

“‘And No Birds Sang:’ the life of choreographer and dancer Katherine Litz”¹

By Jason Andrew and Julia K. Gleich

Katherine Litz, an important figure in mid-century American Modern Dance, was most known for her humorous and sometimes ironic solos. Like so many artists who slip into obscurity, Katherine Litz remains a footnote in the biographies of others: as a dancer for Doris Humphrey and Agnes de Mille to name a few. This article, first presented at the Black Mountain College Conference in 2018, presents not only a succinct chronology of the legendary choreographer’s dances but also argues for her significant placement in the history of modern dance. Litz’s presence and influence is ripe for rediscovery.

First recruited to teach at Black Mountain College in the early 1950s by American artist-dancer Elizabeth Jennerjahn at the suggestion of Merce Cunningham, Litz is credited for her exceptional physical and creative beauty, and described as “muse to poets and painters at Black Mountain College.”² She last performed three weeks before her death in 1978, leaving this world requesting no funeral, no memorial service, no celebration of her life, leaving behind no family to mourn—as if no birds sang. Her body was cremated and buried in Denver.

Katherine Maude Litz was born in Denver on July 26, 1912. She had her first dancing lessons in the teen-age classes of Martin Wilcox who taught both ballet and modern techniques. When she finished high school she enrolled in the Perry-Mansfield School of the Theatre at Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where most leading moderns have taught at one time or another. At the end of a year’s tour with a Perry-Mansfield troupe she reached New York City.

¹ “And No Birds Sang” was the title of one of Litz’s solo dances to Alexander Scriabin (1871-1915), first performed in 1952.

² Harris, Mary Emma. *The Arts at Black Mountain College*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987, 214.



Katherine Litz by Barbara Morgan. © Barbara Morgan, courtesy The Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.

“I remember seeing pictures of Doris [Humphrey] and Charles [Weidman], Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, and [Harald] Kreutzberg in copies of *Dance Magazine* my mother would bring home,” Litz once told an interviewer. “And I saw pictures of ballet dancers, and of specialists in all sorts of dance styles. But I never associated what I dreamed of doing with them, I never saw myself in the image of some other dancer.”³

After watching Martha Graham, Humphrey, and Weidman perform she selected Humphrey-Weidman as her training school. “I was green out of Denver,” Litz recalls, “I saw Charles [Weidman] perform and because I felt that modern dance had a kind of strength, perhaps a masculine quality, compared to ballet—I chose to study with him. He invited me to the Humphrey-Weidman studio to be an understudy.”⁴ Between 1936 and

³ Litz in interview with Olga Maynard. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

⁴ Litz, op. cit., 2.

1943 Litz was a regular member of the company. She recalled the first day she arrived at the studio:

The studio was high up, on the 5th floor, the walls were white-washed brick and there was an enormous skylight, which let in a beautiful soft light. I thought I was in Heaven; that is, the nearest thing to Heaven should there be one. In those days, Weidman and Humphrey and Graham were Gods of Dance. We went to the studio every day, at the exact time we were told to arrive, and we waited, for what we should discover that day. We went with faith and trust, and they were deserved emotions, but for a young dancer it was also an awestruck experience. I was terribly shy, and I could not even find the courage to go into a corner by myself and try a stretch or two. I had great respect for authority, and an awe for greatness. Doris came into the room one day, to look at Charles' work, and she said: 'I want that little new one, the one with the blonde hair.' She asked me to come to her rehearsals and she gave me my first important role, the young girl in "With My Red Fires." I played opposite Charles; probably the most thrilling event of my professional career.⁵

Dance critic John Martin reviewed the performance in *The New York Times* declaring:

Doris Humphrey's "With My Red Fires" is one of the great dance works of our time. If there has ever been any doubt about it, the revival which is now current at the Studio Theatre of Miss Humphrey and Charles Weidman at 108 West Sixteenth Street should settle the point for all time.⁶

Martin singled out Litz in the performance: "As the daughter, the lovely Katherine Litz is the very epitome of young love, fresh, genuine and heart wringing." Martin went on to describe Humphrey's movement:

Its physical technique is tremendous and constantly inventive, using every part of the body freely and creatively, locomotion is by no means a prime concern, but takes its place among a dozen other aspects of movement. Costuming is highly contributory and not merely decorative. There is a powerful force of comment in the fantastic norm of movement which is established; much of it is grotesque, some of it is downright hilarious, but there is a fine, strong, positive lyrical affirmation in it in spite of everything.⁷

⁵ Litz, op. cit., 2.

⁶ Martin, John. "Own Work Danced By Doris Humphrey," *The New York Times*, April 26, 1942, 41.

⁷ Martin, op. cit., 41.

Litz never really got to know Doris Humphrey well. “In those years she was awesome, too far above me,” Litz said.

Much later in our lives we were a great deal closer, but never truly very close. She was a remarkable woman, a very great dancer and choreographer, but for me there was the need to find out, and to know, what was my dance. I had to discover that for myself, not shaped by a particular technique.⁸

Litz always seemed to know that there was a “personal dance.” “I saw modern dance long before I knew it existed; I saw it as a child in Denver,” she explained. “I was not entirely ignorant of dance techniques [...] during the first national tour of the Humphrey-Weidman Company. I was still resisting the impulse to improvise or make visible my dream of a ‘new dance.’”

When a friend arrived from Denver and needed a dance for auditions, Litz choreographed a duet to Rachmaninoff because she could play it on the piano. The “nice man” that held the audition told her there was a job in a show in Chicago and that she could have it because she fit into the costume. “I refused, because at that point wild horses could not have dragged me away from my modern dance classes in New York.”⁹

During an absence of several years from Humphrey-Weidman, Litz joined Jack Cole’s small ensemble called Ballet In Time.¹⁰ Cole would later earn the title “Father of Theatrical Jazz Dance” for his innovative technique and work in musicals. “We worked in vaudeville and night clubs [including the Rainbow Room],” Litz remembered, “and I stayed with the troupe for the better part of that year.”¹¹ She also danced in Eleanor King’s “Icaro,” based on a poem by Lauro de Bosis and featuring Jack Cole as Icaro. During this time she was a partner to José Limon in outside programs, and appeared with Charles Weidman in the “Flickers” at the Rainbow Room. In 1940-41 she toured with Agnes de Mille joining Joseph Anthony, the well-known actor/director, and Louis Horst. It was shortly after this that de Mille choreographed “Oklahoma!” and de Mille invited Litz to join the National Tour of “Oklahoma!”

⁸ Litz in interview with Olga Maynard. Litz Papers, NYPL, 3.

⁹ Litz, op. cit., 6-7.

¹⁰ According to Martin Gottfried, Cole “won a place in choreographic history for developing the basic vocabulary of jazz dancing—the kind of dancing done in nightclubs and Broadway musicals.” Gottfried, Martin. *Nobody’s Fool*. Simon and Schuster, 2002, p. 167. One of Cole’s most memorable choreographic highlights is “Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend” for Marilyn Monroe in the film musical *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. The number has been famously reinterpreted by Madonna for her music video of “Material Girl.”

¹¹ Litz in interview with Olga Maynard. Litz Papers, NYPL, 7.

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NEW YORK NY SEP 13 1943

MISS KATHARINE LITZ,
1508 N. STATE ST., CHGO.

CAN OFFER YOU CHARMING PART FOR SIXTY FEEL CONFIDENT CAN
ARRANGE RAISE LATER WITH DIRECTING RESPONSIBILITY AS IT IS MY
RIGHT TO CHOOSE MY REPRESENTATIVE BUT DONT MAKE ISSUE OF
THIS NOW THERE IS A PERSONAL SITUATION WITH WHYTE COME IMMEDIATELY
WIRE DECISION JERRY WHYTE ST. JAMES THEATRE MY HOUSE AWAITS
YOU LOVE

AGNES

524A

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

PHOTO: Telegram from Agnes de Mille to Katherine Litz, September 13, 1943. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Litz recalled that during the rehearsals for "Oklahoma!" that "I had already been singled out as particular--being the only barefoot, unbridled dancer."

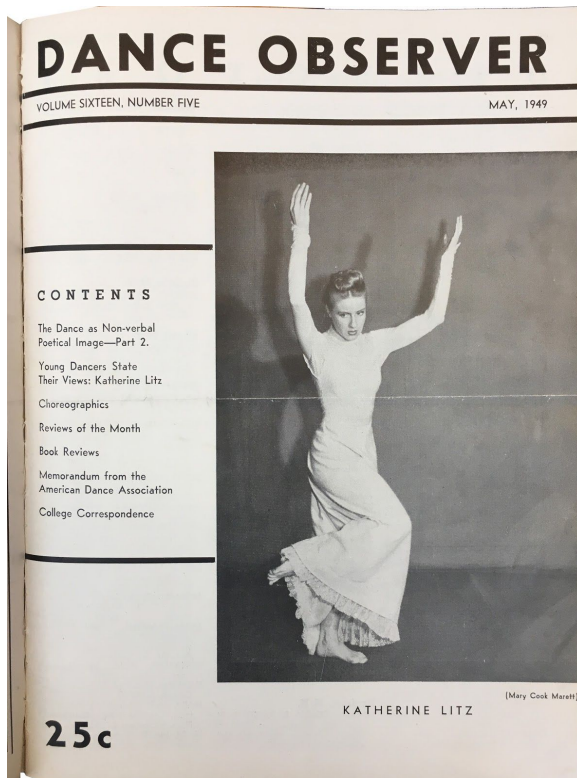
Gemze de Lappe, who has since become a close friend, confided to me much later that I had shocked the other girls because I came to rehearsals with no bra and wearing a white jersey top. One male singer asked me why I didn't rehearse in shoes. I explained that my father was a hermit, that I had been brought up in the Colorado mountains and had never worn shoes until I was brought down to Denver at the age of 14.¹²

During the two-year run of the show in Chicago, Litz found time to study with Sybil Shearer, who had also taken leave from the Humphrey-Weidman Company to pursue her own work. Shearer and Litz undertook to "work out some ideas [...] which had to do with short studies, solos and duets." Back in New York, Litz made her choreographic debut in a 1944 Shearer-Litz program at the 92nd Street Young Men's and

¹² Litz, op. cit., 13-14.

Young Women's Hebrew Association (92nd St Y).

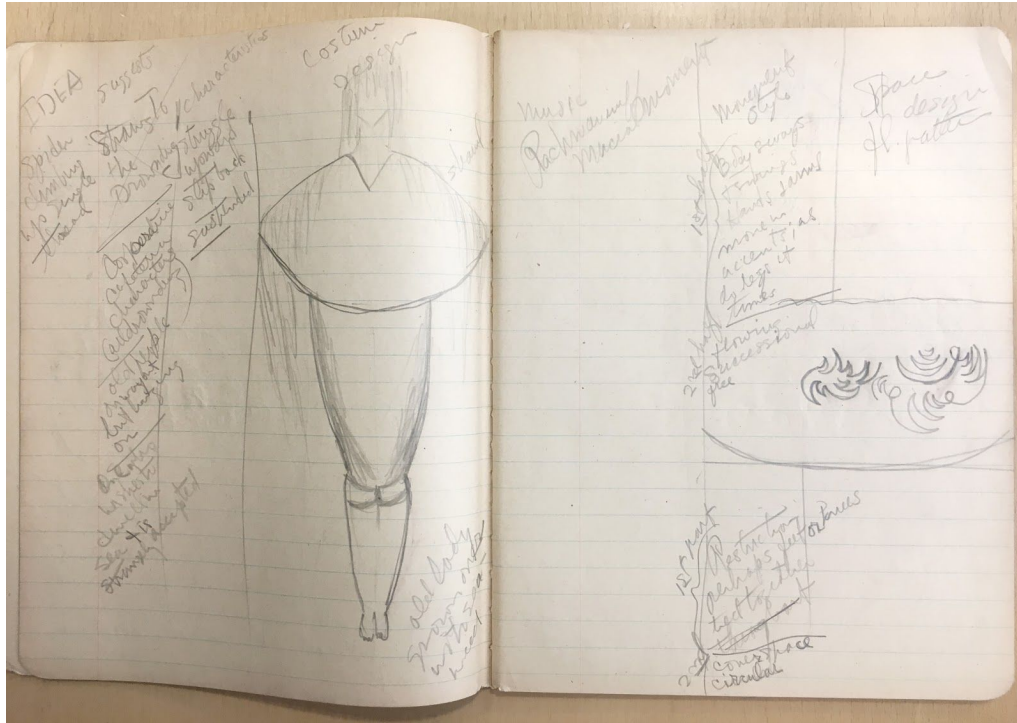
We isolated as many qualities of movement as we could think of. We each made our own studies of one quality. It was in working out a duet of sharp movement, based on a contrapuntal idea, that I became aware of a concrete method of approaching composition.



Dance Observer Covers featuring Litz, May 1949 and Sybil Shearer, June-July 1949. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.



**Katherine Litz by Helen Balour Morrison. Photo by Helen Balfour Morrison, 1943
(c) 2019 Morrison-Shearer Foundation.**



Dance Plans: Page from notebook late 40s. Idea / Suggests / Characteristics / Costume Design / Music / Movement Style / Space Design & Pattern. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

In 1945 Litz returned to New York from Chicago to dance in de Mille's "Carousel" and to study with Yuri Bilstin. Bilstin's theatrical analysis of dance had been lauded by Shearer. She felt that the choreographer could not always wait for an "inspiration," and should have some practical or "scientific" way of tapping the movement potential of the body. Bilstin's suggestion to substitute creative dance movement for traditional gestures in Dalcroze exercises¹³ extended the dancer's movement vocabulary immensely. Litz became a devoted technician of this process.

Litz's career blossoming, in 1947 she married the artist and set designer Charles Oscar. In 1949 she presented work during the New York City Dance Theatre Series at the 92nd St Y. The performance attracted considerable attention, and her first full-length concert in April 1950 further reinforced her artistic status. "Twilight of a Flower" (Ravel), her finest 1950 premiere, was a Chaplinesque solo so universal in its concept of decadence that it could be seen as a "broken-down Spanish dancer," a female derelict with a hangover, or merely "reluctant resignation to the ravages of old age."¹⁴

¹³ Dalcroze Eurhythmics teaches concepts of rhythm, structure, and musical expression using movement, and is the concept for which Dalcroze is best known. It focuses on allowing the student to gain physical awareness and experience of music through training that takes place through all of the senses, particularly kinesthetic.

¹⁴ N. K. "Katherine Litz and Group," *Dance Observer*, June-July 1950, 85.



Advertisement in the May 1950 issue of *Dance Observer* for Litz teaching “A Creative Approach to Dance” at Black Mountain College, Arts Session, July 6-August 20. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Litz at Black Mountain College

In the summer of 1950, Litz began a three-year association with Black Mountain College. She was invited to join the Summer Art Institutes by Elizabeth (Betty) Jennerjahn at the suggestion of Merce Cunningham.

We get an idea of what she had planned as on the verso of the BMC Community List she paired up students that included June Rice, Elizabeth Jennerjahn, Tim LaFarge, Nick Cernovich, Florence West, Susie Goodman, Estelle Levi, M.C. Richards and Mark and Ruth Halpern. Then she made notes on activities that included “Portraits of departure: Opposition in line, Invert, Qualities of movement, Directional, Space, Design, Rhythm.”¹⁵

That summer featured performances that included three one-act plays directed by Robert Klein. Litz recalled that he treated it like summer stock and was constantly in

¹⁵ Black Mountain College, Community List, Summer Session, 1950. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

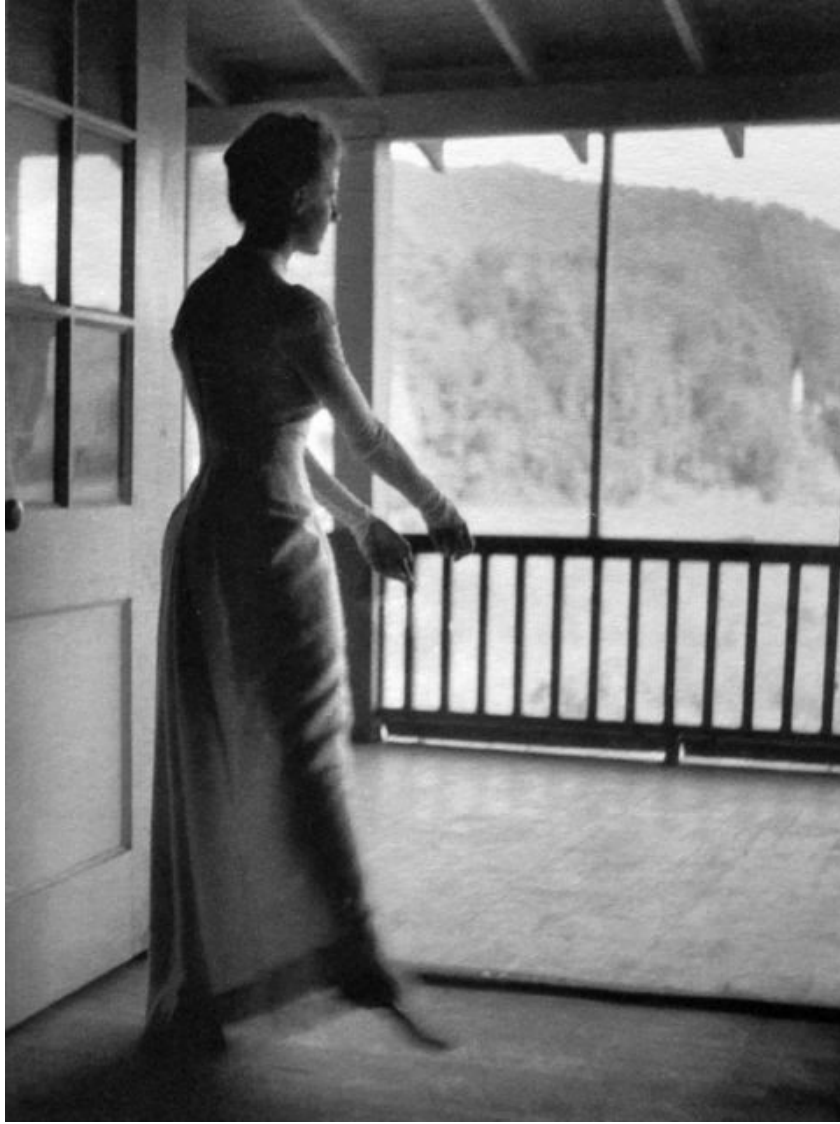
conflict with the dancers. Vollmer Hetherington organized a series of six concerts of contemporary quartet music. With the Light-Sound-Movement Workshop originated by Betty and Peter Jennerjahn, Litz's dance class performed "The Story of Piroo," based on a story by Fielding Dawson. Litz also gave a concert of her own. The Summer Session also sponsored a film series that included a group of Chaplin films, whom Litz admired greatly.

At the end of the summer of 1950, Litz performed in the American Dance Festival at Connecticut College sharing a program with José Limón and Merce Cunningham. On August 12, Litz danced three solos: "Blood of the Lamb," "Twilight of a Flower," and "Fire in the Snow." The next day she performed on a program with Dudley-Maslow-Hales Company and Merce Cunningham. She danced "Blood of the Lamb," "Twilight of a Flower," and "Daughter of Virtue," while Cunningham performed his unaccompanied solo piece "Before Dawn" and Limón premiered "The Exiles."¹⁶

Litz returned to the 92nd St Y in November 1950, to present a concert with Merce Cunningham and Jean Erdman. She premiered the group work, "Bound by House and Kin" (music from Elizabethan Suite).¹⁷

¹⁶ N.K. "Reviews of the Summer: American Dance Festival," *Dance Observer*. Aug-Sept 1950, 102.

¹⁷ Horst, Louis. "Merce Cunningham, Jean Erdman, Katherine Litz." *Dance Observer*. Jan 1951, 6.



Katherine Litz at Black Mountain College by Hazel Larsen Archer, ca. 1951. © Estate of Hazel Larsen Archer courtesy of Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center.

BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE ----- TREASURER

Katherine Litz

Salary Calculations for 1951-52 are:

Base Salary	\$2000.00
Dependency	0
Experience	80.00
Gross Total Salary:	\$2080.00
Deductions to College:	
Food	\$400.00
Rent	400.00
Net Total:	\$1280.00
Monthly Salary:	\$106.67
Accruals Withheld:	
Income Tax	0.00
FICA Tax	\$1.60
Hosp. Ins.	0.00
	1.60
	\$105.07
Contingent Salary:	52.53
Monthly Check:	\$52.54

The Board has decided to charge a flat rate of \$400.00 for rent and electricity for each living unit for the year.

Black Mountain College – Treasurer / Katherine Litz Salary Calculations for 1951-52: \$52.54 / month. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Black Mountain College 1951

Before she returned to BMC in August for the 1951 Summer Session, Litz presented solo work at Juilliard School of Music in May. She arrived at BMC as the poet Charles Olson, who had taught one weekend a month for the 1948-49 year, returned from the Yucatan to teach for the 1951-52 academic year. He remained the dominant figure until the college's closing.

1951 became another summer of forged friendships and collaborations. "The Glyph," Katherine Litz's most remembered solo, premiered at BMC on August 24, 1951, and featured artistic collaborations with artist Ben Shahn, poet Charles Olson and composer Lou Harrison. It all began when Olson, just back from studying Mayan glyphs in Yucatan, wrote a poem "A Glyph for Ben Shahn." Shahn reciprocated, applying the glyph idea of double image in a portrait in ink and watercolor on paper depicting Olson as a human glyph. An enlargement of the work (likely done by Litz's husband Charles Oscar) then became the décor for a dance by Litz set to music by Lou Harrison.

The choreography itself grew out of an exploration of various movement possibilities with and inside three yards of jersey tubing (which was likely designed by Johanna Jalowetz). The dance was punctuated by intermittent retreats behind the Ben Shahn screen, and each duel between the "frightened gargoyle" and her garment was more hilarious than the last. As Doris Hering described it in a later performance in 1952:

Sometimes it rolled disconsolately about her bosom, sometimes it rose high above her head, sometimes it dragged long and sad and had to be gathered up in her fleet and nervous fingers. Finally she crawled out of it in sheer panic and ran off clutching it to her like a chorus girl clasping her hard-earned mink.¹⁸

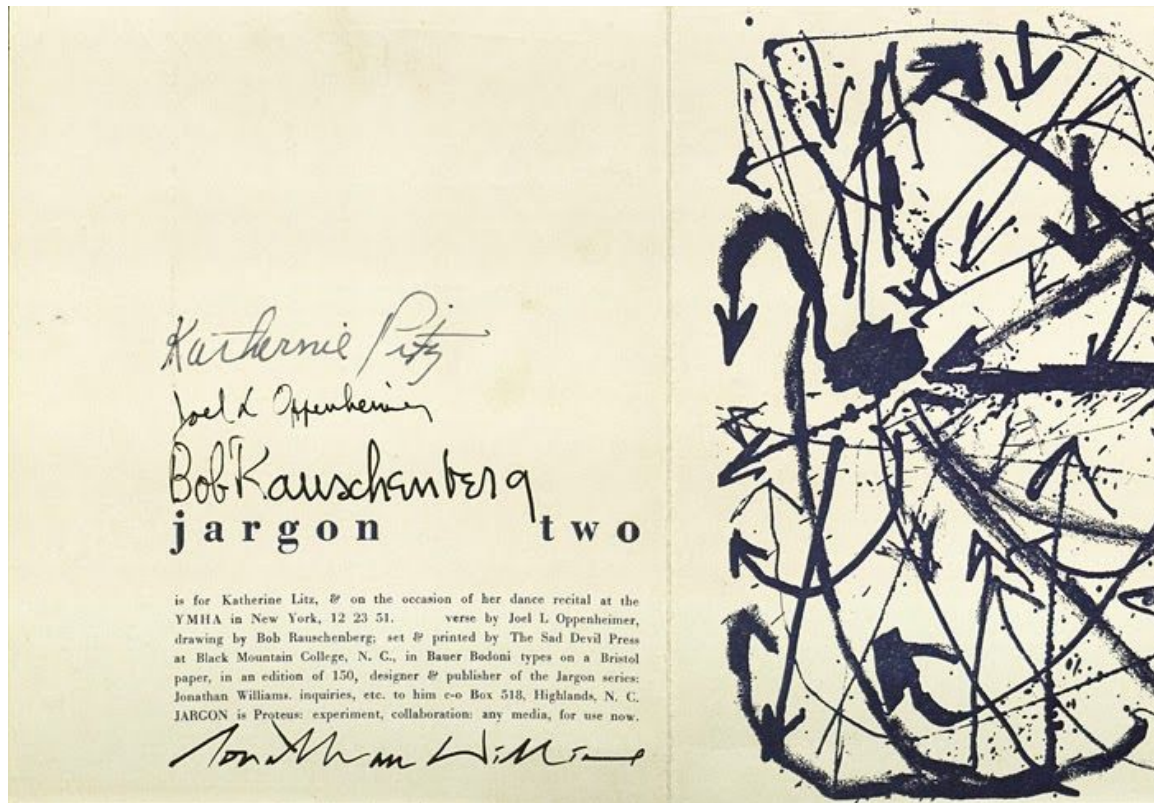
M.C. Richard and Litz also revived the Light-Sound-Movement Workshop that summer. In collaboration with about a dozen students and faculty they improvised short theater pieces, sometimes "limited to a minute or so," and incorporated slides, improvised music, and dance elements.¹⁹

¹⁸ Hering, Doris. *Dance Magazine*, February, 1952, 43.

¹⁹ Diaz, Eva. "The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College." Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014, 79.



Katherine Litz in "The Glyph" featured on the cover of *Dance Observer*, February 1952. Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.



***jargon two: The Dancer.* Katherine Litz Papers, 1901-1979, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.**

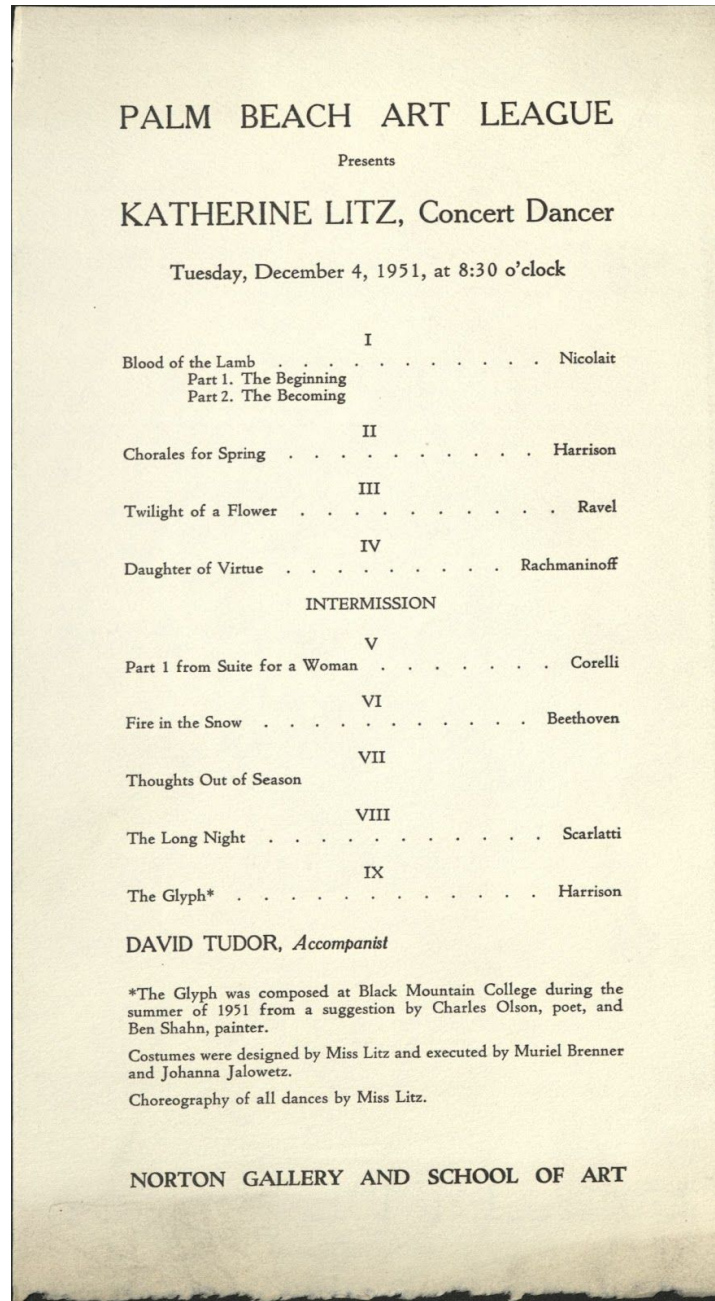
Jonathan Williams published the second in the series of his publication called "Jargon" in 1951. After Williams had enrolled for the fall semester, he issued "jargon two, The Dancer," a broadside with a poem by Joel Oppenheimer and drawing by Robert Rauschenberg to commemorate Katherine Litz's December dance concert at 92nd St Y.²⁰

After the Summer Session of 1951, Katherine remained at BMC. At the end of Summer 1951, M. C. Richards, who had decided also to remain at Black Mountain, drove to the West Coast with the pianist David Tudor and two students. After her return in the Fall, she drove Katherine Litz, who was continuing to teach dance, and Tudor, her accompanist, on a concert tour of the south.²¹ The tour stopped at University of Georgia, Athens; Georgia State College for Women, Milledgeville; the Norton Gallery in West Palm Beach; and the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. The tour premiered two works: "Thoughts Out of Season" (Morton Feldman) and "The Long Night" (Scarlatti).²²

²⁰ Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center Archives.

²¹ Harris, Mary Emma. *The Arts at Black Mountain College*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987, 168-172

²² Original performance program from Palm Beach Art League and Norton Gallery and School of Art, archived at Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.



Program from the Palm Beach Art League. Presenting Katherine Litz on December 4, 1951. David Tudor accompanist.²³ Courtesy The Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.

²³ Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.

“Katy was a genius, so inventive, so funny,” recalled David Tudor.

She did a dance called “The Glyph” (Lou Harrison wrote the music). And her total inspiration was a piece of clothing someone had made for or given to her, saying she could use it however she wanted. And all it was, was a jersey tube. And Katy became fascinated by this, this thing, because there was nothing to do with it. So she invented ways to use it. That’s how the piece came about [...] And it was hilarious, hilarious. Katy was delight. I would have done anything for her. You know, she caused me to play a piece that I hated, the First Sonata of Charles Ives, which I did not like at all. But she was determined to do a ballet about Dracula [with the Charles Ives as score]. I could see it theatrically because her collaborator was Charles Weidman, who was a freak if ever there was! He was the weirdest choice, and the combination of those two was just unbelievable. “Fire in the Snow” was Katy’s swan song, one of her most beautiful dances. It’s such a shame that the music [Beethoven’s “Für Elise”] was so banal.²⁴

Dancer/choreographer Ella Rosewood, through her Seminal Solos Project, has recreated and performed “The Glyph,” as recently as 2018. She describes the reconstruction:

Katherine's choreography of “The Gylph” leans towards the theatrical. The movements are focused on manipulating the body tube costume to create comic effects. The prepared piano score including sounds of a gong, pitchfork, and bells, to name a few, surprisingly or tragically line up or counterpoint with the movement--this is where some of the comedy comes in. Although classical ballet or modern technique is needed to execute many of the movements like balances and turns, the bulk of the piece relies on the dancer's strength in sensing timing before doing the next movement, and personality to carry out the entire piece with some type of attitude towards the tube.²⁵

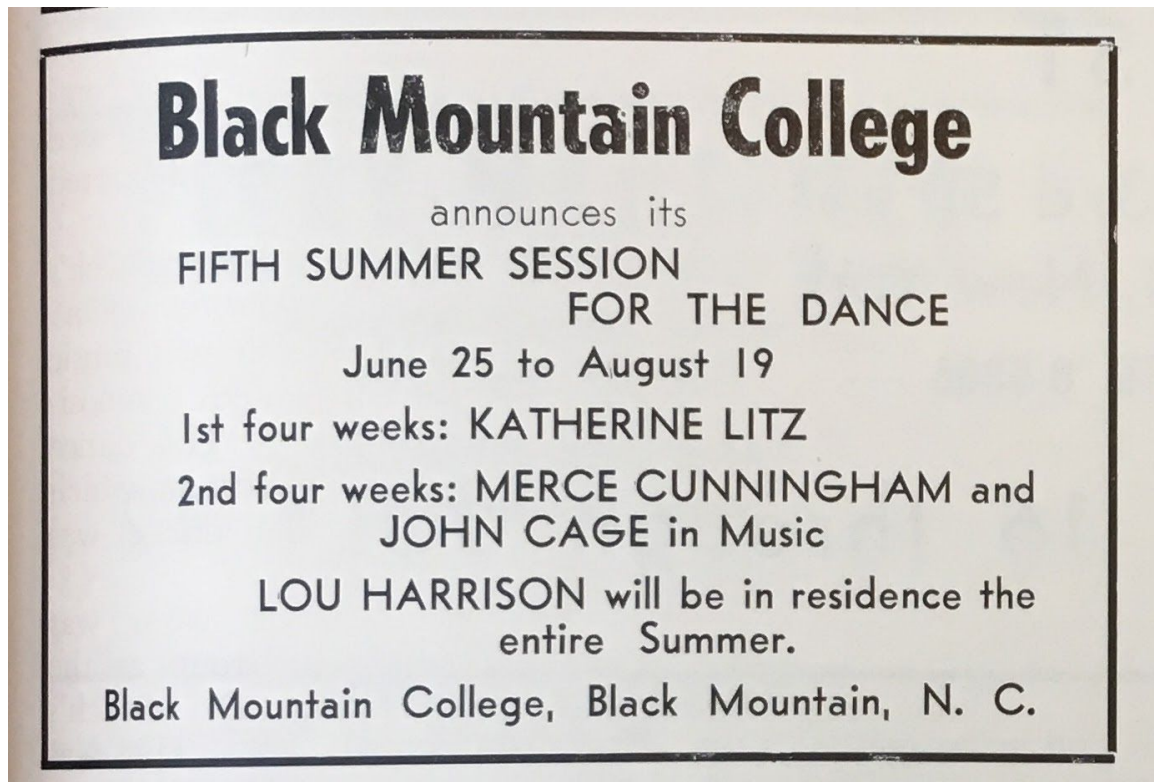
Litz' "The Glyph" was also performed by dancer Polly Motley as part of the 2015 exhibition on Black Mountain College "Look Before You Leap" at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

From June 13-26, 1952, she participated in the Summer Arts Festival, Louisiana State University at the invitation of Blanche Duffy, Dance Director. Then she returned to BMC for the 1952 Summer Session during which she worked to complete yet another remarkable solo titled: "And No Birds Sang" (to a composition by the Russian composer

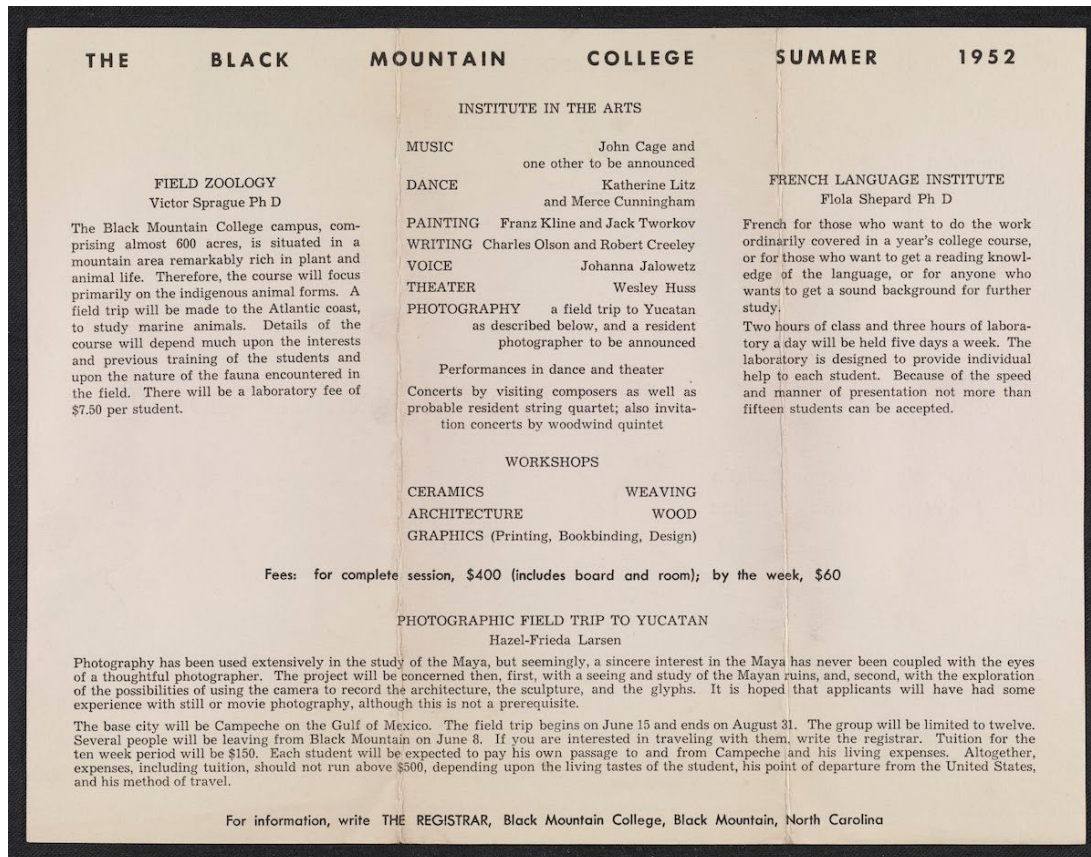
²⁴ Tudor, David interviewed by John Holzaepfel. “From Reminiscences of a Twentieth-Century Pianist: An Interview with David Tudor.” In Oxford University Press’ *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 78. No. 3 (Autumn 1994), 632.

²⁵ Rosewood, Ella. Personal email correspondence with the authors, January 3, 2020.

Alexander Scriabin). And Litz was present for what has become the theatrical highlight in the history of BMC: Cage and Co: "Theater Piece #1."



Advertisement for Black Mountain College Summer Session in *Dance Observer* (June-July 1952). Courtesy The Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.



Brochure for Summer Session at Black Mountain College. Jack Tworkov papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institute.

In August 1952, Ted Shawn invited her to take part in one of the summer programs at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. In May 1953, she presented a solo concert with new premieres: "Garden of Doubts" (Bartók), "The Dancing School," "The Story of Love from Fear to Flight" (Vivaldi), and "Super-Duper Jet Girl" (Meytuss [sic] [Yuliy Meitus] and Mosolov).

To support herself and her work, Litz began offering classes in dance technique and acting for dancers from her home/studio in Brooklyn Heights, New York.

Offbeat humor became Litz's trademark. In addition to her remarkable solos, she took on Bram Stoker's Gothic tale "Dracula" in 1959, featuring Charles Weidman and Viola Farber. She was "fond of paradox and would allow tragic gestures to become humorous simply by following the trajectory of the gesture to its kinetically logical conclusion."²⁶

Katherine would go on to present again at the American Dance Festival in 1962. She would hold visiting artist and faculty positions at Bennington College, Sarah

²⁶ McDonagh, Don, *The Complete Guide to Modern Dance*. Doubleday Co, 1976, 211.

Lawrence College, Hunter College, University of Illinois (where she set the piece “Continuum” with 18 people) and countless others. In 1965 she became a Guggenheim Fellow and in 1967 she formed the Katherine Litz Dance Company. In 1968, CBS Camera Three presented “Katherine Litz and the Creative Process.”



Katherine Litz. © Jack Mitchell. Courtesy The Dance Collection in The Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts (a collecting area of the Popular Culture Collections) in the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collection, George A. Smathers Libraries.

In 1978, the final year of her life, the Katherine Litz Dance Company performed an evening of dances at the Judson Memorial Church in New York City. During the late '50s and early '60s Litz had appeared in many Judson Poets' Theater productions as a dancer-actress. Her final performance coincided with a residency at Cornell University on November 17. The press release stated that:

Ms. Litz' choreography concerns itself with people, with privacy and detail. Her dances reflect the mind and its myriad processes. [quoting Litz] "I do the little flaws, as in life. In a way, I'm interested in extremes. Often, I like to show that people who take themselves very seriously are ridiculous. But most of all, I make dances about people."

Litz performed alongside the prolific modern dance choreographer Paul Taylor, who, though clearly admiring and affectionate towards Litz, did not see the irony of his comments lauding her quiet determination:

The gang and I are to share a program with Katherine Litz, a dancer of delight whose solos are delicate flights of whimsy, a phantasmagoria dreamed up by an eternal ingenue [...] She never ceases to cheer her audiences, never seems to mind that her work isn't more widely recognized, and never mentions her solitary struggles to continue work that deserves higher acclaim.²⁷

Katherine Litz was loved and respected among a generation of artists that came to define American art and modern dance at mid-century. Teacher/choreographer Aileen Passloff who danced for her in the '50s brings Litz full circle to the experiments of BMC: "Katie knew all the rules and did her best to forget them!"²⁸ It is our hope that this article may bring attention to Litz's under recognized yet historically original and delightful art to an entirely new generation of curious historians.

²⁷ Taylor, Paul. *Private Domain: An Autobiography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987, 138.

²⁸ Passloff, Aileen. Personal interview with the authors, December 5, 2018.