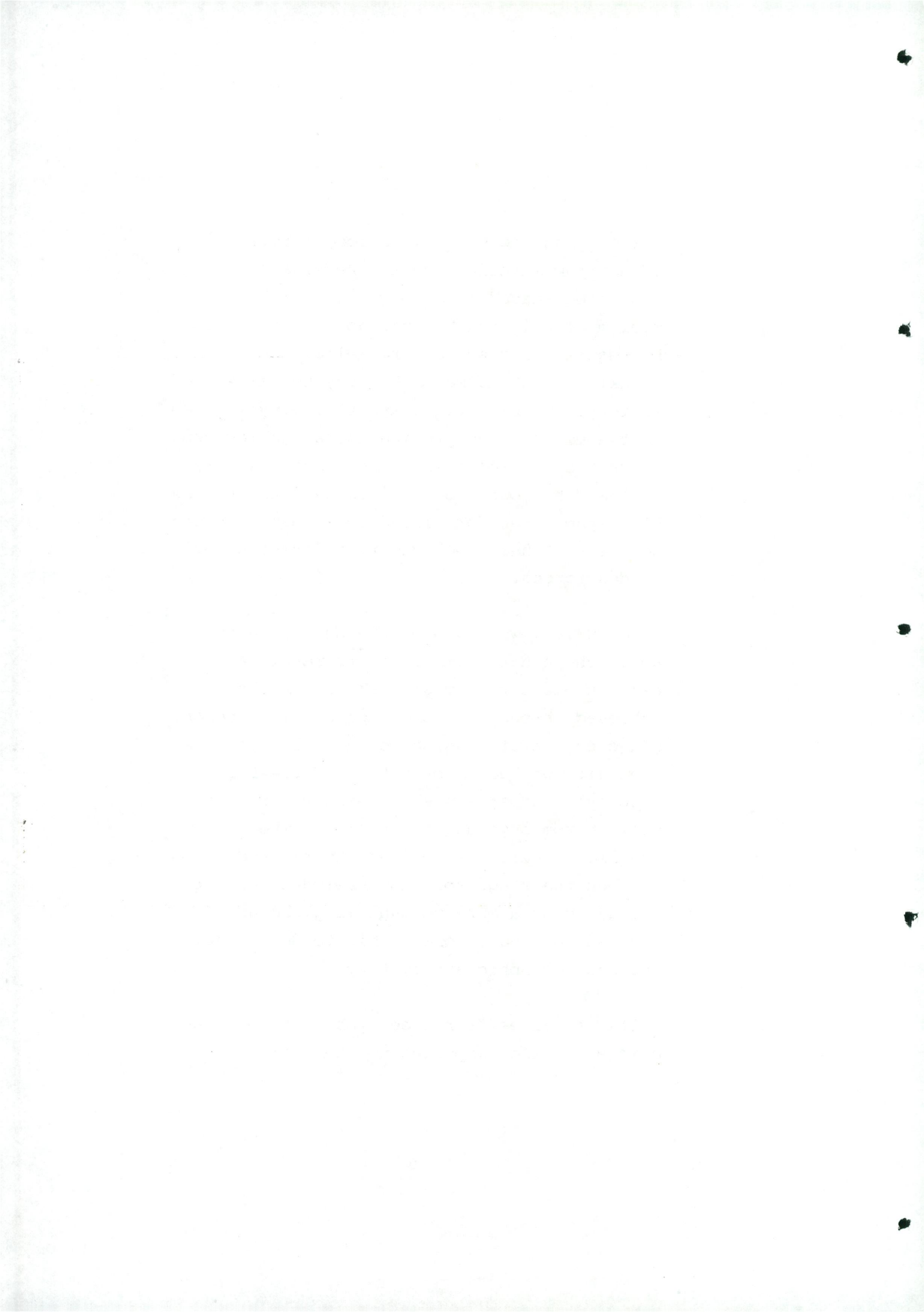
Her performances in Paris during the last decade of the nineteenth century distinguish modern dance from other forms of dance whose aim it was to merely entertain, ritualize or demonstrate an extremely high standard of physical agility. Her's was an act of communication and a translation of personal feeling. Fuller shared the opinion of a contemporary Doris Humphrey in that she considered her dance as an art concerned with human values. These views are upheld by modern theory. In considering that emotional expression is at the heart of dance, John Martin rejects the fact that movement is always representational but argues that it is a clue to the feelings of the person possessed by the emotional state as gesture expresses emotion.



Fuller's dance was a revelation, a revelation of her raw material, self. Personal feeling had to be shaped into images just like in the medium of painting or into words for a poem. Her dance, in a sense paralleled Freud's thinking at the time in his psychoanalysis of society. He believed that creativity was the most admirable and precious human achievement which has its roots in the subconscious. He analysed his own subconscious by interpreting his dreams then formulated ideas based on the belief that human behaviour is motivated by hidden forces.

Loie Fuller, who adopted the purely human approach in her work seemed to retain a certain element of mysticism. This, she achieved through the creation of ambiance on stage by use of imagination and illusion. A depiction of Fuller by artist, Marie-Félix Hippolyte Lucas; shows the dancer's rather plain buxom physique (Plate 14). The classical ballerina however who floated sylph like on the stage somehow seemed to elevate the dance to a more mechanical plane as opposed to a human one. This tended to veil the choreographic art mystery.

Fuller's dances attracted Symbolist poets and painters. They appealed to the artists





Marie-Felix Hippolyte Lucas; depicts the
dancer in oil on canvas.
Loie Fuller (1862-1928).



liking for mystery, their belief in producing art for its own sake and also in efforts to entwine form and content. Like Fuller they concentrated on expressing human emotion in their art and they turned to the introspective, the subconscious for inspiration. Frustrated by the increasing materialism of the era, more and more artists, through an inward search for personal and prevalent truth sought to give meaning to life. They chose subjects such as death, sex, demonism and spirituality. For example, the incarnation of lust is shown in Gustave Moreau's 'Apparition'. Just as Greek mythology was a common influence in some American modern dance, particularly that of Isadora Duncan, so too did Moreau find influence in Greek myth and biblical stories. This is evident in his painting 'Oedipus and the Sphinx'. To him myths were mysteries handed down from century to century. He was interested in expressing human feelings, the passions of mankind. Kandinsky too speaks of the imperatives of the 'inner necessity which inspire an artist beyond the data of the external world'. (Kuspit, 1986.p.313). Kandinsky's theories which we know to be influential to the work of Schlemmer claimed that the spiritual in art was strongly identified with the search for the abstract in art.

The art of Odilon Redon focuses entirely on the inner life. This inspiration shows itself through subjects from the external world. This notion of expression of the inner self through external means is very strongly recalled in the core of Loie Fullers choreography and performance in her ability to fuse the emotional with physical gesture.



CHAPTER 4

The Social Question

American Modern Dance as an Art Form

The development of modern Dance in America was far more than a mere kinetic phenomenon. Underlying the outward motion it has, as an art form, profoundly important cultural and social implications. It is an experience, generally speaking, which can be shared by all members of a community. For instance the modern dance techniques of Loie Fuller were commonly assumed to be a true reflection of contemporary life. In many ways it was, alive and vital. This however was not a new concept. By tracing its history one can see how fundamental the role of dance was in earlier societies. To primitive man dance was a social and recreational outlet as well as an expression of national identity or loyalty. His art of choreography was a language to convey, whether military, festive or in the case of the hunter, victorious and celebratory. It was usually a community gathering, perhaps as simple as responding in motion to the beating of a drum.



Every culture in the world finds foundations for its art in dance; through body movement, states of mind and dramatic or narrative sequences can be eloquently expressed.

Schroeder suggests that dance is a servicable art form with many social roles and functions. Of course, it is a means of relaxation and entertainment. It is used in education, in courtship and is an occupation for some. Panayotis Micheli's theory concerning the general art experience applied to that type developed by Loie Fuller. He believes that is

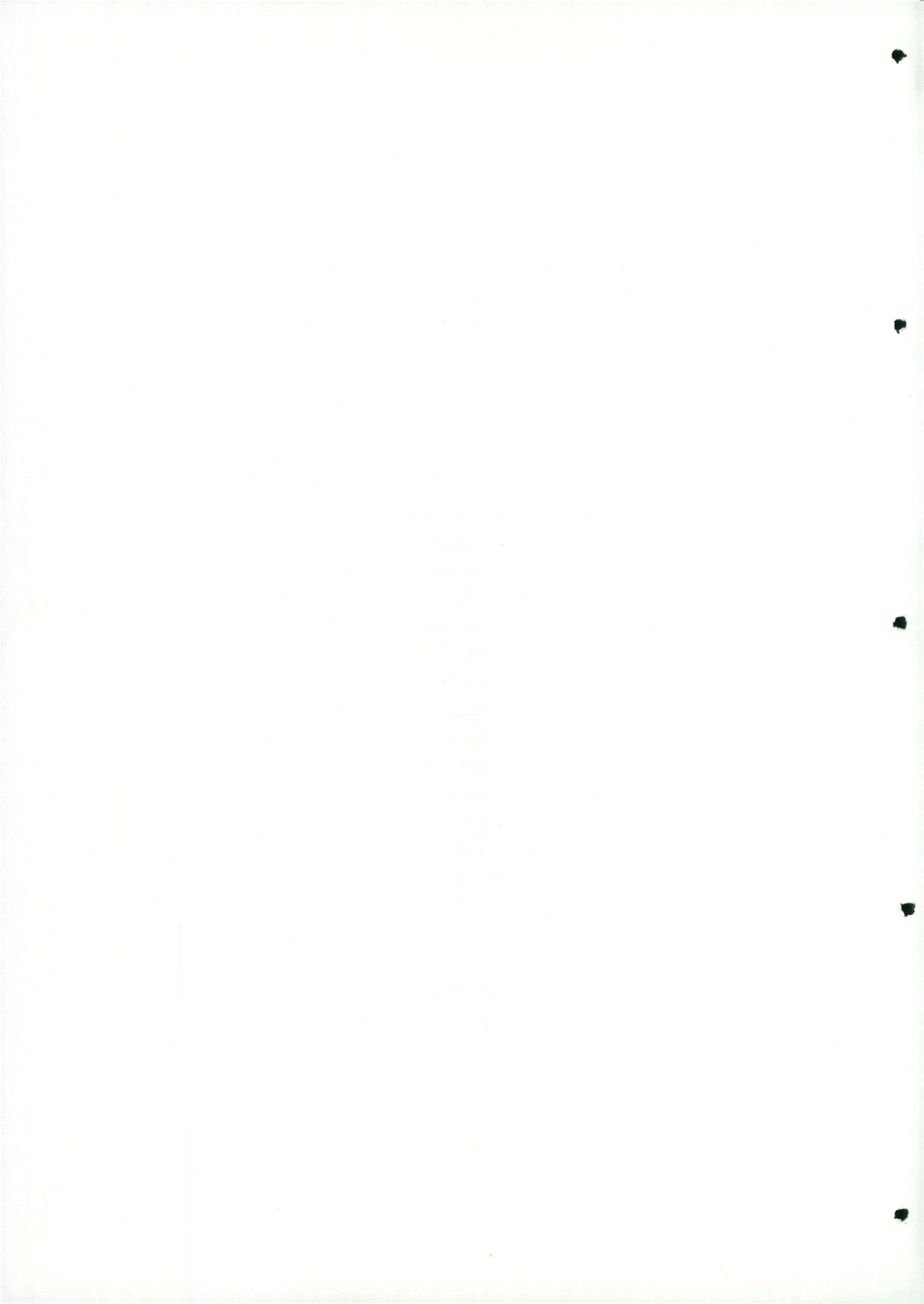
expresses the deeper spiritual anguish of man and his highest ideals in eternal symbols... It fascinates man and releases him from immediate practical concerns, transports him into the peaceful environment of a transcendal vision and fills his soul with joy.

(Michelis; 1977,p.46).

Walter Abell's 'the collective unconscious'theory (Abell, 1966,p.46) entails the idea that dance grows out of the myth and traditions of a culture's history. Common to American modern dance is the evocation of visions of the past.

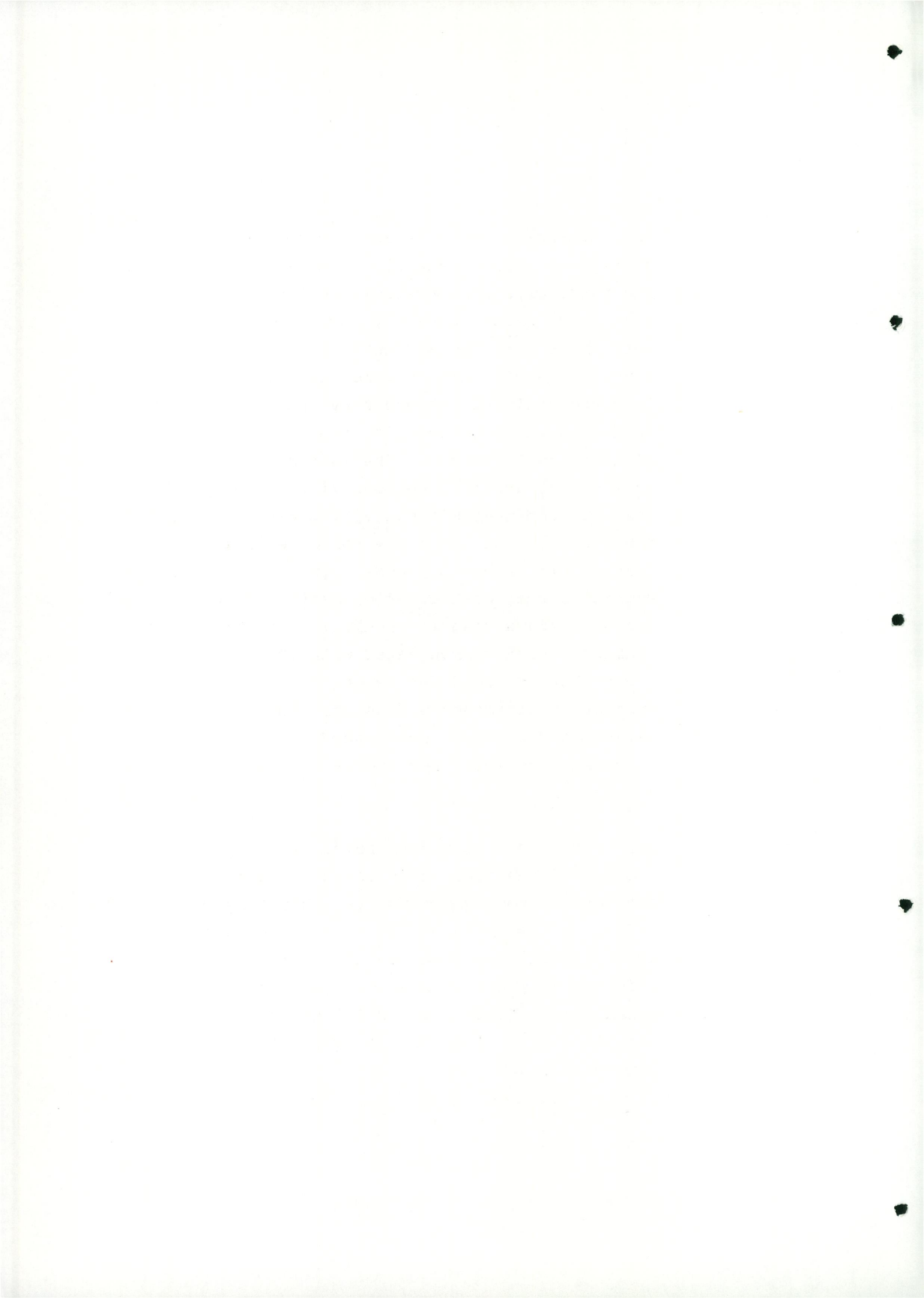
Loie Fuller demonstrates that purely contemporary themes and artistic impulse were the driving force behind her choreographic displays. The uniqueness of dance as an art form of aesthetic experience is embodied in the fact that the dancers body, intellect and emotion unify in expression where the human is the actual art form. Painting, poetry or sculpture usually exists as physically separate from its creator. The fact that the presentation of modern dance tends to be a fusion of other forms of artistic expression helps it provide unlimited potential for aesthetic growth but these are differences in the way in which dance is perceived compared to stationary arts. In Painting for example the artist deals with two dimensional translated space. The images on the canvas present in its entirety at any one time. The choreographic work though is unfolded in a moving sequence and is perceived as it progresses. Memory plays a large part here due to continual change, perhaps, effecting the aesthetic appreciation by the audience.

Fuller managed to capture her viewers attention and sustain it successfully.



The interior space on stage created an atmosphere which instantly involved both performers with the audience. A very important social aspect which is brought into the realm of the dance by Loie Fuller is the embodiment of the concept of individual freedom. She introduced this to art and into her own life. She acknowledged that subjectivity began with the body and the human has the freedom to control his or her own body. In combining this with other elements of the dance she gave visual stimulation to her audience which communicated with them in a way that extended far beyond the projection of images and sound. She established a mutual open ended experience between them and herself in her dances.

The essence of the modern revolution at the end of the nineteenth century was the subject of creativity and its liberating effect on the individual. This universal shift in attitude towards life therefore effected many artistic and scientific endeavours. There was a willingness by the pioneers to look for new ways of interpretation.



An interpretation of political changes in the modern period giving priority to communication technology much later this century, has been offered by Gouldner, (1976). He attributed this to the advances in printing particularly during the arts and crafts movement. Printing posters made art and information available to the masses. This promoted the communication revolution and as we have seen, the dance of Loie Fuller also. One did not have to visit a gallery to gain intellectual or visual stimulation, it was contained in the surrounding environment. Initiative had been taken by governments to realise the significance of the revolution. Socialists of the era began to highlight the awareness of the importance in ideology attached to the new style.

Much of mass culture is still centered around individual self image and presentation and personal identification. As populations increase and styles and culture rapidly change, the need to make a statement about oneself can intensify. Artistic creation comes from the inner self. Fullers means of expression was centered around and open to the control of the individual.

The new style artists and designers interpreted this claiming to exert a reforming influence on every area of life and art. Art Nouveau highlighted the significant role that art could play in the lives of the public, rich and poor alike.

'Ver Sacrum', (Sacred Spring) officially documented these ideas among the principles of the Vienna Secessionists when it appeared in 1898. Considered one of the most significant journals in Art Nouveau, it provided information on art and literature in a cosmopolitan context. This served as a strengthening link between Austria and Europe. It reflected the modern spirit as the language of the new style began to spread across the Western world. The social and cultural aspirations of the Liberals in Government supported the new movement.

It is interesting to note the existence of a direct relationship in the social context between Art Nouveau and Symbolism. The two movements were limited in their opposition to the two main currents of art at the time, academicism and Impressionism.

These can be traced back to Neoclassicism. Their common view was that life was brought to art, therefore art should be brought to life. Modern dance at the turn of the century actually played a very important role in encouraging the development of the idea that women are functioning capable human beings, which has grown into a major social issue. Loie Fuller herself was a feminist and she formed part of the group of the first modern dances who were mainly women. They had adopted new roles in dance considering that the major roles played in classical ballet were by men.

In a strong sense the work of Lois Fuller and her contemporaries has become closely intertwined with a whole new philosophy of life and art in its humanistic approach. This along with its flexible nature, ie, non-conforming to the bounds of what is or is not suitable in terms of content and materials, holds implications for the performing arts today. Performances art defies simple definition because its intended breakthrough draws on aspects of painting, sculpture, film, mime, theatre, opera and dance yet it is none of these.

Performance art today stated with the Italian Futurists who from 1910 staged acts which were intended to destroy all things solid and serious connected with Art. Concerned with mechanical motion, individuality underpinned their work also. Umberto Boccioni claimed that modern life was the only law for the artist.

CONCLUSION

By focusing on the work of Loie Fuller one can see how experiment, the instinctive aspect of choreography and awareness of change in social and industrial fields of her era, validates the supposition that there is no one form of dance. Fuller explored possibilities extensively which she saw in the world around her. Together with the fresh, dramatic uncommon way in which she inter related movement and music she presented constant and exciting variations in her performance. She proved that creative dance was an art which called out for an extensive vocabulary not limited to an orthodox formula. As a major female pioneer of her time Fuller possessed tremendous motivation and determination to break from convention and dispense with ideas from the past. Her decision to represent the nymph freely contrasts to the highly controlled, rigid pose of the ballerina. She created an order through emotional and physical unity by applying this unity to gesture and their underlying spiritual and emotional moods. She proved that authentic emotional states could be lived out in performance and therefore accomplished a great deal as a dancer and choreographer.

Through studying her work one can see that the actual bodily moves on stage were quite limited and quite ordinary. Her skill and ingenuity applied sophistication by means of accessories to the dancer and the stage.

There is undoubtedly strong links with Fullers work and the other visual arts around the turn of the century. Dance still has a large degree of validity as a cultural activity in society and American modern dance possessed the freedom of creativity which consequently had a liberating effect on the individual. The development^{of} modern dance in America thrived in Europe. Its inspiration was derived from Europe, from the Art Nouveau movement and Symbolism. In turn these artists and designers were deeply enaged with the notion that art should be brought to life, just as art was and still is an integral element in art. Fuller shared with them one main aim, the common objective was to communicate something of importance to their audience.

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