

# The Development of the Rolf Movement® Work

## An Interview with Vivian Jaye and Jane Harrington

By Anne F. Hoff, Certified Advanced Rolfer™

*Editor's Note: Vivian Jaye and Jane Harrington are both Rolf Movement Practitioners™ and Rolf Movement faculty. Jane is also a Certified Advanced Rolfer and Rolfing® Instructor, while Vivian was given the title Honorary Rolfer in 1999. Vivian is now retired and living in Monterey, California, while Jane maintains a practice in Albuquerque, New Mexico and frequent travels to teach. The interview was conducted in January 2009 while Jane was spending time with Vivian in Monterey. Vivian and Jane were instrumental in the third phase of the development of Rolf Movement work, and its subsequent place in the curriculum allowing the work to be available in all Rolf trainings. (The first phase of the movement work was represented by Ida Rolf and Judith Aston; the second was represented by Heather Starsong, Megan James, Annie Duggan and Janie French. This was described by Heather Starsong in "Receiving, Learning, Teaching, Becoming..." her contribution to the "In My Practice" column in the March issue of Structural Integration.)*

**Anne Hoff:** Vivian and Jane, when I approached you with the idea of an interview on the history and development of the Rolf Movement work, you had particular reasons for wanting to do the interview together. What are those reasons?

**Jane Harrington:** We were students in the very first movement class at the Rolf Institute of Structural Integration® that Heather Starsong and Megan James taught together beginning in 1979. That class started with a five-day interview/selection, and we became friends at that time. We were roommates through our whole training, and we learned the work together, developed our friendship through the work, and our development of teaching and moving forward started right there.

**AH:** What was the movement work like at that early stage?

**JH:** The movement work in those early days was relatively limited in its scope. It involved movement analysis (in walking and activities); work with what is often called "Ida's Yoga" (her sequencing



Vivian Jaye and Jane Harrington in the late spring of 1991 during a movement certification training.

explorations); and we assisted clients with application to daily activity.

**Vivian Jaye:** Ida's Yoga was the sequences we all know: "arm rotations," "toes up, toes down," and other related material.

**AH:** What was the relationship at that point between the movement work and the structural work?

**JH:** What's interesting is in our first training we spent the mornings in a Rolfing class. So we had the lecture and demonstration for the basic series. Peter Melchior was our instructor and David Hoac was the assistant.

**VJ:** We were actually called "auditors."

**JH:** In the afternoon the movement auditors would meet separately and work with the functional aspect of each session. It was an amazing training.

**AH:** So it was very tied in with the ten-session series?

**VJ:** Yes.

**JH:** Absolutely.

**AH:** At that point in time, if I understand right, people who trained in movement did not also train in the structural work, it was a whole separate category.

**VJ:** That's true.

**JH:** [Before you called for this interview,] we were just sitting here talking and in our memory of those early classes we can only think of one person who was a structural Rolfer who initially trained in movement.

**VJ:** And she was not in the first class.

**AH:** So what kinds of people were coming into those early movement trainings?

**VJ:** There were five or six of us, Jane?

**JH:** I think there were eight of us . . . Vivian's shaking her head . . . We don't know how many people were in our class! There were some people like myself who were retired dancers, a number of people were educators, we had some psychotherapists . . .

**VJ:** We had a couple of massage therapists . . .

**JH:** And so on.

**VJ:** I think one of the things that probably drew [Jane and me] together is that we were both ex-teachers, we were both basically educators.

**JH:** For both of us, our bachelor's degrees were in education.

**AH:** That obviously has had an important role. Now it's "Rolf Movement Practitioners," but in the early days you were called "Rolf Movement Teachers," right?

**JH:** That's true.

**AH:** So the educational aspect was very clearly acknowledged in the title.

**VJ:** It was [also] more emphasized in the hands-on part of our work, the structural work.

**JH:** Part of it too is Ida always talked about this work being an education process.

**AH:** I think that can sometimes get lost in the structural work. Ideally it's there, but it's easier for it to get lost in the structural work.

**VJ:** Absolutely. To a certain degree the movement work was looked at as the educational component. Just parenthetically, we had also a practicing phase of our training, which involved watching movement lecture/demos with Megan and Heather and then having clients – I can't remember quite how many, but more than one...

**JH:** We had three . . . .

**VJ:** Whom we did a series of five sessions with . . . .

**JH:** We did more than five with those people, Vivian, we did eight.

**VJ:** [laughs] Okay, we did eight!

**AH:** Was there a sort of "recipe" to those eight, or was it open-ended?

**JH:** We had concepts, goals and an intent for each session that we covered; it roughly followed the sequencing of the Rolfing series. We followed it conceptually, not in terms of parts of the body, necessarily. We worked the concepts and goals through the eight sessions. There wasn't a recipe; it was never as clear as the structural work around a recipe.

**VJ:** In a way our analysis was always very client-oriented in the sense of looking at that particular client, analyzing what the needs were, and developing a process based on those needs, as Jane says. Concepts [like] "how are we going to support those changes" – you know, all of the rest of what we think of as [Rolfing] Principles, except we didn't call them "principles" then. It was always client-based: "What are we going to do with this client (based on what the client presented to us)?," rather than "This is Session One, what are we going to do?" Although it began to take on some form, obviously.

I think another component of the early training was the introduction of a "movement touch."

**AH:** Can you talk about that a bit?

**JH:** Let me say something here. When we first trained, the touch we were being taught was more of a guiding touch, much as I've seen Judith Aston use. Megan James added in a touch that was more of an invitation for change and options. In that touch, we always held the body between our hands. So both hands were always on the body and we were working with relationships. This touch and the expansion of it is one of the aspects of the work we developed in our explorations.

**AH:** Can you give an example, to contrast what that guiding touch would look like compared to the inviting touch?

**JH:** [In the inviting touch,] the two hands were always contacting in a way that invited awareness of dimension and relationships. For example, one hand might be in the front of the body at the sternum, the other hand at the lower thoracic / upper lumbar in the back. We were working with that diagonal angle, assisting the client in finding that inner space, shape, dimension...

**VJ:** And movement – or motility as we would call it now.

**JH:** One of the things I was so surprised by when I went, in the early/mid-80s, to an Upledger [craniosacral] training, was when he introduced what he called "unwinding" because that was a big component of that touch that I had learned through Megan and then we had developed.

**AH:** In contrast, what was the guiding touch like?

**JH:** The guiding touch would be more like placing one hand . . . .

**VJ:** One surface . . . .

**JH:** . . . to bring awareness to . . . .

**VJ:** . . . a specific area.

**AH:** So it was less dimensional, less of a full inner awareness?

**JH:** Exactly.

**AH:** From here we could go on here with more about the touch, or go more linearly with what you two developed in the movement work history. Which way would you like to go?

**VJ:** Well, a couple of things come to my mind at this moment. One is certainly the touch is an important part of the development of the movement work in

the last twenty years – not only in terms of motility in the body but the unwinding of the joints... we can get more into those technical qualities if you want. But the second thing is, and we probably want to bring this up, in those early days what was happening is the movement work was evolving into a body of work of its own. In other words, movement people were being certified within the Institute to practice only the movement aspect of Rolfing.

**JH:** So in our practices we did only the functional part of the work. Vivian never trained as a structural Rolfer, and I had been doing just straight movement functional work for ten years before I trained as a structural Rolfer.

**VJ:** That presented a kind of territory for us to explore at great length [laughs].

**AH:** What was the trajectory from you two being in that class together to eventually being key people in the furthering of the movement work?

**JH:** Several things happened at that time. Part of what happened is a lot of people left [the Institute]. Megan passed away, Heather began to get involved more in the structural work, Annie Duggan and Janie French left the Institute to develop their own work . . . . It all happened right around the same time. The other thing that was happening – I don't remember if there were three or five classes of movement people trained as we were trained, movement practitioners were certified in movement, not being certified as structural Rolfers . . . .

**VJ:** . . . I can remember three . . . .

**JH:** What happened is there was beginning to be some confusion, or at least perceived confusion in the public's eye, of these people being called "Rolfers," being trained by the Institute, but not doing what the public viewed as Rolfing. So the trend was going away from training separately. I think we were at a junction – and this would have been mid-80s – where there was a good chance that movement work would have just faded away. It's hard to say. What happened is Vivian and I were best friends and we wanted to see each other more and wanted to teach together. So that was an impulse. Vivian went in front of the Rolf faculty and made a request that we teach movement continuing ed certification for Rolfers. We were approved almost entrepreneurially: "Great, if you all want

to do it, have a ball.” And we did it. Vivian can probably add more.

**VJ:** It was based on a decision that we were not going to take the work out of the Institute. We already had begun to establish a work that we both practiced – neither one of us was structurally trained at the time. With what was going on within the Institute, we were faced with a decision of “do we take this work out of the Institute, or do we leave it in the Institute and find a place for ourselves?” We chose the latter. That was a rather conscious decision we made. I think this is basically why, at least in terms of us personally, it stayed in the Institute. We made that choice, and we got some support for that choice. We had allies in the faculty – Jan Sultan comes immediately to mind, and I think Tom [Wing] was still on faculty and was a supporter; Jim Asher and Jeff Maitland were as well. So we had allies who saw value in the work and supported us in trying to keep it within the Institute.

**AH:** Do you think people left in the past because value was not seen in the work, or they just went in a different direction from the Rolfing paradigm?

**JH:** I don’t know. Heather would be the person to ask about that. The people who actually left and taught elsewhere were Judith and Janie and Annie.

**AH:** So the faculty gave you their blessing, but it sounds like they didn’t have a very clear plan at that point.

**VJ:** Well, the idea was “go out and see if the market will support what you are wanting to do.”

**JH:** “Will Rolfers sign up for this?”

**VJ:** And they did.

**JH:** Initially we taught a series of six-day classes that resulted in movement certification. If I remember right there were four of them. The fourth one worked with group work. These classes were only open to Certified Rolfers. At the end, they were [also] certified in movement work. We did quite a few of these in the Institute in the mid to late 80s into the early 90s. Out of that we developed with Heather, Gael Ohlgren . . . it seems a fifth person was there . . . it may have been Megan . . . we developed the Combined Studies program. In the Combined Studies program people trained in the structural and functional work together. There was a Rolfing instructor and

a Movement instructor through that whole training. There were probably five or six of those taught. That format is what developed into the Brazilian format.

**VJ:** It’s important to know that the Combined Studies did not lead to certification in movement. It was a rather peculiar deal in that the first phase of Combined Studies focused on both movement and structure . . .

**JH:** . . . it was much like our initial training. For each session, the students were given the information in structure, and then they also worked with it in function. These trainings went on *forever*.

**VJ:** These students would give and receive with each other *ten* structural sessions and *ten* movement sessions. They were long [laughs].

**JH:** . . . And expensive to run.

**VJ:** The second part of Combined Studies was primarily focused on practicing in structure.

**AH:** And then if students wanted movement certification they would do another piece after that?

**JH:** Exactly.

**VJ:** So the Brazilian project developed in a form that wanted to confer dual certification. That was the intent of that. So we created a little bit of this and a little bit of that and devised a program over time that resulted in a dual certification.

**AH:** At this point had the training developed significantly from what you learned, or it was similar?

**JH:** That first part, where they were giving and receiving both structural and movement sessions, that started out with similarities to our training, and then over time it shifted. I think one of the key things that emerged out of this – one of the pieces that’s very much apparent in the Institute right now – is that the way we worked with it allowed more blending.

**VJ:** I would add to that also a deeper layer of embodiment of sessions, because there was that congruence of not only delivering and experiencing structural work but also experiencing and delivering functional work simultaneously. There was an emphasis on the embodiment of the work, which does come out of the original movement training.

**AH:** Does it seem to you that people who come out of the Combined Studies format, or the Brazilian format, go about both their structural and movement work, or either one, in a different way from people who do the structural work and then some years later pick up the movement work?

**JH:** Yes, because they learned them together. A very key component that happened in the late 80s and early 90s is the Advanced Faculty [at that time] – Jeff Maitland, Jan Sultan, and Michael Salvesson – developed the Principles of Intervention for Rolfing. Those principles allowed us to take the work into concepts rather than techniques. “These are the principles, these are the intents, and the technique could be a structural [one], a functional [one] or a blend. That was a big shift. I remember teaching a Combined Studies with Jeff around this time and working with him in terms of “If these are the principles, how will we apply them structurally and/or functionally.”

**VJ:** Now the movement work had always operated pretty much on a conceptual or principles basis. So for movement work, that was a very freeing element. It made all of the Rolfing practitioners in terms of the way we work more congruent with each other. So the structural or functional work, whatever decisions you made with a client, were based on principles, not so much on “these are the techniques I use in this session.” That was a huge thing that happened in terms of the ability to blend the work.

**AH:** What has led to the work being so blended in Brazil, but no longer so much that way in the U.S. with the ending of the Combined Studies format? As I remember from my training in the mid-90s, in the U.S. there’s the lead-in week to Unit II where you introduce movement, and some elements of movement in the structural training, but after structural certification whether you pursue movement certification or not is completely up to the Rolfer.

**JH:** Vivian talked about Brazil because she and Pedro Prado did extensive development of the Brazilian format. In terms of the U.S. curriculum right now, there is a strong movement component in Units I, II, and III. It’s carried all the way through. It’s gotten more clear, especially with the curriculum work that’s been done in the past three to four years, so the curriculum is much more organized sequentially in terms of what is

taught in each unit of the trainings. Anyone who has been certified as Rolfing faculty in I'd say the last eight years – maybe longer than that – is required to be movement certified. So it's really changed.

**VJ:** Speaking to it in a little more detail, Unit II has its components of being an embodiment phase (that's what it's called), so it has that same feel about it, while Unit III is the clinical application phase. What happened in Brazil was a conscious decision that people would be dually certified. I don't know what's happening in Brazil now, it's been five years or longer since I've been down there, but the intent was that the function and structure work together to create a full Rolfer and that people would be dually certified and dually trained. So the intention of the training was different than it was in the United States. Europe has picked up some of that intention. I'm really not familiar with what's currently going on in Europe. I know they are incorporating a good deal of this but perhaps in a different form. The United States is moving more in a direction of integration between the structural and functional work, but not in any sense requiring that people be dual-certified. But I think it's important to note that new faculty members are required to be certified in both.

**AH:** So it sounds like there's less segregation than there used to be. It went from structural and functional practices being completely different domains to being very blended.

**JH:** What's interesting is with the new students, I'd say in the last three years, when I teach a Unit II or a Unit III students come in valuing the functional aspect of the work and understanding that the functional piece has to be there for the structure to hold. This is now a given, it has been years since I've walked into a class and had students question the value of the functional work. It's a nice shift.

**AH:** What else do you want to talk about?

**JH:** I'm not quite sure how to frame this; we were trained to value the interruption of habitual patterns, those patterns of response that get repeated in the structure. I'm not saying we're the only ones who value this, but it was part of how we were trained. For those patterns to be interrupted, part of what has to happen is the client has to have the ability to sense [his] own awareness – the embodiment piece – the ability to sense “what happens to my shape both inside and

outside when a pattern changes, and how do I find that bridge between the familiar habitual and the new?” This is key for my sense of the work and when I'm teaching and working with students. I'm really interested in how the inner sensation relates – is it congruent with the presentation in the world? For me personally that's probably the thing that most fascinates me.

**VJ:** I think that I would underline the sense of an inner reference that we always take with us, and for that to be retrievable for the client. So in other words let's use the touch example that we gave you of one hand on the sternum and the other on the lumbar – that shape and space that the person can experience inside – [I'm concerned] that that particular reference is retrievable for the client, can be taken in gravity to sitting, to walking, to playing golf, whatever. That [the client has] a sense of [himself] inside that is retrievable in terms of taking it to [his] outer activities, to [his] life.

**AH:** This brings up two things. One is that what you are talking about is what Ida Rolf considered the evolutionary potential in Rolfing.

**VJ:** Absolutely.

**AH:** It also seems that whether you can achieve this with the client represents that edge that determines whether the client has the big *Aha* with Rolfing and it sticks, or whether it's just that things felt good, his neck felt better, but he maybe doesn't know how to move with it into an evolutionary place.

**VJ:** That's exactly correct. In fact one of the articles that I used to love to hand out to students on this theme is Ida's article on the vertical. I don't even know if that article is [still] available. But yes, you are absolutely correct. The proprioceptive sense of dimension, of span, of space – whatever word you want to use for that. Yes, absolutely.

**AH:** What is it, do you think, that some clients get this so easily and some don't?

**VJ:** [laughter]

**JH:** I think part of it is the Rolfer's skill – is the Rolfer embodied in himself enough to understand it? That's key.

**VJ:** That's paramount for me. And that's the underlying reason for the emphasis on embodiment in the training.

**JH:** The other piece is that some clients find it easier to have internal proprioceptive awareness, some clients find it easier to work with perception in space. It takes a skill and an understanding from the Rolfer to know which one is going to be the way to access for that client, and then how do you add the missing component. I think a lot of it's the skill of the Rolfer because most of us, if we are not conscious about it, will simply work from our habitual way – and the clients we get success with are the people [whose] habitual matches ours. So it's a knowing of how to language sense in space and also sense inside.

**VJ:** Let me tell you a story. I had a gal come to me who owned horses and trained them. She had this horse she couldn't get to go straight. She was sure there was something wrong with the horse, so my first impression was to send her to a practitioner who worked on horses. But then I said, “I don't know anything about training horses, but I'm willing to watch you ride the horse.” What I saw in her relationship to that horse was that she was riding it crooked and setting the horse off. So there was this incredible opportunity, if you will, to demonstrate that what was going on was not about the horse, it was about how she was sitting on the horse, which came to be a proprioceptive awareness. This also opened up to a whole piece about how she was afraid of that particular horse.

**AH:** As you are talking, I'm feeling a resonance with Peter Levine's work here too: the inner sense you are describing seems related to the felt sense that he talks about, which is necessary to come out of a trauma vortex and into the present moment. What you are talking about sounds very congruent with that.

**VJ:** Yes, and the whole languaging you are talking about in terms of the “felt sense” was a big part of the languaging of Megan James actually. There were many, many people who were traveling in the same territory at the same time, and we were among them. And yes, that's absolutely true.

**AH:** Where do you see the movement work going now? Vivian, you are officially retired, is that correct?

**VJ:** Absolutely!

**AH:** It sounds like you're happy about that.

**VJ:** Yeah, I have bailed like all the others! I'm a happy observer. I think Jane really needs to answer that question for you.

**JH:** I really suspect we are going to see the work more integrated, and less differentiation between structure and function. It seems to be where we are going. There's interest currently in using – I don't know the word I'm looking for – props and things. We are understanding much more about open- versus closed-chain function, and the neurological aspects. We have always in movement work integrated the work that was done in the body of the session into activity and daily activities, because that is where people anchor. Now I see the work is going more into moving through space and less of that internal [sense]. That's the current trend; we'll see what happens.

**AH:** Where does the piece that Hubert Godard brings in fit into all of this?

**JH:** The piece I just talked about is an aspect of Hubert's work. Hubert has brought in a lot about perception. In the time I've taught and worked with [Hubert], he tends to do movement segments rather than full sessions, and I think that is a piece of where the work is headed.

**AH:** What do you mean by a segment rather than a session?

**JH:** Rolfers are required to have five private movement sessions to become certified in Rolfing; it's one of the prerequisites. So we still teach a five-session stand-alone movement series. My experience is that

many Rolf Movement instructors don't do separate movement sessions, rather the focus is on wonderful discrete work and application.

**AH:** Is there anything else either of you wants to add?

**VJ:** I'm thinking about it. Is there anything else you'd like to ask?

**AH:** It seems the movement work really has an ability to morph. The structural work has that ability, but it becomes hotly contested when it morphs because there are some people who feel we have to do only what Dr. Rolf did.

**VJ:** We were lucky – we didn't have a "recipe." We were always principle- or concept-based. So that can morph. If we look at the [Ten Series] Recipe as a teaching technique – and it's a wonderful technology for teaching, actually – and are more principle-based in terms of our practice, then [there's] morphing of Rolfing structural and functional [to be] more the same. But if we look at the Recipe as we have, as a marketing technique, it gets locked in a different way – and has historically. My sense from the outside – as I look at it in terms of practitioners in my own community – is that the principle-base to the series work has helped enormously. It's taking on a more client-need base, the willingness of Rolfers to incorporate other teachings.

**JH:** In my view, we want to teach the ten-session series so that students learn a classic series. All of the evolution in our

work has emerged out of the classic Ten Series, which students must understand to be good Rolfers.

**AH:** Thank you both very much, for this interview and for your contributions to our work. Vivian, with you retired now, I especially want us to remember what your role was and express our appreciation.

**VJ:** I'm very grateful. [I have such] gratitude [to Rolfing] in terms of what has emerged as my embodiment of the work. What it has enabled me to do is not only successfully integrate what has been considerable outside [medical] intervention into my body, [and] to embody the changes, but the embodiment of Rolfing has [also] given me the opportunity to access in a way that is deeply learned inside of me – I don't have to reach for it. I don't have to try to understand acupuncture, I don't have to try to understand cardiac surgery. There is a way I can embody this and work with it in terms of my own healing that I am just incredibly grateful for. I am constantly in awe of the breadth of our principles, and the description of the reality of the physical body.

**JH:** I hear Vivian talking about her ability to access functional Rolfing. I believe this is because we did only the functional work for many years, so we view Rolf Movement as a body of work that stands on its own. You asked about what we see happening currently and in the future with the movement work. One of the shifts I see is that the work is being blended more and more with the structural Rolfing rather than standing alone. I have mixed feelings about it.

**AH:** It's interesting, because they started out so separate and now you are saying they are going some place where they are so blended. Just in having a situation where you have to be a Rolfer to train in movement, there's probably a whole demographic that may no longer come into the work.

**VJ:** As we've spent time together over the last several days, we've talked about that.

**JH:** We were approached many times and many places by non-Rolfers to train them, and part of the conscious choice we made to stay in the Institute was that we would not train non-Rolfers.

**AH:** The Rolfing community has certainly benefited from your staying. Thank you again.