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**INTERPRETATION OF CLASSICAL
BALLET IN THE RADU POKLITARU'S
WORKS: A PHILOSOPHICAL AND
IDEOLOGICAL PARADIGM
OF MODERN-BALLET**

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The purpose of the article is to identify the features of R. Poklitaru's interpretations of classical ballets in the context of the choreographer's philosophical and ideological paradigm. The research methodology for studying the characteristics of interpretation of classical ballets on the example of the work of the leading choreographer, founder and artistic director of the Kyiv Modern-Ballet Theatre Radu Poklitaru is carried out using the following methods: historicism is to identify the features of cultural and artistic trends of our time, the typological method is to determine the specifics of the interpretation process in choreographing), the method of stylistic approach is to understand the basics of ballet-master's choreography). Scientific novelty. There are well-researched features of ballet classics rendition by R. Poklitaru; analysis of the concept of "interpretation" in contemporary choreography; the article seeks to conceptualise the innovation of approaches to classical ballets rendition in the context of the choreographer's philosophical and ideological paradigm. Conclusions. In the postmodern paradigm of R. Poklitaru's work, we found that in his work, the choreographer goes not just by the desire to modernise the classical work, actualise it by integrating topics understandable to the 21st-century viewer, but the purpose to get the core message, get the author's point across a specific context. The choreographer's philosophical and ideological views determine not only the ballet transcension classical system and the renewal of the choreographic language but also the expansion and renewal of the vocabulary of contemporary choreography, its plastic forms for understanding the psychology of human relations. Modernising the classical ballet theatre in the understanding of R. Poklitaru is a means of enhancing the emotional impact on the viewer. However, to touch the subtle conception, the artist must be adequate to the time he creates.

Keywords: R. Poklitaru; Kyiv Modern-Ballet; choreography; interpretation; ballet classics; postmodern aesthetics; contemporary dance

Introduction

Choreography in Ukraine, having integrated into contemporary art, has acquired a new form, meaning and role, testifying to the high level of dance development as a spectacle, social ritual, leisure activities, etc., a true artistic expression representing contemporary art. The prosperous heritage of the past, combined with the innovation of experimental choreographers and various modern forms, allows dance to remain one of the most significant cultural phenomena. The re-rendition agenda of well-known classical ballets by contemporary choreographers of Ukraine under the specifics of the noughties' postmodern aesthetics receives specific manifestations, which actualises the study of this aspect from the standpoint of modern art studies.

This research is aimed at identifying the features of the process of finding innovative means of the choreographic language of contemporary dance and their integrated combination with the traditions of academic dance in the context of reinterpretations of ballets of classical heritage on the example of the work of the leading choreographer, founder and artistic director of the Kyiv Modern-Ballet Theatre (since 2018-academic), Honoured Artist of Ukraine, winner of the Taras Shevchenko National Prize, People's Artist of Moldova, Professor of the Department of Choreography at the Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts Radu Poklitaru.

The work of one of the leading contemporary choreographers of Ukraine, R. Poklitaru, has been actively attracting the attention of domestic researchers in recent years, who mainly consider it in the context of productions of the Kyiv Modern-Ballet Theatre, created in 2006. For example, in the publication "Changing Images in the Carmen Ballet Correlated with World Trends in Cultural Development of the 20th and Early 21st Century" (2013), Ye. Shcherbak highlights some features of the author's approach of R. Poklitaru to productions, analysing *Carmen.TV* ballet (Kyiv Modern-Ballet, 2006); in the article "Integration of Different

Imaginative Systems in the Work of Radu Poklitaru” (2013), Ye. Zynych considers the vectors of integration of symbolic systems of various types of art in the performances of R. Poklitaru *Pictures from the Exhibition* by M. Mussorgsky, *Perekrestok* by M. Skoryk and *The Power of Fate* by G. Verdi, G. Puccini, Camille Saint-Saëns, A. Boito, A. Catalani, and others. However, despite the coverage of certain aspects of the choreographer’s interpretation of classical ballets, his interpretation of classical ballet heritage works remains insufficiently studied and requires detailed analysis.

The scientific novelty lies in the study of the peculiarities of ballet classics rendition by one of the leading choreographers of Ukraine, the founder and artistic director of the Kyiv Modern-Ballet Theatre R. Poklitaru; analysis of the concept of “interpretation” in the context of contemporary choreography; attempts are made to conceptualise the innovation of approaches to reading classical ballets in the context of the choreographer’s philosophical and ideological paradigm.

Purpose of the article

The purpose of the article is to identify the features of R. Poklitaru’s interpretations of classical ballets in the context of the choreographer’s philosophical and ideological paradigm.

The research methodology for studying the features of interpretation of classical ballets on the example of the work of the leading choreographer, founder and artistic director of the Kyiv Modern-Ballet Theatre Radu Poklitaru is carried out using the following methods: historicism is to identify the features of cultural and artistic trends of our time, the typological method is to determine the specifics of the interpretation process in choreographing), the method of stylistic approach is to understand the basics of ballet-master’s choreography).

Main research material

The realities of culture-specific elements confirm numerous attempts to modernise the classical heritage in various art forms based on interpretation of the original artworks.

Researchers define interpretation as a fundamental operation of thinking, giving meaning to any manifestations of human spiritual activity objectified in a sign or sensory-visual form, emphasising its specificity-comprehension (decoding) of meaning embodied in various texts and cultural artefacts (Shvyrev, 2001, p. 134).

Concerning choreography, we understand interpretation as a process in which objective systems of signs pass through the individual’s worldview (choreographer), turning into a subjective system of signs. Since the worldview is formed due to the symbiotic interaction of an individual’s value attitudes, historical, social and everyday realities, their diversity determines a variety of interpretations of objective sign systems and their relativity.

Researchers note that any interpretation of a ballet director’s script is analysed from the point of view of the figurative proximity of plasticity to the ideological and conceptual content of music (Abdokov, 2009, p. 78).

According to O. Kirpichenkova, the choreographer can interpret the score in two aspects:

- musical content, which involves imitating the logic of the development of musical speech, preserving the sequence of bills or using bills, compilations, revision with other musical works; extrapolation of stylistic features of music to choreography, etc.;

- interpretation of the libretto, which is dissolved in the score, which involves a radical change in the script (for example, introducing new characters, changing the location of the action and the essence of the conflict), preserving the basis of the script (for example, changing the characteristics of the characters) or preserving the script with a change in choreography (Kirpichenkova, 2017, p. 48).

Following the specifics of the current dominant aesthetics of Postmodernism, the desire to revise the ideological and semantic content of the source sometimes leads to levelling the value foundations of the original artwork. However, in the work of one of the leading choreographers of Ukraine, R. Poklitaru, the ideological and aesthetic reference point is the criterion of compliance of the choreographic solution with the symbolic and poetic content, structure and style of the musical score, which, however, do not exclude a radical change in the plot-effective basis.

An extremely original interpretation according to R. Poklitaru’s vision received one of the most popular ballets *The Rite of Spring* by I. Stravinsky to the M. Roerich’s libretto (one of the key works of art of the

twentieth century, one of the first plotless ballets, the characters of which were devoid of personal characteristics, because the personality acts, has not yet understood itself; the plot is based on the ancient ritual of spring pagan sacrifice: a young girl surrounded by elders dances until complete exhaustion to awaken spring, and dies) (Chumina, 2014, p. 105), whose productions in their own choreography (since 1913, more than 1920 versions) were performed by leading choreographers of the twentieth century as V. Nijinsky (original choreography of 1913), L. Myasin (1920 version, focused on spatial concepts of dance), M. Béjart (1959 version in the style of abstract expressionism), P. Vausch (hyperrealistic version), J. Neumeier (1972 version as a disturbing message to contemporaries), M. Ek (1984 version in classical Postmodernism), S. Oshima (1995 version), and others.

Ye. Yanina-Ledovska notes that the idea of R. Poklitaru in the process of staging Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* ballet (National Opera of Ukraine, 2002) was based on the desire to tell a story about how a little man strives for personal happiness, "where there is an aggressive, cruel environment that is hostile to any manifestations of independence and sincere feelings of an individual" (Yanina-Ledovska, 2014, p. 220). According to the researcher, the choreographer is an opponent of conformism, thoughtless obedience to the regime and the laws of society generated by it — this topic can be significantly traced in a number of his productions.

The story of Cinderella is devoid of charm and theatrical convention, which the choreographer presents in two versions (to the music of S. Prokofiev and Rossini's overture to the *Cinderella* opera, 2005 and the music of O. Khodosko, 2006). R. Poklitaru moved the central part of S. Prokofiev's classical ballet of the same name from the house of his stepmother and sisters. The royal palace to the modern house of evil belongs to her stepmother. The main character works in it as a cleaner. It gradually turns into a part of this world, and the prince is a rich and capricious client, for whom his guardian chooses a "girl for entertainment" (Cinderella). Inspired by the cinema of the early twentieth century, Hollywood melodrama and the specific atmosphere of the "pleasure district", the choreographer, in collaboration with artists A. Ipatieva and A. Zlobin, creates not a realistic performance but a fantasy performance in the aesthetics of The Times of Marilyn Monroe and the heyday of pin-up, presenting his vision of the Cinderella story about how a poor, offended, but kind and honest orphan meets his beautiful prince as a kind of personification of universal justice — that even a person who has nothing from birth, can achieve everything in life solely because of his personal qualities and spiritual beauty.

In the *Carmen* opera by G. Bizet, R. Poklitaru turns twice, having staged *Carmen* and *Carmen.TV* ballets based on its motives in 2001 and 2006. The choreographer departs from the classical interpretation of the love story of a passionate gipsy woman, presenting, based on traditional musical material, an innovative vision. The main character in the production of R. Poklitaru becomes a pious peasant Micaëla — abandoned José, who sits on the front stage in front of the TV throughout the performance, suffers and hopes for the return of her beloved, and at key moments approaches the actors frozen in uncertain poses and changes their posing and/or gestures, thereby making fateful turns of events that move the plot towards the denouement that she wants herself. So, it is she who pushes the lustful Carmen, who flirts with José and Escamillo during the stage action, to death (José kills her while performing a Spanish dance), and she leads her lover by the arm to the TV. According to the researchers, the director managed to update the plot as much as possible for the modern viewer while maintaining the atmosphere characteristic of Spain of the century before last.

In the interpretation of R. Poklitaru, one of the most famous classical ballets, P. Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* (V. Begichev's libretto) is a tragic story about the meaninglessness of the struggle in general and with oneself in particular. The director changes the plot, transforming the classic fairy tale about a prince who fell in love with an enchanted girl into a parable about the impossibility of living contrary to his nature, breaking the central conflict — the transformation of a man into a swan. Stolen from a flock baby swan, turned by the evil genius Von Rothbart into a charming young man Siegfried, lives in the black castle among a retinue of depraved and half-drunk courtiers and buffoons and remembers his past only in dreams — mirages inspired by a narcotic potion, in which he swims around the lake with beautiful birds with white wings and the most charming of them — Odette. In reality, Siegfried grows up with the gothic royal Odile, and after reaching military age, he becomes one of Rothbart's soldiers, who leads his army, hunting/fighting swans.

According to the philosophical and ideological views of R. Poklitaru, the interpretation and staging of the drama require inner laughter, which is healthy ideas about life.

However, unlike the classic close, it is full of tragedy: realising the impossibility of his own life in someone else's body, Siegfried makes his first and last triumphant flight and is killed by hunters.

In 2007, R. Poklitaru performed one of the most famous classical ballets — P. Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, defining the genre of the production as a phantasmagoria ballet for adults. In the choreographer's interpretation, the Nutcracker turns from a children's fairy tale into "a dream in a dream", which the beggar

Marie saw when she froze to death under the windows of the rich Stahlbaum's house. The love conflict conceived by R. Poklitaru is extremely psychologically complex — a girl who was deprived of parental love falls in love with the old hypnotist Drosselmeier. He, suffering from the immorality of his attraction to her, creates his clone at a young age (The Nutcracker) and watches them throughout the stage action, suffering from jealousy, daring to replace him only in the decisive scene of the performance: during the wedding with Nutcracker, at the moment of realisation of Marie's dream, under the P. Tchaikovsky's wedding adagio, a bride is kissed by Drosselmeier, and the dreamy beggar falls into eternal sleep.

R. Poklitaru's interpretation of the *Giselle* ballet by A. Adan (October Palace, Kyiv, 2016) is full of philosophical understanding of the theme of love and betrayal and faith in the power of the human spirit, which supports during the hard knocks. Unlike other classical ballets, the libretto of the fantastic ballet in two acts T. Gautier's *Giselle, or The Wilis* (original title) was considered by the director, not as the primary source based on which he creates his own story — the ballet about a destitute child of an urban, who dreams of real big love has a typical storyline with the original, but as a result of modernisation, peasants, squires and wilis turned into bikers, prostitutes and punks. In the version of T. Gautier, which was based on the belief about Willis (dead dancers — young brides who died before the wedding, but at night they get up from their graves and dance in the moonlight dressed in wedding dresses), recorded by H. Heine in the *Florentine Nights* story and the V. Hugo's *Phantoms* poetry, a village girl Giselle falls in love with Albert, goes crazy because of infidelity and dies, once in the other world. However, according to the creative vision of R. Poklitaru, modern Giselle is deprived of access to the idealised world of deceased souls, and her fate is more terrible because of hopelessness and the inability to get out of the gap of poverty.

Theorising the peculiarities of interpretation of classical ballets by R. Poklitaru, we note the features typical of his productions:

- unique aesthetics of plastic spectacle and integration of elements of symbolic systems of various types of art into the gist of the production;
- perfect sense of musical accents, each of which gets a plastic reflection;
- unique dance vocabulary, which the choreographer creates due to the breadth and diversity of his dance style, without denying any of the existing types of dance (elements of contemporary dance are combined with ballet classics, such as in the *Cinderella* ballet by S. Prokofiev, neoclassical and contemporary), complex technique movements and interesting lifts (for example, *Swan Lake* is built mainly on movements above the stage);
- parody and irony, inspired by the tradition of classical productions; entertainment, humour and satire, masking the tragedy of the situation because the final productions of the choreographer in his interpretation usually do not change, only strengthening with various expressive means (from the type of construction of the performance, choreographic text, consisting of solo and ensemble forms of multiple dance types and characteristics, to the interaction of choreographic and musical arrangements, plastic idea, philosophical meaning of choreographic images, etc.);
- personification in the image of a certain character of fate, supreme or dark forces that determine and direct the actions of the characters and, accordingly, sequence of acts (for example, Micaëla in *the Carmen. TV* ballet, Drosselmeyer in *The Nutcracker*, Rothbart in the *Swan Lake* ballet);
- create your own story based on the source (classical ballet libretto);
- strengthening the philosophical content of the plot using choreographic vocabulary, plastic expressiveness, stage solution, costumes, props, etc.

Conclusions

In the context of the Postmodern paradigm of creativity, R. Poklitaru seeks not only to stage the ballets in the technique of classical dance, developing his choreographic texts but also significantly changes the plots, which is due not so much to the desire to modernise the classical work, actualising it by integrating topics and twists and turns for the 21st-century audience, as to convey the main idea, to convey the author's view a specific situation.

The choreographer's philosophical and ideological views determine the ballet transcension classical system and the renewal of the choreographic language and the expansion and renewal of the vocabulary of contemporary choreography, its plastic forms to try to understand the psychology of human relations. Modernising classical ballet theatre in the choreographer's understanding enhances the emotional impact on the viewer. However, to touch the subtle conception, the artist must be adequate to the time he creates.

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**ІНТЕРПРЕТАЦІЯ БАЛЕТІВ
КЛАСИЧНОГО СПАДКУ
У ТВОРЧОСТІ РАДУ ПОКЛІТАРУ:
ФІЛОСОФСЬКО-СВІТОГЛЯДНА
ПАРАДИГМА МОДЕРН-БАЛЕТУ**

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Мета статті — виявити особливості авторських інтерпретацій балетів класичного спадку Р. Поклітару в контексті філософсько-світоглядної парадигми балетмейстера. Методологія дослідження особливостей інтерпретації балетів класичного спадку на прикладі творчості провідного балетмейстера, засновника та художнього керівника театру «Київ модерн-балет» Раду Поклітару здійснена за допомогою таких методів: історизму (для виявлення особливостей культурно-мистецьких тенденцій сучасності), типологічного методу (для визначення специфіки процесу інтерпретації в хореографічному мистецтві), методу стильового підходу (для розуміння засад балетмейстерської діяльності хореографа). Наукова новизна. Ретельно досліджені особливості прочитання балетної класики Р. Поклітару; проаналізовані поняття «інтерпретація» в контексті сучасного хореографічного мистецтва; зроблена спроба концептуалізувати новаторство підходів до прочитання класичних балетів у контексті філософсько-світоглядної парадигми балетмейстера. Висновки. У рамках постмодерністської парадигми творчості Р. Поклітару встановили, що у власній діяльності хореограф керувався не стільки бажанням осучаснити класичний твір, актуалізувати інтегруванням зрозумілих глядачу XXI ст. тем, скільки метою донести основну ідею, передати авторську позицію щодо конкретної ситуації. Філософсько-світоглядні погляди балетмейстера зумовлюють не лише вихід балету за межі строго вивіреної класичної системи та оновлення хореографічної мови, а й розширення та оновлення лексики сучасної хореографії, її пластичних форм для осмислення психології людських стосунків. Осучаснення класичної спадщини балетного театру в розумінні Р. Поклітару — це засіб посилення емоційного впливу на глядача, і щоб доторкнутися до тонкого плану, митець має бути адекватний часу, в якому творить.

Ключові слова: Р. Поклітару; «Київ модерн-балет»; хореографія; інтерпретація; балетна класика; естетика постмодерну; сучасний танець

**ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ БАЛЕТОВ
КЛАССИЧЕСКОГО НАСЛЕДИЯ
В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ РАДУ ПОКЛИТАРУ:
ФИЛОСОФСКО-МИРОВОЗЗРЕНЧЕСКАЯ
ПАРАДИГМА МОДЕРН-БАЛЕТА**

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Цель статьи — выявить особенности авторских интерпретаций балетов классического наследия Р. Поклитару в контексте философско-мировоззренческой парадигмы балетмейстера. Методология исследования особенностей интерпретации балетов классического наследия на примере творчества ведущего балетмейстера, основателя и художественного руководителя театра «Киев модерн-балет» Раду Поклитару осуществлена с помощью следующих методов: историзма (для выявления особенностей культурных тенденций современности), типологического метода (для определения специфики процесса интерпретации в хореографическом искусстве), метода стилового подхода (для понимания основ балетмейстерской деятельности хореографа). Научная новизна. Тщательно исследованы особенности прочтения балетной классики Р. Поклитару; проанализированы понятия «интерпретация» в контексте современного хореографического искусства; предпринята попытка концептуализировать новаторство подходов к прочтению классических балетов в контексте философско-мировоззренческой парадигмы балетмейстера. Выводы. В рамках постмодернистской парадигмы творчества Р. Поклитару установили, что в своей деятельности хореограф руководствовался не столько желанием осовременить классическое произведение, актуализировать интегрированием, понятным зрителю XXI века, а сколько донести основную идею, передать авторскую позицию по конкретной ситуации. Философско-мировоззренческие взгляды балетмейстера обуславливают не только выход балета за пределы строго выверенной классической системы и обновления хореографического языка, но и расширения и обновления лексики современной хореографии, ее пластических форм для осмысления психологии человеческих отношений. Придание классического наследия балетного театра в понимании Р. Поклитару — это средство усиления эмоционального воздействия на зрителя, и чтобы прикоснуться к тонкому плану, художник должен быть адекватен времени, в котором творит.

Ключевые слова: Раду Поклитару; «Киев модерн-балет»; хореография; интерпретация; балетная классика; эстетика постмодернизма; современный танец