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Dance Notation Bureau

INTERVIEWS: JM

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Mr. Lincoln Kirstein

Telephone Conversation

May 11, 1951

JM discussed with Kirstein the work of the Dance Notation Bureau. Kirstein said that he and Balanchine had a high regard for its work and were utilizing its services whenever they could afford to do so, to have a record made of the choreography of New York City Center Ballet Company productions. Balanchine is particularly enthusiastic, and Kirstein will shortly send JM a copy of an article which Balanchine wrote on the subject. There is, in Kirstein's mind, no question of the central importance of this work for the development of all types of dancing.

JM said that the RF officers in the Humanities were inclined to take this view and that he was prepared to write Miss Hutchinson to say that there was at least some possibility of assistance in the preparation of a text that would, in effect, standardize notation. But there were two difficulties to be faced - first, that of the proprietary rights of the system in its originator, Laban, and second, the fact that no grant could be made to the Bureau, since it was not, strictly speaking, a non-profit corporation.

On the second point, Kirstein said that either the American Ballet School or the American Ballet Society would be delighted to sponsor the project. On the first point, Kirstein agreed that careful clearance was necessary.

jm

JM:MS