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ANIMAL MOTIFS IN SCENIC DESIGN

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Today, art studies on the theory, history, and stage setting are quite compound. National science lacks specialized subject and systematic studies aimed at examining the experience of using animal motifs – as the use of non-performing animals on stage as a specific element – in the production design of performing arts. The purpose of the article is an art analysis of the animal motifs in the scenic design of theatre production from antiquity to the present. The research methodology is the traditional art methods: historical-cultural, historical-attributive, reconstructive-model, chronological descriptions, which provide the explaining of the figurative transformation of animal motifs in the scenic design of theatrical production. Animal motifs in the system of scenic design are first considered in scientific terms, which shape the scientific novelty. The author draws the following conclusions: scenic design has a dual nature belonging to both the design and performing arts; the perception of animate motifs in the scenic design carries aesthetic and/or emotional pleasure to the public as animals improvise unpredictably, and again they begin to dominate at scenic design of the theatrical production; ways of involving animals in scenic design can be organized by functional purpose: animals as a component of scenic design, animals as game design requisites, animals as living sets, animals as participants in the stage action; animal motifs have functional features in the scenic design of dramatic performances.

Keywords: animal motifs; design; performing arts; non-performing animals; stage space

Introduction

The concept of design is relatively young and today is freely used in all arts, including the performing arts. The object of design can be almost any new technical industrial product in any area of human activity, where human communication is social and cultural. The concept of scenic design in the context of the artistic design can be specified as a craft production in the performing arts, which serves the needs of people to contact with this art in different forms – visual, sound, olfactory, and tactile.

With regard to the theoretical interpretation of the concepts of “design” and, in particular, the “scenic design” in relation to the terms “theatre decorative art” and “scenography”, it should be noted that theatrical science interprets the term “theatre decorative art” as synonymous for “scenography”, defining it as a “form of fine art that builds the spatial and visual environment, visual image, place and time of theatrical production” (Drak, 1984). Art history of the twentieth century states that the etymology of a word “scenography” is derived from the phrase “scene” – Latin scene, Greek σκηνή, and “grapho” – Greek γράφω, which means writing (“Stsenohrafiia”, 1984). However, it is worth considering an alternative opinion on the etymology of the word “scenography”. According to the author’s updated version, the term comes from the English word scenery, which means “decorations” in combination with the Greek “... graphic” (write, draw, paint), which in compound words combined with other concepts (for example, “scenery”) forms the phrase “scenery painting”. A new insight into the etymology of the word causes it to be interpreted differently – to create an artistic visual image of the play with actually scene painting. The conception of “scenography” as a “scene painting” associated with an area of art in Ancient Greece – scenery, which implied an artistic combination of architecture, sculpture, and painting, leads to a misunderstanding of the term - the decoration of the scene by various expressive means, but not only painting ones.

In modern terms, the essence of multivariate ways of designing both the theatrical production and stage is introduced by the term “scenic design”. Definitions of the term “design”, for example, the “scenic design”, implies a broad and common concept of the artistic designing of stage space. Commonly, the design is specified for an artistic designing that has quality of the interconnection of the details provided to create a coherent and effective unity. The effectiveness of such artistic designing is influenced by four limiting factors: the pro-

perties of the materials that will be used, the influence of methods that will adapt these materials to applying, the existence of the parts within the whole, and the impact of the whole on those who can see, use, or take part in the design object. This article examines animal motifs as components of the scenic design of a theatrical production.

At present, theoretical and practical studies on the theory, history and practice of stage setting can be divided into issued areas into several directions: the historical evolution of Ukrainian scenography (V. Berozkin, I. Verykivska, H. Veselovska, D. Horbachov, N. Yermakova, O. Kliekovkin, N. Kornienko, O. Krasylnykova, A. Lypkivska, L. Sokyрко, V. Fialko, V. Chechuk, and others); contemporary Ukrainian scenography (O. Kovalchuk, O. Krasylnykova, O. Klekovkin, O. Ostroverkh, S. Trykolenko, and others); involvement of world artistic experience in the Ukrainian scenography process (O. Antonova, M. Hromov, A. Nikitina, T. Shekhter, and others); practical experience of Ukrainian scenic designers (D. Borovskiy, M. Levytska, D. Lider, A. Petrytskyi, M. Frenkel, and others); technical equipment as an instrument of artistic expression and a means of implementation of the producers' creative concept (V. Bazanov, V. Kozlinsky, K. Iudova-Romanova, and others); issues of national component in Ukrainian design (V. Danylenko, Yu. Diachenko, O. Hladun, M. Stankevych, and others).

Thus, it can be argued that there is a lack of art studies in the national science aimed at studying design solutions that contain animal motifs in the design of the performing art productions. Animal motifs within the use at a stage the animality as a key element of the production, in particular, of the performing arts are first considered in scientific terms in the system of scenic design, which shape the scientific novelty of the research.

The purpose of the article

The purpose of the study is an art analysis of the animal motifs in the scenic design of theatrical production from antiquity to the present.

Presentation of the main material

Mentioning the involvement of animals in the design of theatrical performances can be found in the ancient world. The more the Roman Empire conquered countries, the more often there were processions with a large number of war captives showing war trophy, including never-before-seen by the Roman public exotic animals. Indeed, it is known that the inaugural ceremony of the Colosseum of Rome in 80 AD was celebrated with festive events that were lasting for the 100 days running. Therein, there were numerous performances with the bestiarii ("beastfighters") and gladiators. In bloody theatrical performances, there were found "50 ostriches, 2 giraffes, 20 zebras, 15 moose, 100 deer, 20 elephants, 40 wild horses, 60 buffaloes, 6 crocodiles in the canals" (Hrinchenko, 1897, pp. 16-17). In the amphitheatre, there was also practiced pitting wild animals against each other: a rhino against an elephant, a panther against a bull, a bear against a boar and so on. Subsequently, "hunters" who "hunted" for animals joined the performance. In such struggles, both humans and animals won. Further, to raise the audience's adrenaline the prisoners and criminals appeared in the arena, armed only with swords and knives, and hungry furious animals were put to them – "two hundred hungry bears and four hundred lions, tigers and hyenas" (Hrinchenko, 1897, p. 18) that hit out ripped and ate people. Note that these actions can actually be referred as theatrical executions. In this context, animals are in fact both performers of theatrical blood-stained cruel staging and become an element of its artistic design.

Sometimes the criminals for the slaves' guilt were also condemned to such theatrical execution, when a person appeared in the luxurious arena, playing the lyre, personifying the legendary Greek Orpheus. It seemed that nature itself was fascinated by its game: the rocks, listening, approached him, trees bent branches, birds flew over him, and animals came to his feet. At the end of this idyll, "Orpheus" was torn into pieces by the bear.

Direct involvement of spectators into animal performance was also popular. Thus, at the climactic scene of the performance, "the arena stain with blood is being sprinkled with sand. In the middle of the arena, there is a place covered with boards. There is a pit under these boards, and there are machines in it. The wooden floor is removed. The machines put a green grove out of the pit. Among the trees on the branches, the most wonderful birds are tied. Thousands of ostriches, deer, boars, wild rams, sorts of poultry are penned through the gates" (Hrinchenko, 1897, p. 20). An illusion of wildlife harmony is created in the arena of the amphitheater. Suddenly, "the gate opens into the yard and the hoi polloi rushes into the arena" (Hrin, 1897, p. 20], trying to hold something at once. There is a big flurry, fights, lumps in the arena... At the same time the Senate lodge

is reached out with the same plight – they are throwing pearls, valuables, slaves' grants, houses, estates there. Other spectators have to watch this furry with pleasure.

The described examples of involving animals in a theatrical performance in Ancient Rome can be interpreted as animal motifs in the proto-scenic design. A characteristic feature of shows created with animal elements is its focus on satisfying the aesthetic needs of spectators and at the same time on emotional excitement from horror.

Since the 9th century in Western Europe, the Christian Church was beginning to look for the most expressive means of influencing the believers. With this in mind, the process of staging the mass was launched. Initially, the ritual of reading episodes from legends about the life of Christ, about his burial and resurrection was formed. From these dialogues, an early liturgical play was born. This early church theater made a significant contribution to the process of the emergence of stage design. The techniques, antiquity's time-tested, found their continuation in the liturgical drama. In particular, the production of the first live nativity scene (Italian presepe – cribs) was a landmark in the history of the theatre - the spatial reproduction of a sketch depicting the nativity in Bethlehem, by Francis of Assisi. The event took place in the Greccio Cave near Rieti, the Umbria region of Italy on Christmas Day on December 25, 1223, which further began the tradition of exhibiting Christmas nativity scenes not only in Italian churches but subsequently spread throughout Europe, including Ukraine. Historical references to this were made by the biographer of St. Thomas of Celano in "The First Life of St. Francis of Assisi", written in 1228–1229, immediately after the canonization of the Poor Man from Assisi (Olikh, 018). In Francis's idea, according to the gospel story, the assistant had to "introduce the Child born in Bethlehem and in some way to see with the eyes of the body the inconvenience in which he was in need of new-born things, as he was put in a crib and lying on the hay between the ox and a donkey" ("Rizdvo"). As can be seen from the text, the idea of Francis did not include the full reproduction in the live performance of the familiar scene of Christmas nativity with the new-born Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, magi, as well as ox, donkey, and sheep. To create an allusion to the events of Bethlehem, it was enough to bring the Christmas mass to the cave, to reproduce the cribs to which Francis laid hay during the mass, and the presence of animals – there was only an ox and a donkey in the interior. Francis did not use any figures to reproduce the stage images. For him, the Eucharist was the embodiment of Jesus. By engaging believers in such an unusual theatrical mass, the pastor did not try to show them a re-enactment of the biblical story, he preached people to communicate with Jesus through the system of visual allusions.

The above example can be interpreted as creating animal motifs in the proto-scenic design during the staging of the church mass – the presence in the interior of the cave, an ox and a donkey serves to determine the place of action and the decoration of the production.

Today in Europe, the tradition of "live nativity scene" has not been lost. As a rule, it is made in the evening for two to three hours between December 4 and January 6 in the squares of cities or in the fields where it is possible to involve animals in the production. The main event of the re-enactment is the demonstration of Madonna with a baby Jesus in her arms as a woman with a real baby.

Christmas "live nativity scene", however in a modified form, exists today in Ukraine. Thus, in the story of the TV News Service program of the 1+1 TV channel, it was mentioned about the ceremonial tradition of celebrating the Old New Year, which coincides with the feast day of Vasyl, in Western Ukraine, in particular in the village of Kolinty, Ivano-Frankivsk region. The peculiarity of the local ancient tradition is to participate in the ritual of zasivannia (Ukrainian ritual sowing) of a real horse, which is taken by the zasivalnyky (participants of the ritual) from house to house. The horse is adorned with bell necklaces, colourful wraps, bright artificial flowers, tassels, and ribbons in accordance with local tradition - it should become the main decoration of the festive performance. A festive, solemnly decorated march of participants goes over the village at midnight. The local villagers are glad to invite the participants and the horse to visit a yard or a house. There is a belief: if on the feast of Vasyl it is a horse that first comes to the house, the wealth and health will come to the family. Therefore, the animal is often brought directly to the house, despite its rather large and can cause inconvenience. The bright dressed horse is accompanied by the participants, who are sending holiday greetings to the hosts with songs, dances, and good words. The solemn walk from house to house lasts all night and ends in the morning in the churchyard (Pass, 2018).

Considering the involvement of the animal in the theatrical ceremonial action in the context of studying the design features of the stage space of theatrical and entertainment productions, it is worth noting that the horse is the central visual artistic way of acting. Other participants of the action – zasivalnyky, are placed around it. Moving a horse from house to house, from the yard to yard means moving all the stage space. The boundaries of the stage space in which the stage action takes place are determined by the visual presence

of the horse in it. The horse becomes the central component of the whole performance; however, it is not involved in the performances at all. It is present only for design purposes if you do not take into account the beliefs in its miraculous, healing power. Spectators, watching the ritual action and sometimes taking part in it, enjoy esthetical pleasure of the dramatic-vocal-choreographic performances, as well as the scenic composition created by the participants and festively decorated horse.

In general, it can be observed that horses are more often involved in stage performances than other animals. Therefore, the performance of G. Veryovka National Academic Folk Choir on the stage of the Kremlin Palace of Congresses during the reporting concert of the creative collectives of the Ukrainian SSR, dedicated to the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1981, with the musical number “Song about Tachanka” (lyrics: M. Ruderman, music: K. Listov, director: I. Moiseyev) was accompanied by four horses of the amazing beauty. The power-driven movable platform at the front edge of the stage, scrolling beneath their swift hooves, gave the spectacular impression that the beautiful animals were rushing directly to the audience in time with dynamic music. Highly professional vocal choral performance combined with beautiful animals on stage, with the dynamics of graceful fast and unique in their direction of movement towards the audience made an unforgettable emotional impression from the perception of the concert number. In this case, the horses became the dominant attraction of the composition in the scenic design of the performance.

Butterflies have always attracted people with their bright colours. The Mexican Day of the Dead is a holiday inherited from the Aztec by modern peoples of North America. The Aztecs believed that the souls of the dead returned to the world of living in the form of winged insects to visit relatives and celebrate the Day of the Dead together. It is no coincidence that the time of the festive ritual carnivals – November 1 and 2 – often coincides with the period when millions of the giant monarch butterflies leave the US and Canada and fly into the forests of central Mexico. Clouds of black and orange butterflies create a spectacular and unforgettable sight, flying in the air to delight the eyes of spectators and participants with the sudden unexpected movements and soft, diverse, shimmering beauty of the wings.

Another equally impressive original example of how designers use beautiful butterflies for the design of space of entertainment events may be the present Ukrainian trend to salute during the wedding with beautiful colourful and multi-coloured butterflies. The vibrant colours and amazing shapes of the insect wings, their flickering movements, hold the viewer’s attention, evoking aesthetically pleasure and positive emotions, creating a sense of uniqueness of the holiday. This design is able to transform the usual location of the event into a magical stage space, where a striking visual action takes place. Combined with the floral design, the holiday site seems like a true oasis.

With regard to the traditional release of pigeons by newlyweds at a wedding ceremony, in the context of studying the features of scenic design, it is possible to talk about the dual direction of the use of appropriate animal props: on the one hand, to perform a wedding rite that will bring peace and love into married life, and on the other – newlyweds, releasing beautiful decorative white doves into the sky create a fragmentary decoration of the wedding event. Thus, white doves, symbolizing peace and love in a new family, become part of the decoration of the rite.

Exploring the features of the design of scenic space with animal involvement as its constituent, we focused on the most illustrative examples of theatrical events. On the other hand, the representatives of the animal world are seamless within the professional theatrical scene, where they participate in the scenic design. Researchers argue, “in recent years, the design process of the stage performance has become rare popular. It differs fundamentally from the traditional context-dependent naturalistic treatment of design in that it is focused solely on visual perception, devoid of any philosophical and meaningful sense” (Trykolenko, 016, p. 84).

There are some bright examples from the history of the opera. Thus, from the first staging on November 2, 1935, on the stage of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, the widely known a national comic opera in three acts “Ero the Joker” by J. Gotovac (directed by K. Dolencic, scenic design by D. Laginje) – in the final scene of the wedding between a smart country young man Mića and the daughter of a rich peasant, Djula, newlyweds traditionally ride a horse. In fact, the scenic design is the costumes of the performers, the floodlight and a pair of horses – white and black (“Ero the Joker”, n.d.). The main characters occupy a prominent place in the stage composition: they, while sitting on the top, are above the surrounding circle of guests. In addition, the horses themselves attract spectator attention with their physique and natural beauty.

Despite the various organizational and economic problems associated with the use of horses in illuminated by studio light boards and floats enclosed stage premises, they are quite often involved in productions

compared to other animals. Therefore, it is worth looking back at the production of “The Legend of Faust” based upon J.W. Goethe’s tragic play (Ivan Franko National Academic Drama Theatre, 2007, director: A. Prykhodko, scenic design: M. Pohrebniak). “The scene, where Alexander of Macedon bursts upon the view, is at a pseudo-historical backdrop: the main dominant of the action is living horses” (Trykolenko, 016, pp. 81-82). Alexander the Great and his mistress, riding out on these beautiful horses, go on a victory lap, set wondering and admiration for the audience.

Contemporary ballet art has made a significant contribution to the involvement of animals in scenic design. French choreographer Luke Petton staged *Swan Ballet* in 2012, which was premiered on June 6 at the Théâtre national de Chaillot. Black and white swans and other birds - parrots, herons, cranes, starlings, etc. – took part in the ballet performance along with the dancers of the Le Guetteur Company. Choreographic parts were performed by dancers in compositional unity with birds. The stage settings were within a transparent water trough running along the backdrop of the stage, in a circular reservoir in the foreground and on a mirror-black stage linoleum floor in the centre of the stage. Fantastically graceful, graphically sophisticated and naturally perfect swans have become the dominant component of the design solution of the whole production. Black, white swans, and other birds, clear water and dancers dressed in black and white swimwear, sometimes with a high glove-arm on one arm, caught by the rays of the upper light – the concept of the scenic design for the ballet “Swan” (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. “Swan” – creation for dancers and swans (“Swan”, 2012).

This performance was not the only one of L. Petton’s experience in the field of ballet “contact-improvisation” style with animals in ballet productions. In addition to birds, the artist also involved stallions (2010, “CAvAlle”) (“Luc Petton”, 2018, pp. 2-18).

It is worth to mention some typical examples of wildlife involvement in dramatic performances. It should be noted, in the dramatic production animals are used more as game props, or, even more, they become actors rather than perform design functions. Thus, in the play “Kamo” by the Ukrainian playwright O. Levada in the production of the Kyiv Theatre of Poetry (1985, director: S. Proskurnia, designer: V. Karashevskiy), an ordinary grey sparrow acted in a makeshift stage space in the passage of the Golden Gate of Kyiv. The unpretentious bird of prey, released from a cage under the arches of a hall of a majestic monument of the defence architecture of the 11th century, was associated in the eyes of the viewers with revolutionist Kamo, a freedom fighter. Sparrow became a metaphorical embodiment of the main character, who escaped from years of imprisonment in the mental ward, where he pretended to be psychologically sick. Why is it a sparrow? Because “sparrows are not kept in cages – they are not given the talent of melodious singing. But these unremitting labourers are always around people as if they were part of their lives” (Bahinska, 1986, p. 4).

In the famous performance of Sadovskyi Vinnytsia Oblast Academic Ukrainian Musical and Drama Theatre “Notre-Dame de Paris” by V. Goldfeld from the novel by V. Hugo in the production of F. Vereshchahin (premiered in 1968, scenic designer: M. Bilyk) a pet goat was one of the characters who accompanied Esmeralda at the stage. At the same time, the behaviour of the non-performing animal on stage always dictated an improvised positioning, which made it difficult for both the actors and the theatre production crew. As for the design, the goat was only decorated with a bell and had little painted horns. That is, it can be argued that in this case, the animal was a speechless character, becoming an element of the stage action of the performance, without taking part in the scenic design.

Conclusions

Summarizing the above, we can draw the following conclusions:

- the practice of involving the representatives of the animal world in the scenic design has signs of the intersection of deep traditions in the national artistic culture of Ukraine with the implementation of other cultures' achievements;
- the scenic design has a dual nature, which is explained by its belonging to both the art of design and the stage art;
- the perception of contemplation of animals in the stage space brings esthetical and /or emotional pleasure to the public, which determines their dominant place in the artistic and scenic design of theatrical productions;
- directors often consciously bring real animals to the scene, knowing about their exceptional stage makeup, because the public's perceptions will always be chained to the contemplation of the animal on the stage because they are characterized by improvisational unpredictability;
- the ways of attracting animals to the scenic design are organized in terms of functionality: animals as a component of scenic design, animals as game design requisites, animals as living sets, animals as participants in the stage action;
- it is argued that in dramatic performances animals are used more for the purpose of functional application in the development of stage action than for the artistic design of the external form of the production.

Directions for future research. Investigating the issues of the history and practice of scenic design with animals as one of the elements, we have only had a sketch upon the issues of the general theoretical concept of scenic design as an artistic phenomenon. The aspect of the peculiarities of its national characteristics was also not covered. Future research should also focus on the study of animal motifs in scenic design.

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**АНІМАЛЬНІ МОТИВИ
У ДИЗАЙНІ СЦЕНІЧНОГО
ПРОСТОРУ**

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Мистецтвознавчі дослідження з питань теорії, історії та практики художнього оформлення сценічного простору досить різновекторні. Вітчизняній науці бракує фахових предметних та системних досліджень, спрямованих на вивчення досвіду застосування анімальних мотивів – у розумінні використання на сцені недресированих тварин в якості характерного елемента – в дизайні постановок творів сценічного мистецтва. Мета дослідження – мистецтвознавчий аналіз анімальних мотивів у дизайні сценічного простору театральньо-видовищних постановок у хронологічних межах від античності до сьогодення. Методологічну основу дослідження складають традиційні мистецтвознавчі методи: історико-культурний, історико-атрибутивний, реконструктивно-модельний, хронологічна дескрипція, що сприяють розкриттю образної трансформації анімальних мотивів у дизайні сценічного простору театральньо-видовищних постановок. Анімальні мотиви в системі оформлення сценічного простору з наукового погляду предметно розглядаються вперше, що й зумовило наукову новизну дослідження. Авторкою зроблені такі висновки: дизайн сценічного простору має дуальну природу, виходячи з приналежності і до мистецтва дизайну, і до сценічного мистецтва; перцепція анімальних мотивів у дизайні сценічного простору несе естетичну і/або емоційну насолоду глядачам, обумовлену багато в чому притаманною тваринам імпровізаційною непередбачуваністю, що, своєю чергою, часто призводить до зайняття ними домінуючого місця в художньо-проектному конструюванні театральньо-видовищних постановок; способи залучення тварин до дизайну сценічного простору можна систематизувати за функціональним призначенням: тварини як складник дизайну сценічного простору, тварини як ігровий дизайнерський реквізит, тварини як живі декорації, тварини як учасники сценічної дії; анімальні мотиви мають функціональні особливості в дизайні сценічного простору драматичних вистав.

Ключові слова: анімальні мотиви; дизайн; сценічне мистецтво; недресировані тварини; сценічний простір

**АНИМАЛЬНЫЕ МОТИВЫ
В ДИЗАЙНЕ СЦЕНИЧЕСКОГО
ПРОСТРАНСТВА**

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Искусствоведческие исследования по вопросам теории, истории и практики художественного оформления сценического пространства достаточно разновекторные. Однако, отечественной науке не хватает профессиональных предметных и системных исследований, направленных на изучение опыта применения анімальных мотивов – в смысле использования на сцене недресированных животных в качестве характерного элемента – в дизайне постановок произведений сценического искусства. Цель исследования – искусствоведческий анализ анімальных мотивов в дизайне сценического пространства театральньо-зрелищных постановок в хронологических границах от античности до современности. Методологическую основу исследования составляют традиционные искусствоведческие методы: историко-культурный, историко-атрибутивный, реконструктивно-модельный, хронологическая дескрипция, способствующие раскрытию образной трансформации анімальных мотивов в дизайне сценического пространства театральньо-зрелищных постановок. Анімальный мотивы в системе оформления сценического пространства с научной точки зрения предметно рассматриваются впервые, что и обусловило научную новизну исследования. Автором сделаны следующие выводы: дизайн сценического пространства имеет дуальную природу, исходя из принадлежности и к искусству дизайнера, и к сценическому искусству; перцепция анімальных мотивов в дизайне сценического пространства несет эстетическую и/или эмоциональное наслаждение зрителям, обусловленную во многом присущей животным импровизационной непредсказуемостью, и, в свою очередь, часто приводит к занятию ими доминирующего места в художественно-проектном конструировании театральньо-зрелищных постановок; способы привлечения животных к дизайну сценического пространства можно систематизировать по функциональному назначению: животные как составляющая дизайнера сценического пространства, животные как игровой дизайнерский реквізит, животные как живые декорации, животные как участники сценического действия; анімальный мотивы имеют функциональные особенности в дизайне сценического пространства драматических спектаклей.

Ключевые слова: анімальные мотивы; дизайн; сценическое искусство; недресированные животные; сценическое пространство