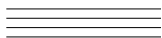


M O D E R N D A N C E
C E R T I F I C A T E



C L I V E J A M E S

My granddaughter has scored, for Modern Dance,
Good marks in all departments, with a nine
For “Use of Space.” Give me another chance
And her certificate might well be mine.
I moved well at her age, and when I grew
I thought of Dance as something I could do.

I never could, of course. I merely flung
Myself about with untrained feet and hair.
No gift at all, except for being young,
And gradually that faded on the air
As I became another crumbling face
Scoring a pittance for his Use of Space.

Now I score zero. But because I’ve seen
Her switch to different corners of the room
Without, it seems, crossing the space between,
Delight reminds me time is a new broom:
It clears the floor our youngsters use to get
The compartmentalized certificate

That we’d have liked to have, but didn’t put
The work into, and so did not deserve,
Although we might have been quite fleet of foot
And God knows that we would have had the nerve:
But we had other things to do and know.
Let her do this. Be glad, and let it go:

For you the Use of Space comes to an end
With your collapse into a spill of dust,
And you are for the wind and waves, my friend,
And all of this is timely, true and just.
The old ones disappear, the young dance on,
Using the space we make by being gone.