

DEPÓSITO LEGAL ZU2020000153
*Esta publicación científica en formato digital
es continuidad de la revista impresa*
ISSN 0041-8811
E-ISSN 2665-0428

Revista de la Universidad del Zulia

Fundada en 1947
por el Dr. Jesús Enrique Lossada



Ciencias
Sociales
y Arte

Año 11 N° 31
Septiembre - Diciembre 2020
Tercera Época
Maracaibo-Venezuela

The genre of ballet portrait in the historical and cultural heritage of artists "Art World"

Tatiana V. Portnova *

ABSTRACT

The author focuses on the features of the artistic embodiment of the actor's images, based on the creative concept and aesthetic vision of a particular artist, a member of the Creative Union of the World of Art. The article reveals the innovative use of the retrospection technique in their work, highlights the main elements of genre modification. The study is based on the material of individual groups of images belonging to different artists, but formed according to a similar typology, thus, the urgent need for a closer and more versatile view of the theater portrait as one of the key forms in the genre system of the period under consideration becomes obvious. A system analysis of the genre is used, studying the set of artistic tools that artists use to most adequately implement their ideas. An analysis of the main components of the artistic structure reveals the genre features of the ballet portrait as an important vector of the individual search for artists of the "World of Art" association.

KEYWORDS: ballet portrait, artists of the World of Art, problems of the genre, typology.

El género de retrato de ballet en el patrimonio histórico y cultural de los artistas "Mundo del Arte"

RESUMEN

El autor se centra en las características de la encarnación artística de las imágenes de ballet, basándose en el concepto creativo y la visión estética de un artista en particular, miembro de la Unión Creativa del Mundo del Arte. El artículo revela el uso innovador de la técnica de la retrospección en su trabajo, destaca los principales elementos de la modificación de género. El estudio se basa en el material de grupos individuales de imágenes pertenecientes a diferentes artistas, pero conformadas según una tipología similar, de ahí la urgente necesidad de una visión más cercana y versátil del retrato teatral como una de las formas clave del género. Se utiliza un sistema de análisis del género, estudiando el conjunto de herramientas artísticas que utilizan los artistas para implementar de la manera más adecuada sus ideas. Un análisis de los principales componentes de la estructura artística revela los rasgos de género del retrato de ballet como un vector importante de la búsqueda individual de artistas de la asociación "Mundo del Arte".

PALABRAS CLAVE: retrato de ballet, artistas de Mundo del Arte, problemas del género, tipología.

*Doctor of Arts, Professor, Institute of Arts, Department of "Art History", Russian State University named after A.N. Kosygin. Moscow, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4221-3923>

Recibido: 17/06/2020

Aceptado: 31/07/2020

Introduction

Portraits of ballet dancers and choreographers deserve separate consideration as a special genre in the visual arts, since they make up a considerable part of all ballet works, but meanwhile they do not fall out of the general character of the artists included in the World of Art association and, of course, represent one whole with other works on this topic. Artists of the World of Art and artists are directly dependent on the nature of their interconnections in the real art process of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Pankratova, 1976). Consideration of the problems of the portrait image is carried out mainly taking into account the possibilities and features of the painting easel canvas and graphic sheet - forms that are undoubtedly leading in the visual arts. The new ideal that embodied poetry and the power of their creative pursuits was embodied in the guise of a ballet dancer, often they were an expression of their own reflection. Ballet images could not but excite their imagination and exalted them above the ordinary and prose of life. Therefore, their work, acquiring a specific intelligence, is sometimes difficult for the audience to perceive.

The relevance of the study is due to the insufficient development in the art of the problem of the genre of ballet portrait in the works of artists "The World of Art", the role of the author in the formation of this genre, the understanding of which is important for clarifying the artistic situation at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, as well as the fact that the genre searches of artists represent art ballet of this period.

The purpose of the study is to identify the genre content, the structure of the theatrical portrait, its formation in the work of the art association "World of Art", ideological and artistic significance.

In accordance with the goal, the following research objectives are defined:

- to indicate the historical and artistic situation in Russia at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, which determined the vector of artistic searches for artists, its movement in the mainstream of theatricality;
- to analyze the features of the poetics of portraiture in the context of the era and creativity of artists;
- give an artistic and stylistic analysis of portraits of ballet dancers, including little-known ones;

– identify the main genre and compositional iconographic features in the typology system of a ballet portrait.

1. Literature review

The general works were considered in the context of the chosen topic: (Alyoshina, Sternin, 2005; Lenyashin, 2001; Sarabyanov, 1989; (Sokolova, 1972; Rusakova, 1998; Etkind. 1989). The following books and articles were analyzed in connection with the study of the influence of the artists of the “World of Art” on the composition of the genre of ballet portrait: (Gavryuseva, 1989; Gusarova, 1972; Parshin, 1993; Lapshina, 1977; Petrov, 1975; Rusakova, 1998).

In addition to the mentioned literature, works on portraiture exhibitions, in particular theatrical art, were also taken into account: (Kruglov. 1998; Luchkin, 2010; Naumenko, 1987).

There are interesting publications containing information on ongoing international exhibitions, which included some theatrical portraits: (Gottlieb, 2005; Alan, 2010).

Memoirs of artists cited in articles and essays describing biographical facts in connection with work on the creation of scenic portrait images in graphics and painting are of interest: (Beechey, 2006); (Rutherford, 2009); (Veroli, 2014). This diverse material shows the general directions of searches in the genre of theatrical portrait in the era of the turn of the XIX - XX centuries and compared with the Russian masters of the "World of Art", to evaluate their activities.

2. Methodology

The stable interest in Russian ballet theater and the artists of the World of Art is evidenced by numerous exhibitions held both in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and in subsequent eras in many art museums around the world. In addition, despite the great interest in theatrical subjects and scientific research in the field of artistic culture of the Silver Age, no studies were conducted in the visual arts based on the materials of the ballet genre. This situation is due to the need for further study of this problem, insufficient research and relevance to modern theater.

The methodological basis of the work was the principles of historicism and systemicity, an integrated approach to the study of artistic phenomena. The combination of

historical-artistic, comparative and typological methods of analysis made it possible to trace the process of formation and features of the ballet portrait genre in the works of artists "The World of Art".

3. Results

Before proceeding to a direct examination of the work of artists working on a ballet portrait, it is necessary to understand the goals and objectives of the author of the work, the subject of which is a ballet dancer. The ways of capturing a person in a portrait are determined by the specifics of fine art and its expressive means. The type of portrait is determined not only by the person portrayed, but also by the author's approach to the image. A portrait of a ballet dancer can be a full-length figure, a half-figure; attention can only be focused on the face; An artist can be shown in and out of dance. A similar task requires its own methods of solution, it considers ballet plastic and harmony, rather prone to a spiritual beginning and uses the model as a means to reflect it. The search for artists in the portrait is associated with the psychology of ballet, a study of the personality of artists. In working on a portrait of a dancer, an artist can set the task of conveying the artist in a specific ballet role, catching his unique features of talent, since he was trained on the principles of liberating the portrait genre from the canons of the traditional compositional solution.

Another category of portraits is associated with showing ballet dancers in a casual environment; artists, like all people, are not isolated from life. When working on such a portrait, the artist proceeds, first of all, from the specific psychological characteristics of the character, taking into account the features of his creative personality, and offers his own interpretation of the image. The gallery of portraits of ballet dancers belongs to the "Mirkusniks": A. Bakst, K. Somov, A. Golovin, M. Dobuzhinsky, B. Kustodiev, K. Korovin. Not all of them worked fruitfully in this genre. Only L. Bakst and M. Dobuzhinsky of all left a considerable legacy; the rest created only a few works; in addition, some of them are listed in catalogs whose location is unknown, therefore we analyzed only some of them.

Portraits of L. Bakst, depicting "A. Pavlov", "A. Duncan" (1918, A.S. Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts), "L. Myasin", "V. Tsukki" (1917, compiled abroad) and portraits of K. Somov, depicting the dancer N. Poznyakov (1910-1913, State Russian Museum, private collection, Moscow) are distinguished by the artists' deep attention to the model's face.

Everyone who carefully watched the ballet, was probably convinced more than once that the very nature of classical dance momentarily reminds us of the constant laws of the structure of the form in a person in ballet. It is easy to notice that artists in portraits are looking for such nuances, such a position of the portrait, the expression of their faces, the tilt of the head, in which the typical features of ballet dancers would be most fully captured. This is achieved, first of all, by a surprisingly smooth linear pattern by L. Bakst, and by a soft, velvety black-and-white study by K. Somov. K. Somov only in some places with the indicated lines emphasizes the lightness of the image in the finished portrait and in one of the options for the "portrait of N. Poznyakov". L. Bakst in "Portrait of A. Pavlova" and "A. Duncan" selects the point of view on the model a little from below, in which the dancers' neck acquires a graceful bend, fluid movement, and the dance itself. On gray-blue paper with a soft Italian pencil, the artist convincingly draws the appearance of ballerinas, not trying to outline the elements of the costume, as if afraid to break and interrupt the flowing lines that outline the oval of the face, neck and shoulders. L. Bakst apply the same technique, expose the dancers' neck, revealing muscle relief, flexibility and mobility in male portraits "Portrait of L. Myasin" and K. Somov "Portrait of N. Poznyakov" with soft shading. L. Bakst was most successful in creating portraits in tune with the scenic in "Portrait of A. Pavlova". Catching the flexible smoothness of movement, the charm of lightly turning the head towards the viewer, fixing half-closed eyes and looking away to the side, applying light shading, the artist thereby achieves a mood of some detachment, emphasizes the ghostly fragility of the plastic appearance inherent in her ballet roles. If the portrayal of the artist in the portraits of L. Bakst is rather developed and completed, then the portrait sketches of M. Dobuzhinsky look completely different: two "Portrait of S. Lifar" (1936-1937), two "Portrait of T. Tumanova" (1935), "Portrait of V. Nemchinov", four "portraits of T. Karsavina" (1914, 1915, 1923). They represent a peculiar, instant sketch with a graphite pencil, conveying nature in all its immediacy. "Portrait of T. Karsavina" and "Portrait of B. Nemchinova" are sketches of dancers in life.

Dancers are represented primarily as ballet dancers in portraits of L. Bakst and K. Somov; M. Dobuzhinsky emphasizes the human essence, along with the artistic one in portrait sketches. The constant internal self-discipline of the ballet dancer does not make his heroes supermen, they are characterized by ordinary human feelings - fatigue, irritation,

desire to withdraw into oneself, to withdraw from a specific situation. "Portrait of T. Karsavina" (1914) captures the dancer during the rehearsal of N. Stravinsky's ballet "Petrushka". Although one profile image of the head is given and the headdress is slightly outlined, T. Karsavina is very recognizable in this role, the image is so truthfully interpreted. The achievement of an amazing similarity is based, first of all, on an extremely concise, accurate description of the general shape of the head with an emphasis on individual characteristics (Dobuzhinsky, 1976).

Another aspect in the field of ballet portrait can be traced in the robots of L. Bakst, K. Somov, A. Golovin, K. Korovin, associated with an attempt to replace the posing tension in the portrait with the artist's free behavior, transferring him to a casual atmosphere. If such searches can just be observed in the portrait sketches of M. Dobuzhinsky, they are clearly identified in the following works: Somov "Portrait of V. Fokina" (1921, State Russian Museum), A. Golovin "Portrait of the ballerina E. Smirnova" (1910, State Tretyakov Gallery), "Portrait of the Ballerina J. Shimanskaya" (1916, Kalinin Regional Art Gallery), L. Bakst "Portrait of V. Nizhinsky on Lido Beach" (1914, private collection), "V. Nizhinsky and other artists on Lido beach" (private collection), "A. Duncan on the beach" (1909, private collection), K. Korovin "Dancer" (1918, private collection, Moscow), "Portrait of V. Trefilova" (1924, private collection). Artists believe that the person is more important than professional; therefore, they depict the rest of the artists, moments of peace, scenes of involuntary removal from work. The figure of V. Fokina, who sat down to rest at a rehearsal, with a spiritual face, half-open mouth, attentive eyes and artistic hands with flexible musical fingers, stands against a light background, illuminated by theatrical light, with great tangibility and at the same time somewhat mysteriously. A simple graphite pencil turns in the hands of K. Somov into an extremely rich and inexhaustible tool. The artist brings the pencil stains to velvety darkness or makes them more tender, like a light shadow that fell on paper. Everything up to the direction of the stroke is permeated by the same state of the artist's creative life during a minute of rest. A. Golovin is painted "Portrait of the Ballerina J. Shimanskaya" by the same expressive means. The emphasis in the figure shown on the floor is also placed on the hands of the dancer. Hands are as expressive as those of Fokina but interpreted in a completely different way. Fokina's hands are flexible and mobile, transmitting inner tension, creative thought; Shimanskaya's hands, on the

contrary, are graceful and flowing, emphasizing the lyrical mood of the image (Golovin, 1960).

The figures in the pictorial portraits of A. Golovin, K. Korovin, L. Bakst were transferred to a specific environment: A. Golovin "Portrait of E.A. Smirnova" - landscape, L. Bakst "Portrait of V. Nizhinsky on Lido beach" - landscape, K. Korovin "Dancer" - rooms, "Portrait of V. Trefilova" - artistic dressing room. K. Korovin does not try to catch the portrait resemblance, treats the figures with a generalized broad brushstroke in The Dancer and Portrait of V. Trefilova; the main thing for him is to express the general atmosphere of rest, disconnection of the artist from the world of creative tension into the world of everyday relaxation. Therefore, he pushes the figures of the dancers deep into the canvas, wanting to leave more room for air and light that fill the room. Despite the models being shown in a landscape setting, the attention in the portraits of L. Bakst "Nizhinsky on Lido Beach" and A. Golovin "Portrait of the ballerina E. Smirnova" is more likely to be focused on the appearance, giving them out as ballet dancers. The slender figure of a dancer with an athletically developed body and naked muscular legs, with reliefly chiaroscuro shapes in "Portrait of V. Nizhinsky on Lido Beach" resembles the images of the gods and heroes of ancient Hellas (Bespalova, 2016). A. Golovin in "Portrait of E. Smirnova" distinguishes the figure of a ballerina from the surrounding landscape with striking, almost photographic resemblance, conveying the originality of posture, the unique personality of the gesture, and the manner of holding. Such identification of professional traits in K. Somov in "Portrait of Fokina" and in A. Golovin in "Portrait of J. Shimanskaya" was expressed, first of all, through the face and plastic of hands; however, professional features in the above portraits are shown rather through the silhouette, through the drawing of the pose of the depicted model.

A different approach to the consideration of a ballet portrait is shown by artists when they strive to show a ballerina in dance, due to which the display of a purely professional moment plays a fundamental role in their works. The artist's labor process is rather emphasized in such a portrait; attention is focused more on the transmission of movement than on the personality itself. However, L. Bakst convincingly painted the images of each of the ballerinas, reliably conveyed their portrait features, showing dance movements, in the following works: "Portrait of I. Rubinstein" (1921), "Portrait of I.

Rubinstein as Antigone” (1906), “Dancing A. Duncan” (1907, meeting abroad). Also B. Kustodiev in the following works: “Portrait of V. Ivanova” in the Spanish dance “Panderos” in the ballet of A. Glazunov “Raymond” (1921, State Central Theater Museum named after A. Bakhrushin), version of “Portrait of V. Ivanova” (Dnepropetrovsky Art Museum).

Conclusion

So, the interpretation of portrait ballet heritage is a cross-cutting theme in the paintings and graphic works of many representatives of the art world. The study shows that this genre as a special area of the ballet theme in the visual arts has more realistic features than their own works of plot subjects. The retrospectivism characteristic of the creative thinking of these masters in the lesser sea touched the portrait genre. This is explained by the fact that the object of the image in the portrait is a ballet dancer, his face, figure, and finally, his creative nature, requiring the artist to faithfully reproduce. The images of ballet dancers in the works of the artists “World of Art” are a collective portrait of an entire generation of Russian dancers with their special attitude, mentality and value system. Determining the artistic achievements in the field of ballet portrait, we can answer that the best of the created works reveal the originality of acting personalities, individual creativity, inner peace, which is their main and lasting significance.

The acting role and the author’s concept of stage interpretation embodied in it had a significant impact on the development of portraiture of the 20th century. The theoretical and practical significance of this study lies in the fact that it examines the work of the artists of the World of Art in the field of portraiture, not only in the context of the processes taking place in the Russian ballet theater, but also in the context of the development of the entire world theater since the 1800s . The main historical stages of the development of the genre of ballet portrait at the turn of the century and the main styles of its artistic existence reveal that these are images created on the basis of life realities, and not fiction, they are characterized by documentary nature. An important feature of the portrait in general and theatrical portrait in particular is demonstrated, which consists in the fact that the display of a person - an artistic person in it has a defining, independent meaning and is the main theme of the entire work. A pictorial or graphic portrait of an

artist always belongs to the sphere of a visual concept: without an out-of-visual reference, a portrait model cannot be identified.

The study of ballet portrait expands the theoretical aspects of modern art history, enriches the idea of the genre palette of fine art and theater, deepens the understanding of its visual and expressive capabilities, expands the traditional boundaries of artistic content. The data and conclusions presented in the work can be used in scientific research and training courses on the study of Russian art culture, choreographic art of the late 19th and 20th centuries.

References

- Alan D. (2010). Conference proceedings; Art and philosophy; Ballet; Exhibition catalogs. - Art Monthly Australia, No. 228, pp.37-39.
- Alyoshina L.S., Sternin G.Yu. (2005). Images and people of the Silver Age. Moscow: Galart, p. 271.
- Beechey, J, Shone. R. (2006). Picasso in London, 1919: The Première of 'The Three-Cornered Hat'. The Burlington Magazine, Vol. 148, No. 1243, pp. 666-679.
- Bespalova E.R. (2016). Bakst in Paris. Moscow: BuksMArt, p. 255.
- Diaghilev Dorris G. (1978), Costumes and Designs for the Ballets Russes Fleeting Gestures: Treasures of Dance Photography Alternative Gestures: Another Look at Dance Photography _ Dance Chronicle, Vol. 2, No. 3 , pp. 237-248.
- Dobuzhinsky M.V. Memoirs. (1976) Volume I. New York: The Way of Life, p. 408.
- Etkind M.A. N. (1989). Benois and Russian art culture. Leningrad: "Artist of the RSFSR", p. 480.
- Gavryuseva T. (1989). Facing the "World of Art". Leningrad panorama. No.1, pp. 32-33.
- Golovin A.Ya. (1960). Meetings and impressions. Letters. Memories of Golovin. Leningrad - Moscow: Art, p. 389.
- Gusarova A. (1972). World of art. Leningrad: "Artist of the RSFSR", p. 100.
- Kruglov V. (1998) By the centenary "World of Art". "World of Art". On the centenary of the exhibition of Russian and Finnish artists in 1898, St. Petersburg: Palace Editions, p. 336.
- Lapshina N.P. (1977). "World of Art": Essays on History and Creative Practice. Moscow: Art, p. 344.
- Lenyashin V.A. (2001). Diaghilev and his era. St. Petersburg: State Russian Museum, p. 320.

Luchkin A.V. (2010). Retrospective exhibitions of the World of Art association in the cultural space of Russia at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. The space of education is the space of culture. Moscow, pp. 184 – 189.

Naumenko N.V. (1987) Diaghilev - the historian of the Russian portrait. Sergey Diaghilev and the artistic culture of the 19-20th centuries: Materials of the first Diaghilev readings. Perm, pp. 110-121.

Pankratova, E.A. (1976) Theater portrait of the late 19th- early 20th century: Lectures. Leningrad State Institute of Theater, Music and Cinematography. Leningrad: LGITMiK, p. 67.

Parshin S.M. (1993). The World of Art. Moscow: Fine Arts, p. 80.

Petrov V.N. (1975). World of art. Moscow: Fine Arts, p. 248.

Rusakova G. (1998). "The World of Art" in the domestic culture of the late 19th - early 20th centuries. Pinakothek. No. 6-7, pp. 8-14.

Sarabyanov D.V. (1989). Art Nouveau style. Sources, history, problems. Moscow: Art, p. 294.

Sokolova N.I., Vanslova V.V. (1972) Ways of development of Russian art of the late 19th - early 20th centuries. Painting. Graphic arts. Sculpture. Theatrical and decorative art. Moscow, p. 271.

Sternin G.Yu. (1984). Russian art culture of the second half of the 19th - early 20th centuries. Research. Essays. Moscow: "Soviet artist", 296 p.

Rutherford A. (2009). The Triumph of the Veiled Dance: The Influence of Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley on Serge Diaghilev's Creation of the Ballets Russes. Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 93-107.

Veroli. P. (2014). Serge Lifar as a Dance Historian and the Myth of Russian Dance in "Zarubezhnaia Rossiia" (Russia Abroad) 1930-1940. Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 105-143.