Looking back at Appalachian Spring

I think for me ~~the~~ ~~most~~ one of the exciting things is that Martha and I together created a whole new kind of partnering. Obviously, we were different aesthetically. Martha's orientation ~~was~~ being psychology and mine ~~was~~ being poetry, ~~but we met creatively~~ ~~[illegible]~~. ~~creativity in a sharing on stage of something one could~~ co

but we met in a shared belief in passion — maybe one could call it that knife's edge commitment to being alive on stage. In later years that mix of poetry and passion within me was described by some critics, especially in my work called 8 Clear Pieces, as violent clarity, but in Appalachian Spring Martha's psychological edge and my poetic edge tried to sing

[redacted] passionately and
the authenticity of what it
is to be a man and what is to be a woman
in that wonderful moment in
dance we call partnering. [redacted]

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I remember that, thinking to myself, when "Setter to the World" was done that it was a mature work of art."

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and that it was a tremendous step ahead for the modern dance

464/ Coming along after "Deaths + Entrances," I felt that "Appalachian Spring was" a new high point in choreography.

At this time I knew that Martha needed to have a variety of composers + when I had heard that Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge had a foundation in the Library of Congress

which would [illegible] commission such works as "Apollo" by Stravinsky, I decided that I should ask her to commission some pieces for dances by Martha. I remember being at Bennington where we were for the summer and writing a letter to Mrs Coolidge ~~whom I was not~~ before + being late to rehearsal, Martha did not understand why I was late, but I

was so excited in trying
a new adventure in
getting an enlarged support
for Martin's work.

within a week Mrs. Coolidge
wrote back + suggested that
Martha + I come to Washington
to see her. She accepted my
suggestion that she commission
Aaron Copland + Paul Hindemith
to write scores for Martha.

at this point I was so entranced by Isamu Noguchi and what he did for "El Penitente", that I suggested that Isamu should do the sets.

How wonderfully it worked out! There was just a year's time that Martha could get the work ready for Mrs. Coolidge's 80th birthday.

I remember that there
was no rehearsal space
at the Library of Congress
the last several days before
the performance we had
to dance in the hallways
between
of the Library of Congress.
where we were

I am sure that Mrs.
Coolidge was very happy

This taught me a lesson for the ~~for the rest of my life~~ rest of my life. Although I don't always act up to that insight, ~~that~~ when one has an idea of something that is possible you move toward it ~~by~~ like writing the letter from Bennington to Mrs. Coolidge