

Notes on the Enchaînements*:

Adage Enchaînement and Grand Allegro Enchaînement

The two enchaînements included in this folder are examples of class work arranged and taught by Betty Oliphant, founder and former artistic director of the National Ballet School of Canada. Now retired, Miss “O”, as she is affectionately called, is internationally renowned for producing many outstanding dancers who have gone on to become performers, choreographers, directors and teachers. These include American Ballet Theater’s Martine Van Hamel and the National Ballet of Canada’s James Kudelka.

Oliphant has a strong background in the Cecchetti method, although she has extended that approach to reflect her personal aesthetic of economy, precision and clarity. Her classes are known for developing students’ technical strength and artistry through their meticulous build-up and balanced construction. From 1972-1993, during the latter part of her sixty-year teaching career, she kept precise records of classes in her own cryptic shorthand.

To preserve and share Oliphant’s valuable teaching legacy her notes are being compiled, edited and presented for publication by Nadia Potts, one of her students who went on to become a principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada (1966-86). Since 1989, Potts has headed the Dance Program at Ryerson University in Toronto.

In addition to documenting a series of Oliphant’s classes through word descriptions, anecdotes and quotations, Potts plans to illustrate key positions with DanceForms. She has generously agreed to share the two enchaînements included in DictionaryI folder as examples of Oliphant’s unique teaching methodology. With Pott’s input and feedback from Betty Oliphant herself, Rhonda Ryman has refined basic ballet positions to reflect Oliphant’s aesthetic (see Ballet PalettesI folder) and used these to produce the *Adage Enchaînement* and *Grand Allegro Enchaînement* animations, works-in-progress that will be part of the larger collection.

*These notes are based on the abstract of a paper entitled “Continuing and Sharing The Legacy of Betty Oliphant” by Nadia Potts, presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of CORPS de Ballet International, Inc., New York, June 25, 2003.