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The Choreography and Production of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard"

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Dance

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Laurie Behunin

August 1993

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This thesis, by Laurie Behunin, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Dance of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Cathy Black

Cathy Black, Committee Chair

Pat Debenham

Pat Debenham, Committee Member

9 July 1993

Date

Phyllis C. Jacobson

Phyllis Jacobson, Department Chair

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Abstract

Chapter 1

Introduction

An old adage states that "history repeats itself." Historical writings, especially scriptural writings, have inspired artists to create works of art based upon the historic tales within them because we, as a human family tend to relive them; therefore, we can relate to these stories. For this reason, scriptural passages are often successful themes for artists in all genres. Moreover, these passages often contain elements of mystery, passion, and spirituality which also add to their artistic richness.

During my full-time mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I became intrigued with a certain scriptural allegory contained in the Book of Mormon, Jacob Chapter 5. This allegory confused some of my contemporaries at that time, and not understanding its significance, they simply skipped over the chapter, explaining that to them it exhibited no importance to the plot of the Book itself. Although I did not profess to completely understand the allegory myself, I did feel that I followed the basic story and recognized passages that were of great worth to me.

As I read Jacob Chapter 5, my intrigue for this passage developed into a desire to understand the story which takes place in an olive vineyard. The master of the vineyard, who had previously groomed an olive tree, is saddened when he sees it is dying. He counsels with his servant as to how they can "heal" this tree and restore it to its original condition. Throughout the story the master and his servant graft, prune, and nourish the tree with intentions of amassing the tree's good fruit at the end of its fruit bearing season. The underlying message in this allegory details Jesus Christ's mission to save the human family. He "prunes" and nourishes His children in an attempt to save them, and in doing so encourages them to bring forth "fruit meet for repentance."

The decision to choreograph this particular chapter of the Book of Mormon was two-fold. First of all, I felt that Jacob 5 was of significant religious value for all because it details the mission of Jesus Christ, whom I believe to be the Savior of the world; therefore, I wished to share this spiritual allegory with others through the medium of dance. Secondly, I simply wanted to praise God through the choreography and production of a dance entitled "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard."

Statement of Purpose

The purpose was to depict through dance my interpretation of the allegory found in Jacob Chapter 5. This project expresses the significance of the mission of Jesus Christ and praises God through the medium of a performing art.

Delimitations

Although liturgical dance has been used for many purposes (among them, ancient temple worship, modern congregational prayer, seeking the gods' help in good crop production, or in theatrical presentation) in this production I focused on the aspect of liturgical dance as it is used in the performing arts, performed as a theatrical production from a proscenium stage. Because I am Christian, "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" dealt with Christian liturgical dance.

The movement for the work of "Jacob Five: A Journey Into the Olive Vineyard" was made up of ballet-based modern dance. The choreographed movement was abstract, but a live narration aided the audience in understanding the story line.

Limitations

Unlike stories in the Bible that have been analyzed by authors of many different religions, the commentaries I found on Jacob Chapter 5 were written solely by Mormon authors. Therefore, I found that the literature which covered Jacob Chapter 5 was limited to a Latter-day Saint point of view.

I found a lack of literature relating to the historical basis of this allegory which tells of a prophet, Jacob, who lived on the ancient American continent. Jacob quoted the original allegory prophesied by Zenos, a prophet from ancient Jerusalem. However, the original records of this allegory were lost and not included in the Old Testament; thus there was not an abundance of information dealing with the historical basis of this allegory. I found this lack to be a limitation.

Justification

My desire to produce a liturgical dance work was supported by the knowledge that a recent prophet supported the performing arts as a valid form of spiritual expression. Spencer W. Kimball, in his 1967 devotional address to Brigham Young University, stated that there were important religious works of art not yet created that

could successfully spread the gospel. He continued by saying that it would be the honor and responsibility of the members of this church to produce these works in order to share the "good news" with others throughout the world. He further stated that these sacred artistic endeavors were a form of praising God, and a way of exhibiting gratitude for the talents with which He has endowed us, His children.

I created this project to respond to the call of President Kimball. I felt that the choreographed allegory of "Jacob Five: A Journey Into the Olive Vineyard" would be a spiritually expressive tool that would perhaps inspire others, as well as myself, in our search to more clearly understand our relationship to God and Jesus Christ.

Definitions

Allegory: A literal, dramatic or pictorial device in which each literal character, object and event represent symbolic illustration of an idea or moral religious principle.

Ballet-based modern dance: Because there exists a broad spectrum of modern dance techniques, the name "ballet-based modern dance" was given to this piece because of the many classical

ballet steps and poses that were incorporated into the movement. The dancers' centers of gravity were lifted to the upper torso in a "posturing" manner which can often be indicative of the ballet genre of dance. However, the dance exists primarily as modern dance with an influence of classical ballet technique.

Fireside: A religious meeting with speakers, presentations, and possible discussion. A fireside differs from other church meetings in that sacred ordinances, such as the sacrament, are not performed. However, firesides remain as formal gatherings in which, ultimately, those who are participating and those who are attending, consciously maintain reverence so as to cultivate a spiritual environment.

Liturgical Dance: Dance that is performed to instruct religious doctrine and/or to praise God.

Proscenium Stage: A stage that directly faces an audience. This kind of stage is usually used in a formal, presentational manner.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

To successfully produce "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" as described in Chapter 1 of this thesis, I found it necessary to review literature concerning liturgical dance as an performing art form as well as religious commentaries that dealt with Jacob Chapter 5 from the Book of Mormon.

Research on Liturgical Dance

Carla De Sola, a dancer in the Omega Liturgical Dance Company and choreographer of liturgical dance, made a statement that defined the beauty of this art form for me. She stated that:

> Liturgical dance is viewed as a living, moving, breathing epiphany of God and creation. As the paced movement of a liturgy unfolds and the dancers emerge, we find ourselves feeling and seeing an embodiment of the 'word.' Liturgical dance can lead both the viewer and participant to new understandings of religious and spiritual realities. The 'word' becomes dance. (Adams 153)

De Sola's idea that liturgical dance could bring spiritual insight to dancers as well as audience members inspired me to further research religious dance. My project dealt with liturgical dance as a performance art; however, throughout history, one finds that liturgical dance has been an integral part of a participatory art form of worship.

Ida F. Chadwick in her "Dance: An Agent of 'Ekstasis,'" described how ancient peoples danced for the spiritual rite of freeing the spirit to commune with God. The tribal peoples as well as people of ancient civilizations such as those in Egypt and Greece danced to their gods in order to ensure fertility in their agricultural endeavors as well as fertility in the young men and women who had come of age. Other ancient cultures danced for rain or other heavenly gifts. Chadwick states that in Greece there were dance festivals with the sole purpose of bringing the dancers to an ecstatic state of the spirit which induced "a mystic experience through excessive stimulation of the senses" (4). According to Chadwick, those "worshippers became possessed by the divinity and entered into direct communication with the spirit" (4).

The Hebrews also traditionally danced in direct worship of their God in a manner of praise and gratitude. Marilyn Daniels stated in The Dance in Christianity, that the Jews danced in their synagogues for celebratory purposes as well as for worshipping their God. She said that "the Jewish prophets danced in their communion with God. They danced before conveying the word of the Lord to the people, the symbolism of movement being more soul-stirring than words" (11). Daniels then explained that Rudolf Laban, a dance notation pioneer, commented upon this phenomenon, stating that "words expressing feelings, emotions, sentiments or certain mental and spiritual states will but touch the fringe of the inner responses which the shapes and rhythms of bodily actions are capable of evoking" (Daniels 11). Thus, the inner emotions or spiritual feelings that the Jews felt, were more clearly communicated to each other through the demonstrated movement than through the spoken word.

The Bible records the Hebrews' joyous 'inner response' of dancing and praising of God after the Israelites' Exodus of Egypt. For many centuries after God parted the Red Sea and Moses led the children of Israel out of bondage, the Hebrews celebrated that

instance in which God had answered their prayers. However, in translating a passage from the French, Histoire Générale de la Dance: Sacrée et Prophane, one might see that the Israelites' passion for dance may have been stronger than their passion to remember their Deliverer, for when they reached the desert, they danced before a new god. Author M. Bonnet said "There was never a dance that made more noise in the world of religious dance than that of the Israelites' in the desert. . .which was criminal before God because Israel had created an imitation god and began practicing idolatry" (34-35).

The famous Hebrew king, David, also made a great impact in the world of religious dance. Bonnet stated that David's dance before the Ark of the Covenant was done with such joy, love, and agility, that we must also possess and demonstrate that same amount of energy any time we are worshipping our God (34).

The influence of these and other examples of dance as recorded in the Bible affected the church members of medieval Europe in different ways. Pageantry became part of the Mass ceremony in the which priests performed processional marches in colorful costume.

Nancy Brooks Schmitz, in "Who Dances Not Knows Not the Way of Life: The Changing Relationships of Dance and Religion," said that "the Mass actually was a disciplined sacred dance" (13). During the first 500 years, after the death of Jesus Christ, the early Christian Church used the sacred dance as a means of praising God during the religious festivals such as Pentecost, Epiphany, and Passover. But, the church leaders forbade the practice of unholy dancing during these festivals and only "supported and encouraged the use of dance as an ally of faith when it was done in the manner of Jesus" (Daniels 21).

These church leaders became "more authoritarian and started to regulate all forms of liturgical and church-related activities" (Daniels 23). One direct result of this regulation was the peasants' practice of religious dances outside of the churches. This proved to be a challenge for the parish leaders as they desired to monitor the spiritual rituals of their members in an effort to praise God. The clergy also banned religious dance for a time as they began to adopt the philosophy that the body was evil and that much of the dance that was supposed to be religious, existed as nothing but paganistic ritual. Dances from the Bible like that of the dance of the golden

calf, or of Salome who danced for the head of John the Baptist, exemplified to church leaders that dance was of the devil. In fact, it was thought that the devil was the inventor of dance "and that those who dance are seen to have 'the devil's bell' bound to their neck" (Brooks 9).

For many years, the religious world embraced the philosophy that dance was evil, so much so, that when the small religious group called the Shakers began to dance in the eighteenth century, they had to scripturally justify their desire to worship deity. Because they were persecuted by other religious sects, "tracts were issued which listed scriptural references to dance. They pointed out that not a single passage spoke against dance as a means of sacred worship" (Schmitz 17). Furthermore, the individual church members' philosophy of dance as means to worship demonstrated a unique view of Christian doctrine for that time period. Nancy Brooks Schmitz quoted Shaker authors Wells and Green who stated:

> God has created man an active, intelligent being, possessing important powers and faculties, capable of serving himself according to his needs and circumstances, and he is required to devote these powers

and faculties to the service of God. Since we are blessed with hands and feet, those active and useful members of the body. . .shall we not acknowledge our obligations to God who gave them in our devotions to him?. . .This attitude of the body should be such as to express outwardly and assist the inward reverence of the soul. (17)

The wish to feel a "reverence of the soul" through religious dance was sought by religious groups of the past. However, it seems that in this century, liturgical dance, as practiced by religious groups, rarely exists. The desire to glorify God through dance has not been the primary intention of all those creating or participating in liturgical dance works. Indeed, "dance as a form of religious expression of the twentieth century did not receive its impetus from religious groups. . .but its rebirth as a means of escape from the existing theater dance, classical ballet" (18) according to Schmitz. Perhaps this revolution from classical ballet to modern dance was the freeing agent that allowed some early modern dancers to feel a sort of spirituality that they had not experienced before.

Indeed, several modern dance pioneers desired to choreograph stories of the Bible. In The Gospel According to Dance, "The list of

modern choreographers inspired by the Bible is a long one, to name a few: Martha Graham, Jose Limon, Lester Horton, Harald Kreutzberg, Glen Tetley, Charles Weidman. . ." (Manor 20). The list included other choreographers from the modern dance as well as the ballet genres who were inspired by biblical passages to create liturgical dances. Gladys Sue Stocking-Hovis, in her unpublished master's thesis, explained by quoting Helmut Scheir that these and so many other choreographers were inspired to choreograph passages from the Bible because ". . .its histories reveal a sense of reality and truthfulness. . ." (2).

Two modern dance pioneers who chronicled biblical stories through dance "made overt religious subject matter a focus for their dances in the early twentieth century" (Adams 3). Ted Shawn and his wife, Ruth St. Denis, not only choreographed religious works of art, they established the Church of the Divine Dance where they implemented and practiced religious dance. St. Denis desired to provide "a place for experimentation in sacred dance. . .that this experimentation might bring about a vital understanding between the church and the arts" (Schmitz 18).

St. Denis and Shawn believed that to dance, one had to find the inner spirit and let it transcend his or her humanity. Shawn, a student of the ministry, "presented entire church services in choreographic form. . .his speeches and his choreography inspired sacred dance" (Schmitz 18).

Biblically inspired works of dance seemed to be classified into two general categories--dances that closely followed the biblical story line, and dances that were based upon scriptural passages or doctrinal points. Those dance works which closely follow the story line of scriptural histories, such as George Balanchine's "Le Fils Prodigue," "Samson and Delilah," or "Noah and the Flood," were quite possibly enlightening to audiences as they viewed the particular choreographer's interpretation and presentation of the travails of the characters. These biblical stories were created anew on stage as the dancers' bodies brought life and dimension to the verses.

Other liturgical dance works were inspired by biblical passages, or certain doctrinal points. Martha Graham, a modern dance pioneer, often choreographed after this manner. One work, "Lucifer," was based on the twelfth verse of the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah. It depicted the horror of the fallen angel's fate by

visually showing what could happen to anyone. Manor stated that this visual depiction of the fall of Satan was a story that related to everyone because it was the retelling of the "mythical experience which is common to all mankind" (23). This "mythical" experience can also be described as a spiritual experience that relates to all humans because of their own susceptibility to spiritual death.

The choreographers who based their works on biblical foundations chose to exhibit their own interpretation of the particular passages through their works. At times, these interpretations greatly differed from the traditional interpretations affixed by religious scholars. For example, the Bat-Dor Dance Company's version of "According to Eve" portrayed the mother of humanity as the object of her sons' desires. The choreographer, John Butler, chose to incorporate Freud's "Electra Complex" into the story line of the ballet to twist the plot. Likewise, Todd Bolender's, "The Creation of the World," differed from the traditional perception of the Adam and Eve story. His ballet modernized the story as it was set in present times and used large groups of dancers to represent the few characters who were actually involved in the creation according to the traditional story.

Other dance innovators wished to prophesy through their movement, according to Doug Adams and Judith Rock. Rock and Adams described a prophet as one who communicated the needs of human beings to other human beings who were capable of aiding those in need. They continued to say that prophetic dance communicated religious or personal ideas to the audience on an individual level. Their rationale was that ". . .God himself is described as reflecting over the plight of man, rather than as contemplating eternal ideas" (85). In Rock and Adam's definition of liturgical dance, if a dance appealed to audiences on an intimately personal spiritual level, it was of prophetic nature. Adams and Rock also said that "the early modern dances of Graham, Wigman and Humphrey did not contemplate eternal ideas but looked at persons in human situations and told the brusque, undecorated, unlovely truth as it was" (85).

Adams and Rock's aforementioned definition of liturgical dance does not coincide in with my own. I believe that God does contemplate eternal ideas, as well as ideas that concern His children on an intimately based level. To understand what liturgical dance represents to me personally, I determined for myself what it

is not. For instance, according to Rock and Adams, the modern dance choreographer, Twyla Tharp, choreographed a modern dance piece entitled "Sue's Leg." Although this work was not biblically based, Rock and Adams claim it was prophetic dance because one was reminded of "his or her plight." Rock and Adams had the same opinion of Paul Taylor's "Cloven Kingdom" which "forces us to look at ourselves. . ." as we ". . . peel it away so that we see into a more subconscious, basic, humorous, and all-too-recognizable reality" (89). I do not agree that these pieces are of the liturgical dance genre because I feel that all dance as an art form could personally touch or influence individuals. To me liturgical dance is an art form that transforms artistic movement into a spiritual form of worship to instruct religious doctrine and/or to praise God. These liturgical dance works are inspiring and enlightening for choreographers, dancers, and audience members alike. When we are "confronted with such a work of art, we once again have ears to hear and eyes to see. Miraculously, for a moment, we do hear and we do see" (Adams and Rock 90).

Through the study of liturgical dance, I could see that this art form encompassed a broad range of definitions. Where I originally

believed liturgical dance to be only a performance-oriented art, I became aware that it was also a form of worship, and a prophetic art form for dancers and audiences alike. I found that dance pieces that seemingly contained no religious content were labeled liturgical dance because of their "prophetic nature," or, their ability to touch people's lives in a spiritually intimate way. And although I did not agree that these particular works were liturgical works, I could see the value in them as works of art with the potential of personally reaching individuals.

Most interestingly, I learned that some dancers and choreographers were inspired by religious themes and that this inspiration manifested itself through a choreographic end which could be spiritually felt by those performing as well as those audience members who watched the pieces. Carla De Sola well summed up the spiritual importance of liturgical dance:

> As a communal form of worship, liturgical dance. . .functions as a conduit from the inner workings of the spirit to the outer expression of today's worship. . . .Communication is body to body with the distance between sanctuary to pew being traversed

> kinesthetically. The viewer is in living communication with the dancer, sharing configurations of space, form, movement qualities, musical and visual elements. (Adams 153-4)

In choreographing the liturgical dance work, "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard," I desired to communicate the spirit mentioned by De Sola that transfers from performer to viewer. Liturgical dance became an expressive means that could carry the dancers and the audience to new spiritual understandings.

Research on Jacob Chapter 5

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) held a day-long symposium on Jacob Chapter 5 in March 1992. Many authors and speakers participated in this forum and shared their insight into the allegory of the olive vineyard.

This collection of writings helped me to understand that there were different aspects to this allegory that touched the lives of different individuals because the authors of the papers each chose a different part of Jacob 5 about which to speak. I desired that my choreographic work of Jacob 5 would also influence the lives of

different individuals as I choreographed to interpret certain different parts of the allegory.

Wilford M. Hess produced a paper entitled "Botanical Comparisons in the Allegory of the Olive Tree" that discussed the fact that the science of horticulture could help us to understand more about the ancient biblical cultures. He declared in his paper that the allegory of the olive vineyard, as recorded in the Book of Mormon, was one of the most interesting botanical allegories in scripture although olive trees are rarely mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Hess continued by remarking on the botanical and scriptural significance of olives, olive trees, olive oil, and olive branches.

In the allegory, Jacob discussed the "good fruit" produced by the tame olive trees. Hess stated that wild and tame trees could produce only the type of fruit from the branch from which they have been derived; thus, "good" fruit came from "good" trees and "evil" fruit came from "evil" trees (Jacob 5:22-26, 57-59). Symbolically, the olive tree was compared to humankind on an individual level--the moisture supply or sap represented the workings of the Holy Ghost within that individual, and the fruit

symbolized the good works produced by a repentant person in an effort to become sanctified and return to live with God.

According to Hess, there was a considerable botanical implication in Jacob Chapter 5 because a balance must exist between the roots of the tree and its branches in order to have the necessary moisture distribution. Allegorically, it has been explained that from a spiritual standpoint, we must also have a spiritual balance in life as well by keeping ourselves "rooted" in Christ; thus, not "branching out too far" as to stop being constantly nourished by the Holy Ghost who was represented by the moisture. Without this important balance one would become spiritually malnourished, or become so top-heavy, or prideful, that the weakened roots could not support the branches, ensuring death.

Finally, from Hess's writing came a paragraph which simply summed up the allegory for me:

> Zenos' allegory is easier to understand if the imagery and interpretation are clarified. Symbolically, the tame tree is the house of Israel (Jacob 5:3), the wild tree is the Gentiles. The roots of the tree can be interpreted as the blood of Israel among the Gentiles, and grafting refers to

> "coming to the knowledge of the true Messiah" (1 Nephi 10:14). The vineyard is conceivably the world, the master of the vineyard is interpreted as Jesus Christ and the servants are the prophets and missionaries. When the Gentiles accept the gospel, they become 'new creatures' fully capable of producing fruit as large and delightsome as the Israelites. Conversely, when the Israelites become wild or are 'overcome' by the wild roots, they have no more potential to produce large fruits of marvelous quality than do the Gentiles (96).

M. Catherine Thomas, former professor of religion at Brigham Young University, also contributed writings about Jacob Chapter 5 for the March symposium. Her paper "Jacob's Allegory: The Mystery of Christ" discussed many deep layers of this scriptural passage. In essaying to unfold some of this allegory's mystery, she explained that "a mystery is a spiritual truth grasped only through divine revelation" (1). She continued by saying that scriptural allegories are given from God to man that man might understand these heavenly messages. In the latter era of the Old Testament and in the New Testament the Jews tried to render God inaccessible to man, and in

striving to do so lost the plainness of the gospel. Thomas declared that all of God's children should understand that the gospel is simple and through prayer, scripture study, and meditation one can receive for himself or herself a divine message. According to Thomas, a spiritual understanding of Jacob Chapter 5 could only come through these means.

After this statement, Thomas shared her ideas and research dealing with this allegory. Like Hess, Thomas discussed the allegory's trees in great detail; those in Jacob Chapter 5 are symbolic at many different levels. "A tree serves well as such a symbol because it has, after all, limbs, a circulatory system, the bearing of fruit. . .specifically, scriptural trees stand either for Christ and his attributes or for man" (3). She said that in this allegory man is the olive tree because it was he that had to prove himself through the production and offering to the Lord of his "good or bad fruit." She also stated that Christ is the olive tree in this history because it, like the tree of life in Lehi's dream, represents the love of God which is His son Jesus Christ.

One symbol of the tree that inspired me to begin choreographing a section of my project was that of the Savior's

death on a cross, or on a tree. Thomas discussed that it is upon this "tree" that the Savior atoned for our sins. She remarked that this atonement or "at-one-ment" of man with Christ was one of the most important doctrines taught in this allegory. She beautifully explained that ". . .cleave is atonement language, it is not God who has ceased to cleave, but man who has rejected God's love. These periods in which we do not see divine activity signify not so much the Master's absence, but rather Israel's voluntary withdrawal from the true olive tree" (7).

In studying this allegory, the theme that resonated so clearly within me was that of the Lord's desire to draw all men and women unto him. Thomas stated that the Lord does all He can to bring His children unto Him, "one need only discover and embrace the relationship" (8). I desired to echo Thomas' written sentiments and portray this relationship between God and His children in the modern dance production of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard."

Chapter 3

Procedures

The purpose of this project was to choreograph, produce, and costume the Book of Mormon allegory found in Jacob Chapter 5. Three developmental stages were instrumental in the creation of this work.

I. Phase 1, the preparation for the production.

   a. Studying Jacob Chapter 5 and other related scriptures and commentaries.

   b. Selecting dancers.

   c. Selecting music.

   d. Choreographing and staging the movement.

   e. Organizing and Rehearsing the dancers.

   f. Designing the costumes.

   g. Preparing the narration.

   h. Designing the lighting.

II. Phase 2, the production.

   a. Organizing myself with the production staff.

   b. The presentation.

   c. Videotaping the production.

III. Phase 3, the evaluation phase.

a. Holding an informal reception after the concert to receive feedback from audience members and those who participated in the production.

b. Self-evaluating the performance as recorded on videotape.

The Preparation

Studying Jacob 5 and Other Related Scriptures and Commentaries

I wished to portray Jacob's allegory of the olive vineyard in a manner that would truly express its spiritual essence. For this reason, I began studying this chapter in a serious manner, trying to do so on a daily basis. I studied the footnotes of the verses and cross-referenced this chapter with other scriptural allegories, as well as other scriptures with similar symbolism. I wanted to better understand this chapter before I choreographed it; thus, I also researched other writings. I read Book of Mormon commentaries, and spoke with experts in the field of religion about this allegory. The material that I received from the F.A.R.M.S. Jacob 5 Symposium proved to be the most valuable material that I used in my pre-choreographic research.

One of the articles printed as a result of the F.A.R.M.S. Symposium was written by Catherine Thomas. It discussed the importance of the Savior's role within the plan of our Heavenly Father, to come as a mediator to save the world. I felt that this article summarized the seventy-seven verse chapter of the Book of Jacob and provided a basis of general knowledge of this allegory for the performers involved.

Thus, a fireside was scheduled for November 22, 1992 in which Thomas was to speak and share her ideas about Jacob 5. Because of adverse weather, Thomas was unable to attend the fireside but her notes were delivered, and the fireside proceeded as planned. Although she was not able to attend, Thomas' notes facilitated a discussion that lasted nearly two hours. Twenty-five dancers and singers attended the fireside and reported that they felt they were beginning a project with a good understanding of its goals. They also felt as if they knew the other performers more intimately as a result of the fireside. Many said that they wished they could start all of their performance projects with a fireside because they could more readily and immediately commit themselves to the project as they were more familiar with the other cast members. Ideas were

shared the night of the fireside and perhaps the ideas differed, however, trust and familiarity within the cast resulted as each performer listened and learned from each other.

The comments during the fireside were insightful. Many of the performers were familiar with the allegory and shared their views of several of the verses. I left them with the challenge to read Jacob 5 as we rehearsed in order that their minds would be constantly centered on the themes of this allegory. And as the performance neared, the dancer who portrayed the servant of the vineyard urged the other cast members to not forget the importance of studying the allegory, and he further urged the careful and constant consideration of these verses as the concert neared.

The dancers also actively participated in preparing spiritual thoughts and offering opening and closing prayers throughout the rehearsal process. The spiritual thoughts were taken from the scriptures; the cast then briefly discussed the significance of the spiritual ideas and how they related to the sections in which we were presently working.

Other times there would be scriptures shared that related directly to the problems that we were experiencing as a cast. At

one point there seemed to be a lot of frustration and tension between some of the dancers, and even between some of the dancers and myself. There seemed to be heavy role discrepancies and questions about the direction in which the dance should go. The scripture was shared: "And thus they labored with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard. . .and they became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was the most precious unto him from the beginning" (Jacob 5:74). This idea that "if we were not one, we were not the Lord's" helped the cast to realize that friction from within was an exhibition of human pride and that only through working for the good of the whole piece could we arrive at a level of spirituality that would support this dance.

I found that these short and simple scriptural thoughts were effective reminders to us all as we had to first gain spirituality and monitor our actions before we could share a religious dance with others. Seeking not to perform the dance before the individual spirituality was sought, directly paralleled the scripture "Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word and then shall

your tongues be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men" (Doctrine and Covenants 11:21). I knew that if we expected to dance well the night of the performance, and if we intended to ask for spiritual guidance, we collectively needed to seek the Lord.

Selection of Dancers

I wished to use numerous dancers and performers in this production. I chose performers with whom I had performed in the past. They had proven themselves to be reliable and exhibited spiritual maturity, sincerity, and a competent level of technical dance or musical ability.

But, as the rehearsal process progressed, there were dancers who were unable to keep the commitment to the heavy schedule and I needed to find more dancers. One of the dancers I selected during the middle of the rehearsal schedule did not begin dancing with the cast until late February, whereas the other dancers who were in these sections began rehearsing in December or January. While the cast practiced one day, this particular dancer looked in the studio and as she walked away, I felt a strong impression that she needed to dance in this project. She explained that she was confused as to

why I would have asked her to dance in a religious dance as she was not active in the church and really had no interest in becoming active. I really did not have an answer for her except that I just felt like she should dance in the project. That dancer became one of the cast anchors and contributed much to each rehearsal.

Another dancer who later joined the cast was the one who portrayed the servant of the vineyard. The former servant of the vineyard found out, after rehearsals were well underway, that he was scheduled to go on tour with a BYU performing group during the most crucial and final period of rehearsal. However, this change in the servant's role, albeit late in the process, was a blessing. I found that this new servant truly wanted to work and mold this project into a dance that would touch and possibly change lives--he rehearsed accordingly.

The addition of these two dancers added to the cast's energy level and helped alleviate the fatigue of practice. The dancers worked well with one another, and their presence created a microcosmic representation of the world, or the Lord's vineyard, as one could see the different body types and differing levels of dance technique and performance abilities. We often discussed that this

cast existed as an unusual cast because of its diversity and that "all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. To some it is given one, and to some it is given another that all may be profited thereby" (Doctrine and Covenants 46:11-12). Although we were not the same and did not possess all of the same gifts, I felt that the differing strengths of each profited the work as a whole.

Selection of Music

Because of the spiritual nature of this piece, I searched for sacred music that supported the dance. My desire was that the music and dance would be in harmonic balance during the performance. Therefore, I searched for music that would inspire the dancers, and heighten their energy and performance levels, but that would not overpower the movement or the spiritual, reverent tone of the dance.

The prerecorded music that I selected was from Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem" and Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Requiem." First, requiems exist as musical masses showing respect for the dead. I wanted to use these works as symbolic representations of the dying trees in the Lord's vineyard. Secondly, the requiem's anthems that

welcome those back into Christ's presence after death were parallel to the regrafting of the trees into the true vine of the Lord, or everlasting life, at the end of the allegory.

There was also one piece of music created for the dance by one of the narrators. He set his own music to the text of Doctrine and Covenants 4, which exists as correlating scripture to verses 70 through 74 of Jacob Chapter 5. The score was written after the movement had been set for this section; thus, the composer worried that the task of creating music to movement might be too arduous a task. However, at the completion of composing this song for the "missionary section" he stated that he found it easier to compose music to prechoreographed dance because a rhythmic structure already existed upon which he could base his melody.

Choreographing and Staging the Movement

I prepared the movement phrases with a male dancer, because I wished to incorporate many lifts. I did this to be prepared for the other dancers and use their time as effectively as possible. However, the movement phrases that I prepared were only a basis for the motion that I desired, somewhat like a skeleton to the dance

that I wanted as an end product, and through the rehearsal process I discovered that my phrases had been enriched and had deepened.

I discovered that choreographing a dance work of considerable length was a challenge because I wanted the dance to exhibit a "wholeness." I worked with theme and variation to tie the first sections of the dance in with the last sections of the dance to create a flow of rhythms and movement throughout the piece. This flow was necessary as the whole 39-minute work consisted of eight separate dances connected by live narration as opposed to a twenty-minute dance with no interruption.

While trying to keep the flow of the pieces steady, I noticed that keeping similar movement qualities in each piece was detrimental. To portray the feelings that I wanted to portray, I had to completely change movement qualities from one piece to the next. I manipulated the movement phrases that I had choreographed by using Rudolf Laban's model of movement qualities. He developed a model that showed the two ends of the spectrum for space, time, and force, which are the three basic elements of dance. For example, time can either be fast or slow, energy can either be heavy or light, and the space or path that one dances in could either be direct or

indirect. Therefore, through a combination of these elements, a choreographer could well manipulate dance phrases resulting in contrast as well as continuity within the piece.

Organizing and Rehearsing the Dancers

I discovered that organizing and rehearsing dancers existed as the most exacting part of producing this dance. Because of the high level of talent the performers possessed, they were in great demand; therefore, I divided them into rehearsal groups to satisfy their busy schedules. Beginning the first week of January, I tried to meet with my dancers in alternating groups at 6:00-8:00 p.m. each Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and at 9:00-11:00 a.m. each Saturday, but, because of schedule conflicts we experienced the stress of a disjointed, unconnected ensemble. I was teaching the same sections over and over to different groups that could only attend certain rehearsals and it seemed that I was making no progress. Some of the dancers, those who were regulary attending rehearsals and were rehearsing the same sections, became frustrated. I could sense that there was not a feeling of unity within the cast because a few of the dancers had never danced with other dancers in their sections and didn't exhibit the same flow of

movement that the other dancers did. Also, the dancers who came regularly felt it unfair that the inattendant dancers weren't putting in the hours required to refine the dance.

This lack of unity within the cast became enough of a dangerous threat to the piece that my advisory committee suggested the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Monday through Friday for practice time during the final two week of rehearsals. The dancers were very loyal as they most often arrived on time, ready to work. We discovered together that early morning was very effective rehearsal time because the stresses of the day had not yet wearied the minds and bodies of the dancers and myself, the choreographer. Moreover, as the dancers worked one with another, unity was fostered within the cast and the dancers seemed to adopt a clearer vision of the purpose of the piece.

Designing the Costumes

Because this work was an abstraction of the allegory, I originally envisioned the costumes as giving the impression of being biblical clothing. But, I found it necessary to modify the costumes in order to facilitate the movement of the choreography.

Using very simplistic colors to create costumes for the olive branches, which ranged from a pale green to a deep grey to a soft brown, unitards were dip-dyed to achieve the look of young branches with foliage on them. The green colored unitards represented the "good" branches and were worn by five female dancers; the brown and grey unitards were worn by three female dancers symbolizing the "evil" branches. This facilitated the audience's differentiation of the two groups of branches. Over the green and brown unitards, there was a sheath that draped from one shoulder and gathered at the waist with a sash, onto which were sewn sequins, seed pearls and other beads that texturized the sheaths and appeared as olives on the costumes of the branches.

Varying textures and colors of ecru material were blended to create robes for the Lord and servant of the vineyard whose costumes most authentically represented biblical clothing. These costumes, too, had the seed pearls and other beads sewn on them to literally represent the olive seeds, and to figuratively represent the seeds of faith and spiritual development. These costumes can be seen on the video as well as in the photographs contained in Appendix A of this thesis.

Preparing The Narration

The narration of this dance needed to be brief, yet give a general overview of the seventy-seven verses included in the fifth chapter of Jacob. Because there are many spiritual themes presented in this scriptural passage, I decided to select one general theme that I wanted to represent in this dance. The theme was Christ's mercy for His children. Thus, I read the chapter several times and chose the verses that spoke of Christ and His plan to save humankind.

The text used for the narration is included in Appendix B of this thesis.

Lighting Design

I selected one set designer and one lighting designer from the University's Theater Department. I had seen their work and was personally familiar with the talents of both of these people. As I told them my ideas and perceptions of how to create an environment on stage that would fulfill the vision I had for this dance, they gave me their suggestions on how to best meet this vision through the use of lights and sets.

However, as the time of the concert drew closer, those people I selected to design the lighting were not available during the time that I had technical rehearsals with my dancers. I, along with Gary Hopkinson, the technical director for the Department of Dance set approximately twenty-five light cues that would enhance the choreography. We used amber, red, and blue lights, as well as three spotlights (specials) and three tree images, created by gobos to accent the stage and costumes, thus creating contrasting moods within the dance.

The Production

The Concert

The concert was documented on videotape and explained more fully in Chapter 4 of this thesis. The tape is available through the Brigham Young University Department of Dance and a sample program is included in Appendix C of this thesis.

Videotaping the Project

One purpose of creating "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard," was to help me begin a series of future liturgical dances. I wished the project to be recorded for future reference, as well as for possible future performance. Furthermore, I may find more

significance in Jacob 5 that I wish to express. It is conceivable that I may add more sections to the work in the future.

The Evaluation

Informal Reception Following the Concert

A brief and informal gathering was scheduled following the performance of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" to gather feedback from the audience members. Discussion was recorded on audio tape to help me clearly remember the comments and suggestions for the dance given by the audience members who were willing to give them.

Evaluating the Videotape

One's own eye often serves as the best critic; therefore, I used the videotape to gain a clearer vision of the piece as it was presented on the night of the concert. Insights gained from this video evaluation are discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Chapter 4

Overview of the Performance

PrePerformance Preparation

Many performers and athletes use some form of physical or mental preperformance preparation. Because this dance was of a spiritual nature, I felt that the dancers needed some spiritual preparation, in addition to their physical preparation, in order to successfully perform. The physical stretching and warming of the body was only one part of preparing to dance. Meditation, prayer, and scripture study were other parts. I also wished for the dancers to be in a peaceful and nurturing atmosphere before the performance in order to feel relaxed.

I became worried about the dancers' states of mind as the 7:00 p.m. performance hour arrived. The "relaxed atmosphere" I had so desired for them, seemed to be out of grasp because we had held both the lighting rehearsal and the dress rehearsal earlier in the day, and the dancers were exhibiting exhaustion and frustration.

Most of the dancers dressed and came on stage. They nervously listened to the would-be viewers convening just a few feet beyond the velvet curtain, and the question arose in many of their heads,

"will we be prepared?" To unify the members of the group present, we all began to dance in unison, using movement from different sections of the dance. Meanwhile, Cathy Black, my advisor, described appropriate images for the dancers to envision. She incorporated other helpful sensory stimuli in order to elicit a desired performance-related response from the dancers. By involving these multisensory incorporated images, the dancers were more successful in dancing as a group instead of dancing eleven solos.

With the aid of these multisensory images, a group of dancers may create an atmosphere on the stage that allows the dance to unfold in a gestalt manner. In the case of this dance, there were moments that were more unified than others. I believe that breaks existed in the dance's continuity as the concentration on mental imaging waned.

It is theorized that what a dancer presents on the stage in his or her mind can realistically be reproduced on the stage of the theater. This imaging is not mere mental visualization, but rather a total sensory commitment that incorporates the body as well as the spirit. According to Janalyn Memmott in her master's thesis, "when

one visualizes, the focus is only on the picture but imaging includes other sensory input, thus creating a holistic sensation. The image should include taste, smell, feeling, hearing, any sensation that would heighten the awareness of the movement experience" (32). She concluded at the end of her thesis that, as she had supposed, the emotional preparation that came from imaging was "a key ingredient for performance success" (43).

I agreed with Memmott's findings. The dancers who were actively participating in this mental, physical, and spiritual warm-up demonstrated their preparedness as they performed that night. They also exhibited continuity in their performance, demonstrating the ability to use their mental imagery to produce a holistic flow in the dance that clearly carried each section through the transitions. The others who remained in the dressing room did not perform to their level of ability.

It was not the fault of those left in the dressing room, who were not present at the warm-up, that their performance was not at a peak. The rehearsals had run late and the necessity of preparing with make-up application and dressing in costume impeded their ability to prepare themselves with the group. However, I witnessed,

both in the video recording of the concert and from the wings as I watched the performance, that those who did not prepare with the group before the dance were watching the steps of the others, looking down as they danced, or didn't pay constant attention to spacing and timing. These aforementioned problems detracted from the holistic and unified performance that had been desired.

The Concert

The concert began at 7:00 p.m., April 10, 1993 with a prayer. Following the prayer, Dr. Richard L. Anderson from the Brigham Young University Department of Religion gave a12-minute brief of the doctrine found in Jacob 5. His remarks existed as a good introduction to the dance because he centered them on the theme of mercy, which was a central image of the dance, and also because they brought the audience to a state of preparedness to witness the dance. His talk made the audience feel as if they were at a fireside and aided the viewers in focusing their minds on the spiritual themes that would unfold on the stage.

The dance began as the curtain opened simultaneously with the start of the music. The lighting was very dim, but faintly defined three images on the stage that were moving slightly to Fauré's "Pie

Jesu." The dance, divided into eight sections with linking transitions, lasted 39 minutes. Each section is described as follows:

Section 1. As the curtain opened, there were three sets of "seedlings" on the floor representing both the seedling of a tree's growth and a human's infancy and development. Also, allegorically, they represented the seeds of faith described in Alma Chapter 32 of the Book of Mormon, which has significant symbolic similarity to Jacob 5.

The "seedlings" were each comprised of a male and a female dancer who developed into trees which incorporated a series of lifts. Then, other dancers added themselves to the lifts to become the branches of the trees. In the end of this section, the trees blended together forming one large tree, and two of the male dancers left the stage to change costume in order to represent the Lord and the servant of the vineyard.

Section 2. The Lord of the vineyard began to survey his vineyard and consider the condition of his trees. He called his servant in and they danced a duet to the live reading of selected verses from Jacob 5. The movement was created directly from

abstracted movement interpretations of the text and variations on different themes throughout the dance.

The tree remained on stage for the first half of this section and then disassembled and disappeared through a hole in the black back curtain masked by a set piece composed of several black boxes. This exit allowed some of the dancers to unobtrusively leave the stage and prepare themselves to dance in the next section.

Section 3. Three female dancers danced the role of the branches of Israel that were not obedient to the commandments of the Lord, or the branches that were pruned from the tree. I did not want the image that females were inherently evil to be reinforced because there were only women dancing in the section. But, because of a lack of male dancers, women were exclusively used.

The movement consisted of large body movements and unusual abstract gesture to symbolize the twistedness of the branches. The three dancers also had their own individual solos representing the different faces of pride. This dance symbolized how pride worked solely for the benefit of the individual; thus, when a prideful group arose, there existed no support for one another. The concept of the "evil" branches' death caused by pride was derived from Jacob 5:48

when the servant said, "Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard--have not the branches overcome the roots thereof. . .behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots taking strength unto themselves. Behold is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?"

During this section, the Lord and the servant entered to assess the progression of the trees in the vineyard. They were saddened by the unrepentant action of these branches and a transition within the piece occurred. The following movement represented the Atonement of Jesus Christ and existed as a part of the aforementioned section.

Accompanied by Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Pie Jesu," the servant figure danced a solo as the "evil" branches remained on stage to watch. The movement of the servant was repeated by the branches as he invited them to come back to the tree. Two of the branches came to him, and then made the choice to leave the stage and resist the invitation of the servant. Meanwhile, as the tree reassembled itself on stage, the third branch accepted the invitation and danced a solo, then a duet with the servant in which he grafted her back into the tree. Following her example, the other two branches came back

onto the stage and danced brief duets with the servant figure and allowed themselves to be regrafted the tree, or House of Israel.

Section 3. The other five women dancers danced a section that represented the wholeness of righteousness. They danced toward the servant and the Lord and abstractly offered up the "fruits of righteousness" (see Jacob 5:17,18,20,22,23,60,75,77). The entrance of the dancers was choreographed as two solos followed by a duet and then another solo to represent the diversity of the people in the Lord's vineyard. To further represent this diversity, the branches began the dance with different lyrical movements and varying, challenging timing. However, in the final stages of the dance, it became evident that these branches were "one" (see Jacob 5:74) as the choreography became unison and they grafted themselves into a menorah-like tree image while the Lord and the servant looked on.

Section 4. The Lord of the vineyard and three of the branches exited as the servant and two of the good branches danced a section to live narration. The branches represented those that had been planted into weak soil, yet produced good fruit because of the care given to them by the Lord. The branches danced in unison with the

servant as well as behind the servant following his timing and movements as if following his steps and learning of him.

Section 5. One of the "evil" branches who had been grafted back into the olive tree entered the stage as the Lord and the servant danced a short duet. Both the Lord and the servant tried to "tame" the "wild" branch and offer the branch a way to overcome its inevitable death, but the branch made the choice to separate herself from the Lord in the end. The Lord could have been a rock for this olive branch--for olive branches thrive on a rocky base--but, because of the branch's choice to resist the Lord, he became a stone, or stumbling block that instead impeded her growth.

Section 6. The Lord and servant remained on stage and began the dance that represented the final pruning of the vineyard. After a short duet, the servant called others to work in the vineyard for the final time. This section was informally titled the "missionary section" and included a representation of the present day missionaries symbolized by the branches' coming together from all parts of the earth to unite as one and work out their own salvation through obedience, repentance, and service toward others. Their movement came from the images of pruning from Jacob 5 and from

threshing with a sickle from Doctrine and Covenants 4. The live music was also based upon this section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Section 7. The dancers danced two different groups of canons. Each group was paired with another group and the canons led them in circles around each other creating a sweeping motion on the stage. The circles were to represent the chain of families and friends that had been grafted back into the olive tree in the Lord's vineyard as well as the Jacob 5:63 reference to "the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last. . .that all may be nourished once again for the last time."

The Lord and the servant danced a duet in the middle of the section and then the branches rejoined them in the end of the dance, symbolizing the work and power of the Lord and the obedience of the righteous branches of Israel in following His will.

Section 8. The final section existed as a joyous reunion of the branches because of their restoration into a "land of promise." The section consisted of grand jeté motifs and was the most difficult section of the dance, at least aerobically. Therefore, as it was originally placed as Section 5 of this dance, it was eventually moved

to the final section, allowing the dancers to reserve their energy for this arduous dance. Also, it was much more appropriate as a final section because of its highly energetic and joyous nature. This section correlated with the third to last verse of the allegory of the olive vineyard which states ". . .and because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and have brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me. . ." (Jacob 5:75). The stage, bathed with white lights during the last section, faded to black and the curtains closed.

The presentation was videotaped. A video copy of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" is available through the Dance Department of Brigham Young University and exists as a more thorough documentation of this dance.

The Reception

The posters used to advertise this concert invited the audience to attend a reception following the dance (see Appendix D). I hoped that those who attended the concert would feel comfortable to stay and talk with each other and with me. There were refreshments in the hall outside the theater so that those who desired to discuss the

concert could casually remain in a specified part of the building identified as a gathering place for them. Everyone was given the option of gathering outside in the hall or remaining in the theater to briefly give feedback on the concert. I was frankly surprised at the number of people who stayed to informally discuss the concert and give their opinions. About 50% of the audience remained inside of the theater to give their opinions, or listen to others' views on the dance. I felt that the discussion was one of the most enjoyable parts of the evening for me as I was able to hear what the audience members understood as they explained their ideas about the dance of Jacob 5.

The first 15 minutes of the discussion was undirected. The audience members were allowed to give their impressions of the dance without having to be specifically questioned by me, the director of the discussion. The remaining 10 minutes of the discussion were devoted to audience responses to specifically directed questions. The transcription of the discussion is included in Appendix E of this thesis.

Many stayed in the hall and visited with each other or waited to discuss the dance with the other dancers and myself at the

conclusion of the discussion held in the theater. Many remained until 10:00 p.m. (an hour and a half after the conclusion of the concert), and I was happy that they felt comfortable enough to stay and visit that length of time.

The Evaluation

I reviewed the video of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" several times as well as studied the responses recorded on the auditory tape during the discussion. I drew some conclusions from this information that I will now summarize.

One part of the dance that I felt possessed clarity, was the beginning section. In watching the video tape, I could see that although there were a few timing problems with one of the "seedling" sets, it was evident that these embryonic trees represented the potential we all possess. An audience member stated that he felt "at the beginning the individuals who were dancing were fledglings. I felt like they were just bursting forth and then at the end they had achieved some kind of maturity, but at the same time, I think that they still had some of the innocence in them."

I also felt that artistically, this part of the dance was the most layered in meaning and arrived at the state that I would have envisioned for the whole dance. Someone stated that "the very beginning scenes were most creative and exciting. They were such a beautiful enfolding of a concept or spirit for the whole dance." I would have liked to have kept this level of creativity throughout the whole dance. In watching the video, I could see that for possible future reconstruction of this dance, incorporating the kind of movement and the level of abstraction apparent in the first section would be beneficial to the other sections.

Another section that seemed to be clearly presented was the atonement section of the dance. An audience member said that when the "evil" branch danced with the Lord and his servant, that the Lord of the vineyard "was fighting with one [the branch] and it seemed clear to me how he tried to keep part of the vineyard not to perish and it was so clear. . ." The fight represented in the dance between a branch and the Lord consisted of writhing movements showing the actual physical struggle in a literal sense, and the fight with sin in an allegorical sense.

The atonement section elicited much response. Another viewer stated that, "I felt like when the Lord of the vineyard was grasping for his children to stay, it was always them who released eventually. They pulled away. He held onto them as long as he could, but it was always them who rejected Him in the end." He added that "it reminds me of the phrase when the Savior comes to the Nephites [as recorded in the Book of Mormon] he says, 'how often I would gather you, but you would not,' or something to that effect. He said that over and over, 'but ye would not, it was up to you, but you rejected me.'"

I believe that this idea of choice and free agency must have been most clearly represented in this section and the duet section including the servant and the "evil" branch who repented and was regrafted into the tree. Many said that they agreed that choice became an evident theme throughout the dance, but mainly in these sections. Someone said, "One of the things that the piece inspired, to me [about the] parable, is the issue of choice. . .of personal responsibility, something that is done moment by moment, not just in the peak moments in our life. We turn away from the Lord every moment or every minute of our lives, or we turn toward him."

The clarity of the atonement section existed as a high point in the dance for me. Throughout the piece, I found it difficult to choreograph in a truly simple fashion; however, I felt that this section just came through me, not necessarily from me. It came simply and remained simple throughout the rehearsal process. I remember thinking that I would add more movement to it at one point, and then had to overcome the temptation to overmanipulate its unadorned clarity. An audience member stated, "There was nothing overdone, it was just spontaneous and inevitable the way you choreographed it. That was the high point of it all for me." That clarity was due in great part to the performance of the two dancers involved. In rehearsal, they truly danced the dance that I had envisioned, and never did they wane from their highly sensitive performance of this part of the dance. At the time of performance, I felt that this section had peaked in its intelligibility.

The sensitive performance of these dancers, along with the other cast members, was discussed by one of the viewers who had previously danced in several liturgical dances. She stated that the dancers "really grasped the special content of the allegory and they really portrayed that well in their performance. They had a deep

rooted spirituality in their expression." She explained that when she had been involved in other religious dances, the preparation to elicit these spiritual expressions was paramount. I discussed the fact that as a group we had studied the scriptures and prayed, but, I also felt the dancers had prepared themselves to dance by the way they lived their lives. Janalyn Memmott stated, "Emotional preparation cannot begin with a piece of choreography, but spans a lifetime of experience. It is in rehearsal process that the dancer has the opportunity to recall those feelings and emotions that most clearly communicate the choreographer's intent" (44). Likewise, spiritual preparation comes from a heritage of spirituality; thus, Memmott's statement further supported the idea that the preparation the dancers exhibited resulted from a background of spirituality.

This spiritual preparation may have also aided the dancers to perform with clarity the night of the concert. An instructor of dance who was in the audience suggested that previous spiritual preparation could have enhanced the dancers' presentation of the dance when she stated, "I have to congratulate your cast. They kept up with [the dance]. The preparation that you gave them spiritually

inspired them to work for the piece and for you in a very successful way--given the fact that the piece still needed to be worked through a little more."

The comments of audience members in response to the introduction given by Dr. Anderson were very positive. One viewer realized that the spiritual preparation that helped prepare the dancers, could also have helped prepare the audience to view the dance stating, "The symposium before the production. . .gave a guideline so that somebody coming, not knowing, would have at least something to base it [the concert] on. So, I thought that the symposium was a good start to give that guideline." He further commented that he would have preferred to see the symposium presented on a different night than that in which the dance was presented. I did not agree that presenting the symposium and the concert on different nights would make the performance more artistic. I felt that the talk and the dance were dependent upon each other in this fireside format. Together they successfully contributed to the evening's events.

After the reception, other audience members expressed their appreciation of the short symposium given by Dr. Anderson. They

said it prepared them to think of the spiritual content that would be presented in the dance. They added that during the dance, the introduction helped them to understand certain themes brought out by the dance, hence, producing a learning atmosphere in which to watch the concert.

When asked to briefly describe what the fifth chapter of Jacob meant to them after seeing the production, the audience members stated that it meant the "long-suffering of Christ," "the atonement," "the Plan of Salvation on an individual and entire world basis," "the history of God's chosen people," "the love of God in action," and "true joy." The theme I had based the dance on was the mercy that Christ has for His children, so I was pleased with the responses that I received in conjunction with these questions.

One comment I found interesting was that after viewing the dance of Jacob 5, one audience member said it meant more than he had thought and he would have liked to have been able see the production again. He stated, "I had kind of a feeling. . .that it was scripture itself. . .and it would be really nice now for me to go back and watch it again and again so that I could learn more and more from it."

Because I was interested in the audience's learning process in accordance with this dance, I posed the question, "What understanding of this scripture can the audience gain from this dance, as opposed to the understanding one would get from a musical or theatrical production of the same allegory?"

Two interesting responses came from two different groups of people. The first response was that communication through language is imperfect, but the language of dance speaks clearly to almost everybody. The second idea was that because as Latter-day Saints, we believe that God has a body of flesh and bones, praising God with our bodies as instruments existed as a high form of praise.

This idea of liturgical dance as "the biggest praise that we can give to Him because we are created in His image," as stated by one of the live narrators during the discussion, led to the idea that this corporal portrayal of spiritual matter through dance teaches the possible physical union between us and deity. One audience member said, "One of the things that I got from this that I did not get from the scripture. . .is the unity of God and Christ. They were always moving with their children, rather than apart. They were always

trying to shape them and I really got a sense of the unity to us and God."

Another viewer said, "God's rejoicing when his children were repentant and [came] to him. . .was most apparent through the actions and facial features--things that you don't get--things that words cannot express." Someone else added, "A play could not express things like the leaves withering and the branches dying and the uprooting. . . .Those are the things that you cannot find in a musical [interpretation] that you can express in dance."

According to an audience member, just by virtue of the fact that the dance existed as a visual stimulus, she could "see" the parable. She came to understand poetry when she viewed the art from which it was inspired and hence, "understood the parable of the olive vineyard by seeing it visually in dance."

However, one audience member felt that this dance, although visual, incorporated symbolisms that incorrectly taught part of the doctrine of Jacob 5. She felt that the lighting was too traditional, and that the dancers both representing the "good" and the "evil" branches existed as labeled groups of people whose actions were too generalized. She said that we, as Latter-day Saints need to depart

"from dichotomies, moving away from strictly traditional representation. We have red--"evil," "negative," "destructive" and we have good--"light." She stated, "I think in order to progress artistically, that first of all these symbolic discrepancies are not necessarily so discrepant, that they often converge, and red and passion is often something that will lead us closer to God."

Another viewer discussed the fact that the traditional symbolism used in religion does not necessarily inhibit artistic expansion. In fact, she spoke in favor of dichotomies stating,

> I understand what they are saying about "red and passion" also leading us to God. Because we must have a passionate love in order to grow closer to Him, however, the Lord works in dichotomies. For example, in Jacob 5, God specifically works with two opposing groups, good and evil. He does not use the words "semi-good" and "partially evil." I see the scriptures as being full of dichotomies. Therefore, using traditional symbols for the dance to represent these dichotomies effectively portrayed God's actual images.

My primary goal in choreographing "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" was to teach a religious doctrine through an artistic medium. Because I found this scripture to be very "black and white" doctrinally, I utilized more traditional artistic symbols to clearly parallel the emblems used in this allegory, which exist as the dichotomized symbols of cutting, grafting, pruning, burning, and casting out.

There were not many negative comments shared during the reception. Some of the reasons that those with suggestions for this piece did not share their thoughts could have been as follows: they were intimidated to honestly give their opinions because of the high percentage of positive reactions toward the piece, they felt it was disrespectful to give a negative opinion about a spiritual dance, they may have had friends or family that participated in the piece, they had not immediately formulated their opinion or suggestions in time to share them during the reception, they did not feel familiar enough with dance to give a suggestion, they did not feel familiar enough with the allegory to give a suggestion, and etc.

I felt uncomfortable that there were not more suggestions given by the audience; however, I was able to give myself

suggestions. As I viewed the videotape I was able to see some sections and transitions that needed work. I found that the most successful sections existed as the more abstract sections and that the narrative sections were weaker. In discussing this problem of clarity exhibited in the abstractly choreographed sections versus the literally choreographed sections that were not clear, my advisors asked me how an understanding of the three elements of choreography: intent, content, and form could have strengthened the literally choreographed sections. I discovered that my intent to detail the story of the characters of Jacob 5 had not been sufficiently supported by the content or motion of the piece. The form was variation on a theme, and I feel that the form worked, but, because the emphasis was placed on the intent and the form, and the content was not sufficiently explored and honed, there was an imbalance created between the intent, content, and form triad. These three elements should essentially be of equal value; equal consideration of all three aspects can truly create a successful piece of choreography.

In reviewing the video, I found there were other parts of the dance in which I could have more artistically layered the symbolism.

I also noticed that the transitions existed as obvious changes of scene, instead of delicate running threads that unified the whole performance. I knew that the transitions were weak; however, it was not until I saw the video that I understood the imperative clarity with which one must choreograph these modulations. I also saw parts of the dances that were very unpolished and unprepared to be presented in the theater. Further rehearsal time would have improved those sections as well as the transitions before and after them.

As I watched the video, the most important lesson I learned in choreographing, performing, and reviewing the dance of Jacob 5 was the fact that liturgical dance exists as a form of worship. Although there were technical and choreographic programs in this piece, the flow of this liturgical dance existed as holistic representation of things spiritual for some individuals. I saw the dancers honor Deity through their movements and expressions and when a dancer uses his or her body to worship God, as did those who danced in the production of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard," that dance can exist as a highly fulfilling form of praise.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to communicate the spiritual feelings borne through scripture study and to praise God through the medium of liturgical dance. "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" became a means of sharing, teaching, and expressing the scriptural doctrine found in the Book of Mormon allegory.

Dancers were selected and the rehearsal process began in November of 1992. Prerecorded, sacred music was selected and original music was created to accompany this piece and to support the atmosphere of the fireside. Some of this music was presented live during the concert by the three narrators who accompanied the dance with their voices, both by singing and by reading parts of the text of Jacob 5.

The dance of Jacob 5 presented at 7:00 p.m., Easter Weekend, April 10, 1993, and was prefaced by a short symposium given by Dr. Richard L. Anderson and followed by a 25-minute feedback-format discussion.

After the discussion, a reception was held for those who wished to stay and discuss the concert. Then, the processes of choreographing, producing, presenting, and evaluating the dance of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" were written in thesis form.

Conclusions

In choreographing, producing and performing in the liturgical dance "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard," I have discovered many things. One is that liturgical dance exists as a form of worship and that those who participate in the dance as well as those who view the dance as audience members can rejoice together in a unified praise to God.

I also learned that there are some who do not feel comfortable at this time with dance as a form of worship. Those believing that liturgical dance is a bit too liberal for them or blasphemous in nature may feel intimidated by this form of praise. One can only praise their god in the way that they feel is correct; thus, it may take time for liturgical dance to become more generally accepted as a form of worship. According to the majority of the audience present the night of the concert who shared their insights, liturgical

dance can be an effective form of worship, when carefully and prayerfully choreographed and performed.

Throughout the process of choreographing and presenting this dance, I fully enjoyed how the cast freely shared their ideas and feelings about Jacob 5 and related scriptures. This time of sharing was rich throughout the rehearsal period as the dancers and the advisors, along with the choreographer, explained their ideas about the allegory and how its literary symbolism could be translated into dance symbolism. Furthermore, the group involvement aided the cast in more clearly performing their individual parts in dancing this allegory. Their input helped them to identify and define their roles for themselves and enhance their characters' movement accordingly.

The sharing of ideas also became apparent the night of the performance. Because the dance of Jacob Chapter 5 was advertised to be presented in a fireside format, the audience arrived prepared to watch a dance concert of spiritual nature and were generally prepared to share their ideas of what they saw and felt as they watched the performance. The audience members seemed open and unafraid to express their feelings, whether positive or negative, resulting from their attendance of this concert.

The sharing of spiritual ideas and the desire to praise God through dance did not end with the performance of the production. Many of the dancers expressed their desire to further polish the work presented on the night of April 10, 1993 or begin another religious dance project. A few also expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate in a liturgical dance production, explaining the rare privilege it is to dance one's testimony of the gospel. I found this sharing most satisfying, along with the opportunity of performing this liturgical dance as a vehicle that brought people together in God and praised Him for His goodness toward His children. Although the dance allegory did not exist as a perfect interpretation of the literary allegory, many understood the perfectness of the allegory's message and were able to recognize its truthfulness.

Recommendations

In the event that "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" were to be recreated, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. Audition cast members. The time involved in producing a dance of 39 minutes is considerable. When dancers are cast as a result of an audition, their commitment level seems to be higher.

2. Set up a mandatory rehearsal schedule before rehearsals begin.

3. Take attendance at rehearsals. When possible, follow up with those who do not attend to schedule a rehearsal and teach them the movement before the cast meets again so as to not frustrate the other dancers and slow the process of future rehearsals.

4. Select Music. The music should be selected before the rehearsals begin. Performers should not be expected to wait to learn sections because the choreographer did not find the desired music.

5. Regard performers' time as sacred. The choreography should be set before the dancers arrive at the rehearsal hall so as not to waste their time.

6. Award dancers with university credit. Because the dancers dedicated much of their time and talent to this project without remuneration, I feel that future dancers in graduate projects, that

will also give so much of themselves, should be awarded university credit.

7. Organize rehearsals as "technique class." The timing in this piece is very challenging. Therefore, to more fully ensure the unified performance of this dance, organizing some of the rehearsals as 'technique class' rehearsals would be beneficial.

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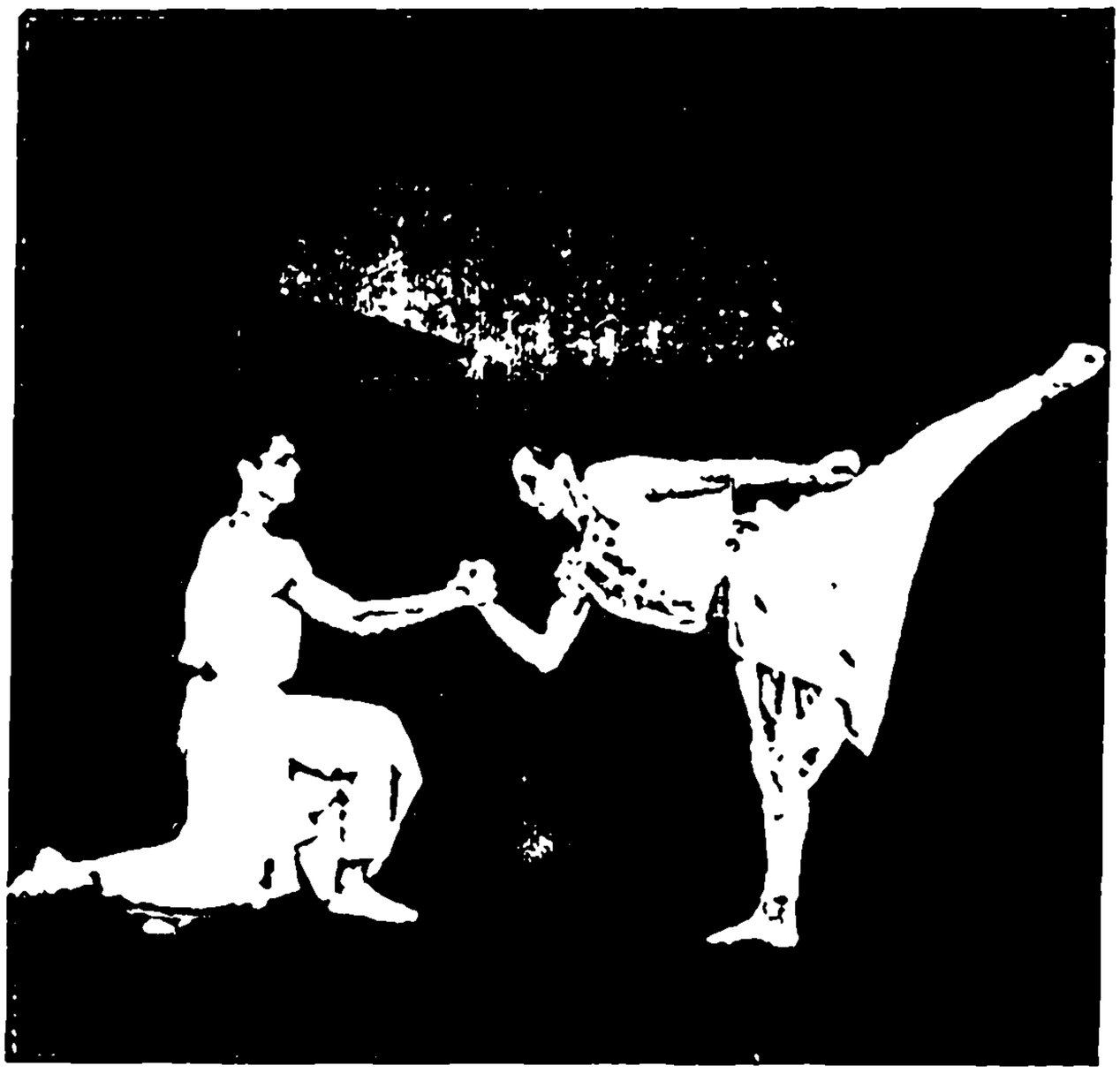
Appendix A

Concert Photographs



Duet Section danced by the Lord and servant of the vineyard

"And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard "

--Jacob 5.10

Atonement Section. danced by "evil" branches and the servant

". . let us prune it, and dig about it a little longer, that perhaps it

may bring forth good fruit unto thee "

--Jacob 5 27

"Good" Branches Section danced by "good" branches

"Behold these, and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit, and he beheld also that it was good"

--Jacob 5 20

Appendix B

Narration of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard"

Narration of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard"

(Script Derived from Selected Verses of Jacob Chapter 5)

DUET SECTION

(Lord and servant of the vineyard dance to scriptural accompaniment.)

Jason: 3) For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay.

4) And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive-tree began to decay; and he said: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not.

5) And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it according to his word.

6) And it came to pass that after many days it began to put forth somewhat a little, young and tender branches; but behold, the main top thereof began to perish.

Justin: 7) And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from the wild olive-tree, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned.

10) And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive tree.

11) And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be digged about, and pruned, and nourished, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing.

"EVIL" BRANCHES AND ATONEMENT SECTIONS

(Three "evil" branches dance, to musical and scriptural accompaniment.)

Heather: 31) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season much fruit.

32) But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now it grieveth me that I should lose this tree.

(Lord and servant of the vineyard enter stage left and watch the "evil" branches. The servant begins a solo, and then dances with each of the branches.)

Justin: 27) But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season.

Jason and Heather sing "Pie Jesu"

"GOOD" BRANCHES SECTION

("Good" branches dance toward the Lord and servant of the vineyard. Lord and servant join the dance half-way through.)

Heather: 20) And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he said unto the servant: Behold these; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he said unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, said he, this long time have I nourished it, and it hath brought forth much fruit.

TRIO SECTION

(Two of the "good" branches remain on stage and dance with the servant. There is no music, the accompaniment is solely scriptural narration.)

Justin: 49) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not

cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard?

50) But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.

58) And we will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire.

59) And this I do that, perhaps, the roots thereof may take strength because of their goodness; and because of the change of the branches that the good may overcome the evil.

60) And because that I have preserved the natural branches and the roots thereof, and that I have grafted in the natural branches again into their mother tree, and have preserved the roots of their mother tree, that, perhaps, the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit; and that I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard, and, perhaps, that I may rejoice exceedingly that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit--

CASTING OFF SECTION

(Lord and servant dance with an "evil" branch that chooses to be "cast off." This section is solely accompanied by scriptural narration as well as the past section.)

Jason: 39) And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and they had all become corrupt.

40) And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died.

46) And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and these I had hoped to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive-tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them.

47) But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged about it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who it that has corrupted my vineyard?

41) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and said unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard?

MISSIONARY SECTION

(Lord and servant remain on stage from the "casting off" section and begin this section to narration.)

Jason: 61) Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit.

(The music begins and other dancers representing missionaries from all part of the world join in the dance.)

74) And thus they labored, with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning.

JOY SECTION

(This is the final section of the dance. It begins with a small solo by the servant, followed by a duet by the servant and the Lord, and quintet by the three male dancers and two female dancers. Finally all of the dancers have reentered the stage and in the end are grafted into the tree image as the Lord and servant look on.)

Heather: 75) And it came to pass that when the Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard

was no more corrupt, he called up his servants, and said unto them. . .

Jason: . . .Behold, for this last time have we nourished my vineyard; and thou beholdest that I have done according to my will; and I have preserved the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning. And blessed art thou; for because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and have brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard.

Appendix C

Concert Program

"We have something in the Book of Mormon that, if we did not have any other truth expressed in it, would be sufficient evidence of the divinity of this book. I make reference to the fifth chapter of Jacob. In this chapter we have a parable that nobody could have written unless he had the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. It would have been impossible. I think that as many as ninety-nine out of every hundred who read the Book of Mormon, read this parable through without grasping the fullness and meaning of it. And I think this is one of the greatest passages in the Book of Mormon . . . it is a parable. No greater parable was ever recorded."

Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions

Program

Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard

Introduction	Richard L. Anderson, BYU Religion Department
Choreographer	Laurie Behunin
Narrators	Heather Hart, Justin Hart, Jason Hughes
Dancers	Shannon Beck, Laurie Behunin, Belinda Cheng, Michelle Bell, Debbie Gibbons, Lorelle Jeffries McPhee, Amy Lant, Shaun Parry, Shaun Saunders, Paul Snyder, Nannette Watts
Composers	Gabrielle Faure, Justin Hart, Andrew Lloyd Webber

Reception following performance

Special Thanks to
Mark Huffman, Cathy Black, Pat Debenham, Phyllis Jacobson, Richard Anderson, Justin and Heather Hart, Marty Hughs, Jason Hughs, Les Ditson, Debra Sowell, Gary Hopkinson, Gary Preston, Elizabeth Morley, Lane Livingston, Ania Laver, Julie Curtis, Jen Day, Tanya Ivins, Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), the dancers, and my family.

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Costumes	Laurie Behunin, Karen Behunin, and Diane Johnson
Technical Director	Gary Hopkinson
Stage Crew	Lori Horn, Mindi Porter, Stephanie Rice, Kaylene Mecham
Dance Department Chair	Phyllis Jacobson
College of Physical Education, Dean	Elmo S. Roundy

Appendix D

Concert Poster

Jacob Five:
A Journey Into The Olive Vineyard

A Master's Project

Choreogaphed by Laurie Behunin
in conjunction with the Brigham Young University Department of Dance

April 10, 1993

7:00 pm

185 Richards Building

Reception will follow

Tickets are available in the Dance Ticket Office, 165 RB, 1-4 daily.

Appendix E

Transcription of Reception

Reception Transcription

April 10, 1993

8:00-8:25 p.m.

Open Discussion

1. "In the dance, the Lord was fighting with one. . .well, you played the part, and it seemed clear to me how he tried hard to keep part of the vineyard not to perish. . .and it was clear, so I really liked that."

2. "Just as I understood the poem of the ancient mariner better when I saw it in Gustav Dori's engravings, I think I understood the parable of the olive vineyard by seeing it visually in dance."

3. "The very beginning scenes were most creative and exciting. They were such a beautiful enfolding of a concept or spirit for the whole dance. I thought your beginning was absolutely stunning."

4. "I had kind of a feeling about this. . .that it was scripture itself, and I got about half way through it and then I started feeling like I'd probably understand the beginning better if I could see it again now that I've seen this part. I'm betting that different parts of the crowd understood it differently, and it would be really nice now for me to go back and watch it again and again so that I could learn more and more from it cause I really think that there was a lot more in there than I saw the first time, and I could feel that."

5. "I felt at the beginning that the individuals who were dancing were fledglings. I felt like they were just bursting forth, and then at the end, they had achieved some kind of maturity, but at the same time, I think that they still had some of that innocence in them."

6. "I felt like when the Lord of the vineyard was grasping for his children to stay, it was always them who released eventually. They pulled away. He held onto them as long as he could, but it was always them who rejected him in the end. It reminds me of the phrase when the Savior comes to the Nephites [as recorded in the

Book of Mormon], he says, 'How often I would gather you, but you would not,' or something to that effect. He said that over and over, 'but ye would not. . .it was up to you, but you rejected me.'"

7. "First of all, I enjoyed the narrators, they added quite a bit to it. I enjoyed when they sang in three different languages. It show how ecumenical the church, or the allegory is, and how the servants do go throughout the world, and also I thought the music showed the timelessness. You chose some not just from modern times, but from different periods and I think that shows that the allegory is correct for Zenos' time as well as for our time period. I think that was excellently portrayed."

8. "I loved your cutting. I thought it was an act of genius to get the essence of the allegory in the very few words that were used. Of course you accentuated the love of the Lord, so thought your judgement of what you selected was really remarkable. I loved the variety also. I am only an amateur spectator of modern dance, but I did not see any trite or standard movements. I thought that all of the movements really fit the script and the mood, but I did not

detect the usual, and I felt like the music selection was really quite stunning because, had you picked things that were familiar, it would have destroyed it because we would be thinking of the familiar devotional things, but you brought some very challenging music. I thought that the [Lloyd Webber] was liltingly wonderful and challenging. . .into the future."

9. "I just wanted to comment on your choreography, that it was not trite. I believe the section on the atonement was one of the most beautiful things that I have ever seen and it was nothing overdone. It was just spontaneous and inevitable the way you choreographed it. That was the high point of all of it for me."

10. "I just have a question for you, I noticed that a lot of your dancers really grasped the special content of the allegory and they really portrayed that well in their performance. They had a deep rooted spirituality in their expression, and I know that in some of the pieces that I've been in that have been of a spiritual nature, we've had a lot of preparation for that. What kind of preparation did you give to them that they could portray that so well?"

Question and Response

"After watching "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard," what is the basic theme you derived from the allegory?"

1. "The longsuffering of God."

2. "The Atonement."

3. "The Plan of Salvation on an individual and entire world basis."

4. "The history of God's chosen people."

5. "The love of God in action."

6. "True joy."

"What understanding of this scripture can the audience gain from this dance as opposed to a strictly musical or theatrical production of the same allegory?"

1. "One of the things that I got from this that I did not get from the scripture or musical [version], is the unity of God and Christ. They were in there moving with their children, rather than apart. They were always trying to shape them, and I really got a sense of the unity to us and God."

2. "I think something that was really apparent to me was God's rejoicing when his children were repentant and come to Him, and that was most apparent through the actions and facial features things that you don't get, things that words can't express. We do not have a perfect language and we can't understand God's language at this time, but those body movements express so many things that words cannot."

3. "A play could not express things like the leaves withering and the branches, and the dying and the uprooting. . .those are the things that you could not find in a musical that you can express in dance."

"What are the future prospects of liturgical dance?"

1. I think it is a mission tool just as anything else. In Japan, they had the fabulous seven, they'd go out and sing. I don't see any problem in portraying the Book of Mormon in dance. I think it is a wonderful idea because it communicates on various levels, whatever your age or spiritual development.

2. "I think that for me, dance in its truest and purest form is really a wonderful form of praise and thanksgiving to God, and I can't think of a better way to do that than portraying His word and His scriptures and what He has asked us to do."

3. "I just want to say statistically, as the church grows larger, then there is a higher numerical quotient of people in each of the arts who have capability. So dance would become more visible because there are more Latter-day Saints trained in dance and confident to spread the gospel through that means. As the church grows larger, sometimes we run into a problem with languages and communicating with people. Dance knows that language and it is

something that touches everyone. It is something that can show people and though whatever their means of communicating, they can understand, and just as a parable is used in written and spoken language to illustrate a point, dance can be used to illustrate a point. I have heard of some people who think that it's irreverent but I don't get their thinking in that, because it is no more irreverent than using a parable. It's just another form of a parable, only in movement."

4. "It is just the tip of the iceberg, hopefully, because there is so much puritanism left in our church left over from the old Protestant religions, that we have been sidetracked severely out of the realm of dance as a form of worship. Often when I sit in church, I hear the hymns and I see an entire dance concert in a hymn, and I am dying to put it on video. I think that you are touching just the beginning of the flowering of dance in the church for worship, and eventually we will, we will have dance in the Sacrament Meeting as a form of worship. David danced before the Lord, and some people say he danced naked before the Lord to be able to be in total

communication with the Lord and so I see no reason that we cannot have this. We have old, worn out rules of what can happen in Sacrament Meeting. They are enlarging and I am glad to see them enlarging and some day we will have choirs of trumpets and lots of dancers."

5. "One of the things that the piece inspired to me, [about] the parable, is the issue of choice. The issue of personal responsibility, something that is done moment by moment, not just in the peak moments in our life. We turn away from the Lord every moment, or every minute of our lives, or we turn toward him. So, the distance of the trees far away is almost allegorical in and of itself, of the distance that we put between us and him. I also have a question. When did you finish choreographing?"

"We finished choreographing this week. But, because of different considerations, we met here for rehearsal today to re-choreograph different parts of different sections."

(5.) "I have to congratulate your cast they kept up with it. The preparation that you gave them spiritually inspired them to work for the piece and for you in a very successful way, given the fact that the piece still needed to be worked through a little more. And I just wanted to add to Carma, when we start dancing the hymns, then the hymns will really be heard in heaven."

6. "Being a singer, I have to say that I do think that once we raise our voices with our bodies it becomes a praise. But, without the two combined it won't work, because our body, the language and words are imperfect because haven't reached God's perfection yet, and the one thing that we have that is like His is our body, and if we worship and give that to him, then that is the biggest praise that we can give to him because we are created in his image."

7. I think sometimes when we use the arts to express our feelings, when it comes to spirituality about the church I think that sometimes it becomes distorted and almost garish. But I did not see that tonight, I was impressed by the spirituality of that. I did not feel that it was overdone it was tasteful and you gave to the

audience the feeling of what was in the scripture without offending anyone."

8. "I do agree that dance is spiritual in praise, but just as through the history of the Bible, dance was used as praise but it has also led to misrepresentation of the scriptures, and of the word, and I am for it because my wife is a dancer and I am a theater major, but I would caution of great care because it is such a matter of personal opinion because we could vary it from what we need to be portraying and perceiving. I would say thorough spiritual preparation, and as you started, more of a spiritual symposium before the production, that gave a guideline so that somebody coming, not knowing would have a least something to base it [the concert] on so I thought that the symposium was a good start to give that guideline. I felt that the length was fine, but, being an artist, I would have done it separately but because of the time I can see why you did that."

9. "I just wanted to say what will free us in free religious art throughout all genres, is departure from dichotomies; moving away from strictly traditional representation. We have red--"evil,"

"negative," "destructive," and we have good--"light" and I see it is hard to work against that. We are taught through these dichotomies there is "good" and there is "bad" and don't get mixed up in between. But, I think in order to progress artistically that first of all these symbolic discrepancies are not necessarily so discrepant, that they often converge and "red" and "passion" is often something that will lead us closer to God."

10. "I just know that as we teach languages or other concepts in literature, we like to incorporate all of the senses that we can. For example, if we were going to teach a missionary, for example to say "hello" in a foreign language, we would probably write it upon the board. We would probably pronounce it for him a couple of times, show him how the letters fit together and we would even incorporate some of the other aspects into it. We have them wave their hands and say "salut" in french. And I really think that once we incorporate all of those senses in to learning, especially into such a scene like this, in such a relationship to the scriptures, then we really come to know what the true essence of the themes behind the words are, and it becomes engrained into our memory and this is

seen in all aspects of art and literature. Why do we baptize the way we do? Well the physicalness of the water actually has some kind of effect upon a person. It makes them feel clean, or the "laying on hands." I do not know, but the human touch, when my father lays his hand upon my head, I really feel a genuine strength come to me, and it really calms me down because no one always has their hands on my head. When that newness is felt, and this is seen in the temple, and I really think that in dance, which is a conglomeration between a temporal and spiritual plane, expressing spiritual things through a temporal body, you have that connection and you are able to implant more of those spiritual themes that are behind the words into your spirit. It was really difficult on the part of working with this whole thing. Laurie had a composer in Canada. When the composer could not finish his part of the music, she asked me to write some original music, after she had already choreographed the dance. I have to say that it was definitely a lot of the work of the Lord that Laurie choreographed it the way that she did, because it gave it a definite sequencing.

Note: These comments are directly transcribed from the audio-recording of the discussion held on the concert night following the

dance performance. There exist additional comments that are not included in this transcription because they were not audio-recorded. These unrecorded ideas were shared informally following the actual discussion, either during the reception or otherwise.

Choreography and Production of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard"

Laurie Behunin

Department of Dance

M. A. Degree, August 1993

ABSTRACT

The purpose of choreographing "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" was to artistically express a religious allegory in order to praise God as well as to bring the audience, dancers, and choreographer to a new understanding of the passage from which it was derived. The 39-minute dance was presented April 10, 1993 as a dance fireside. Following the performance, an informal discussion was held to give the audience an opportunity to respond to the dance. These comments were considered and recorded as part of the evaluation of this thesis. Both the thesis and video of "Jacob Five: A Journey into the Olive Vineyard" are available through the Brigham Young University Department of Dance.

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