

# GURDJIEFF'S MOVEMENTS

A Body towards An Aim



A Film by  
**Amir Kaufmann**

with  
**Wim van Dullemen**  
**Christiane Macketanz**

This film is an adjunct to the book:

*The Gurdjieff Movements:*

*A Communication of Ancient Wisdom*

by Wim van Dullemen

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## Comments by Wim van Dullemen

### Introduction:

There seemed to be little sense in writing and presenting my book about Movements (*The Gurdjieff Movements: A Communication of Ancient Wisdom*) if the reader would not get a more complete impression than just words could offer. *To offer that possibility became the aim of this film.*

When I started writing the first chapters of this book, I met Amir Kaufmann, a filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist, who wished to make (here in Berlin, where I reside), a new film dedicated to his own experiences with Gurdjieff's ideas, and possibly incorporating Movements. Amir had previously published a book on the existential essence of sounds, *Magical Sounds*. This background enhanced our communications, and our perceptions merged into a mutual approach. The idea of a joint project was born. From day one we were in full agreement, and it was decided that both the book and the film should be linked together.

The resulting 60-minute film, *Gurdjieff's Movements: A Body Towards an Aim*, by Amir (camera, director and editor), was made after three years of direct and continuous work. We both felt that the first priority was the need to register Movements in a historically correct format, but another aim and challenge was to register and capture the work atmosphere.

During our many talks in those years of growing friendship, Amir showed great sensitivity to the inner

processes evoked by Gurdjieff's Movements and music, and concentrated his work especially upon their effects on human awareness. The fact that Amir is also a photographer allowed him to create various still images that were edited into the film to emphasize certain human shifting-states, probably beyond the scope of what a video clip could capture.

Both Amir and myself felt strongly the dilemma of using a video camera in a sensitive "working" space. A camera has the potential to hinder concentration and quality of presence. I can testify that Amir's quiet behavior and his dedication to the project prevented any negative side effect of the video shooting. Although this was a continuous challenge, his efforts were perceived by all of us as helpful.

### **Works In Progress:**

The viewer should be aware that not all the Movements shown in the film are complete and that some are even fragmented. The execution of the Movements can be described with the same words that you see on signs at the side of road works: WORK IN PROGRESS. Nevertheless, we made efforts to present the Movements in the most natural way and the filming, accompanying the rehearsals, were spread over a few months.

### **Titles:**

Although the titles cannot really contribute to the "first impression" that the film hopes to offer, they are listed below in the sequence in which they appear in the film, including a brief explanation. The Roman numerals alongside the titles indicate the period from which the Movement dates (for full

explanation of these periods see Chapter 17, *The Gurdjieff Movements*, by Wim van Dullemen).

**1. The little dance II:** Many completely different Movements share this title. The numbers 3 and 7 have been incorporated ingeniously in 7 positions, alternated with 3 *entremèdes*.

**2. Ho Ya I:** One of the two warrior or sword dances that were demonstrated in Gurdjieff's performances. The deeper meaning is that the Dervish does not fight an opponent of flesh and blood, but an aspect of himself that he deems undesirable. The words "Ho Ya" mean "Lord God." It is likely that the dance was originally performed with a long dagger. One hand, which makes the "pull and throw" movement, tosses it over the shoulder, and catches it again in the air and then throws it briefly forward to get a better grip on the handle.

**3. Title unknown II:** In this Movement, of which the title is unknown to us, a continuous movement is combined with a strict, tempo-marked movement. This is alternated with a complex and dynamic part by two dancers, in which the continuous movement of one of the arms does not change.

**4. Tibetan Exercise II:** Twenty-four Tibetan words are recited during the Movement. The *entremède* is the word "will" in Morse code.

**5. Multiplication 15 II**

**6. Title unknown:** We do not know if this is an exercise given

by one of Gurdjieff's pupils after his death, or a fragment of an authentic Movement.

## 7. # 31,9 III

**8. Om om om II:** This title is linked to the sound *Om* that is spoken in canon, but not in this recording, in which the head movement is also absent. However, the basic elements are present: the cyclic pattern in the arm, typical of Gurdjieff, with an apparently simple hand movement in two different rhythms.

**9. Dervish of 13 January II:** This Movement is commonly performed in a class and in canon, but here two dancers mirror each other. The rhythmic breathing occurs in various Dervish Movements, but it is not characteristic for this Movement.

**10. Domestic recording: Ya Yu II:** Christiane Macketanz practises the basic movements of this complicated Movement and part of one of the *entremèdes*. This Movement is composed of "dash" and "dot," but in this Movement these are in a mathematical pattern and do not represent a word, such as in most Morse Code Movements.

**11. Prayer of 26th June II:** This is the complete and authentic Movement as given by Gurdjieff. However, this only applies to the dancer on the left, the dancer on the right mirrors this version. The "Whirling Dervish" has been added by us, an experiment in contrast. The accompanying music leaves the well-trodden path of usual Movements music, another

experiment. This demanded extreme concentration from the performers.

**12. Enneagram 12 II:** A study of one of the two roles from this Movement. We continued to work on this Movement and the complete version was performed by us during the 2016 Konya International Mystic Music Festival in Konya, Turkey. A deeper investigation of one of the two roles, as represented here, is certainly justified.

I am indebted to Amir Kaufmann for his work and the patience he has shown while I have been writing this book. More information about his work can be found on his website: [www.amir-artfilm.de](http://www.amir-artfilm.de)

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