

November 2015

Dear LUTSF Patrons, Trustees and Committee Members,

Thank you very much for supporting my research trip to Vienna last summer, allowing me to further the enquiry into my PhD thesis.

Although more travel will be necessary to unravel the subject matter of the evolution of the waltz in eighteenth - century Vienna, my time in the city afforded by the Scholarship Fund provided an important opportunity to delve into more specifics than I had been able to find in resources in the UK. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I was not able to complete the two months planned in the city (21 July – 15 September), however, I did enjoy an initial, inspirational two weeks during which time I was able to achieve a solid amount. Although the purpose of my visit was not fully achieved, important steps that will be fruitful for my continuing research were made.

Experiencing Vienna is a highlight in itself and I would suggest a lesson to other cities with its human scale. Particularly the preservation of the original, central district that allowed me to explore the past that I was seeking. Each day brought a different route to my end goal of the National Library and time to reflect on the people who once traversed the cobblestones I trod. Being able to access the mammoth institution that houses clues to my thesis was also special. The main library provides an exclusive space for researchers that overlooks one of the Habsburgs' former gardens, furnishing a protective environment for imagining the dancers of bygone days. ImPulsTanz, Vienna's International Dance Festival, was ongoing during my visit and it was excellent to see the city bedecked with information regarding today's dance scene. A visit to one of the performances brought back memories of my own career as a dancer and the links to some of the artists.

To future Awardees I would say simply to embrace the moment provided to you by the Fund. It is a privilege to be granted the scholarship, the awarding of which I am sure is not made lightly. The difficulty of finding any sort of funding is no doubt apparent to all which makes the receipt of the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship a particular honour.

Although there is still much to be sourced for my thesis, the material garnered on this trip to Vienna will provide a base for a conference paper to be delivered at Post – Ip '15 in Aveiro, Portugal in early December. The gathering is an International Post-Graduate Forum for Music and Dance. It will be my first presentation at a conference and as a result an important challenge in my development as a dance researcher.

Once again, thank you very much to all involved in the awarding of these funds for travel. The opportunity to broaden one's horizons is always something to be treasured.

Kind regards,

Catherine Dulin

## Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund Report

My trip to Vienna was an essential part of the research I am doing for my PhD thesis – ‘The Evolution of the Waltz in Vienna: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of the Dancing Embrace’ (working title). The heart of the enquiry is aimed at understanding what allowed the shift in body paradigm, from the ‘open’ formal couple dances of the Baroque to the ‘closed’ insular hold of the waltz, to occur. I started this investigation in October 2014 and, although I had already been on a brief exploratory trip to Vienna in February 2015, the visit made possible by the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund was to do in-depth work in the libraries and archives of the city. Primary and secondary sources not available to me in the UK needed to be explored to develop my knowledge and answer questions regarding the period of my study. Furthermore, I wanted to use my time in Vienna to reflect on the city itself and how the history that transpired there might have influenced the emergence of the gliding, rotating couple dance that would come to be known as the waltz, creating a revolution in European social dancing.

Sources in the UK had already alerted me to the complexity of the narrative, with many concentrating on the development of the dance in the nineteenth century and marking the early period of the waltz as obscure. Most listeners when regaled of my project are surprised to learn that this ‘early period’ should take the dance historian back to at least the 1750s when current scholarship has the word ‘waltz’ first appearing in a musical comedy song by Josef Kurz, a famous comic actor of the day. This is an unknown moment for most Austrians who were delighted to hear that I was in their city to investigate the waltz, but would steer me first to the Strauss family or their version of ‘Strictly’ before I delicately guided them back to another time.

My main resource for the days I was able to spend in Vienna became the Austrian National Library. This institution is the equivalent of our British Library, however, depending on the subject matter of the information sought you could be directed to ten different points in or near the exquisite Hofburg Palace, former home to Habsburg rulers. As the material I ordered centred on dance and history, I spent most of my time either in the main library which is in a grand wing of the complex or in the music department housed in a little palace down the road. With my researcher’s pass in hand and generous opening hours, I was able to totally immerse myself in the literature.

The import of being in the urban landscape of my enquiry cannot be emphasised enough. Not only did the city’s resources hold information unavailable to me at home, but walking through the streets of the UNESCO designated world heritage site of the inner district of Vienna afforded moments of reflection on the lives of the eighteenth-century populace. Whether servant or aristocrat, what did turning that corner bring? Even as a twenty-first century sojourner, chancing upon the Winter Palace of a personage

of note in my readings produced a gasp of recognition and wonderment at the grandeur allowed the elite. Being momentarily stymied in a back alley brought the closeness of the old district upon me and the unpleasant thought should one have been trapped in that space by accident.

Even negotiating my way through modern day tourists drinking in the structures and stories of the past delighted my researcher's mission to unfold an element of history. The value of understanding the narrative that has evolved into our lives, to comprehend how it is we do what we do and why, I would argue is immensely important. That contemporary visitors should be experiencing what transpired before them, perhaps even in a country different from their own, is noteworthy in this age of technology. By understanding the lives of the past, we come to know ourselves better. This is what I seek with my investigation into the evolution of the waltz which produced such a radical moment in European dance history. I hope to not only unleash a new perspective on that period, but also integrate it into the common narrative.

The impact of my journey on me personally has been beneficial in aiding my own particular quest to understand why we dance. Although an important piece of European cultural history, social dance is often overlooked by the humanities and the relatively young field of dance studies has many areas yet to be explored. Dance tells an important story about us as people and can communicate a valuable ingredient to the human puzzle. Professionally, I have honed my research skills further in a language that is not my first and challenged my analytical faculties in tracking down a period of dance that is indeed cloudy or perhaps buried in as yet undiscovered material. There is much more to be done, but this trip has taken me another step along the way.

The resulting knowledge gained from this visit ranges from notes on the history of the Habsburgs and Vienna to more general writings on the waltz, as well as details of dance in the city before the understood emergence of my line of enquiry. Of particular interest was a book which pointed to published descriptions of Vienna from the early 1700s through to well into the 1800s. This will provide an important springboard for further research on my next visit. In addition a book analysing the shift in class structures will be useful for comprehending the changes on the dance floor. More general writings on the waltz provided further interesting background to its origins and complexities, each with its own theory as to how the dance developed. It is easy to become involved in the fascinating search for the elusive first moves of the waltz, however, that is not what my thesis is about. Therefore, information regarding dance at the Viennese court before 1750 contributed somewhat more to my current pursuit of a starting point for my discussion on not only how, but also why the waltz evolved in the city and made its way into society. It is clear that the dance was noted at other points in Europe, however, narrowing the enquiry to one particular place and time in history will hopefully indicate impulses that shape dance more broadly.

As my research is still in its early stages, I am unable to form any conclusions from my visit. However, I have gained much food for thought to help me in formulating results in the future. The complexity of my enquiry will require further study in the beautiful city of Vienna and may even lead me to other sources in Europe. Investigating dance history is a fascinating journey into the past, but also provides an exciting adventure in the present. I can only heartily recommend pursuing it to those who are curious about the historical intricacies of our field.