

'Dance and Movement in Education' Course – July 2009 – review by Susie Davies-Splitter

From the 8th to the 12th of July in Sydney at the dance studio at Uni of NSW 15 'Orff' teachers from around Australia participated in the first ANCOS (Aus. National Council of Orff Schulwerk) accredited Orff 'Dance and Movement in Education' course. It was taught by David Spurgeon who has taught in primary schools in the UK and Australia then lectured at Sydney College of Advanced Education in Dance, Drama, Communications and English for 13 years before joining UNSW. He wrote, launched, directed and lectured on the University's B.A. (Dance) B.Ed. double degree for its first 12 years before retiring as a Senior Lecturer in 2006. David has had a lifelong appreciation of music and has always sought to promote good music education within the dance curriculum. He is particularly interested in dance improvisation and ways of encouraging non-dancers to move, dance and create dances.

The course was structured for experienced or keen Orff teachers and lovers of movement who wanted a solid experience in Orff style movement and dance for education. It was not necessary to be a trained dancer to attend the course. Each day was made up of warm ups and simple dance techniques, morning and afternoon composition sessions and concluding with a discussion/notes and films of dances session. Composition topics included : Improvisation, Body Actions, Personal Space, General Space, Effort/Dynamics, Abstraction, Motifs and Phrases, Motifs and Phrases and Visual Design, Dance and Music and Reading a Dance. We learnt about safe dance practices, how to warm up without injury, we played dance and drama games and covered the Laban body activities.