

5. THEATER DANCE ATELIER

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Abstract: *The substance of the spiritual and cultural life is the syncretism of the arts from the performer-spectator division, that was made concurrently with the “dance” segmentation into work and pleasure. Words were held in formulas, gestures and dance in rhythm.*

Today, dance is mostly seen as the art of gesture. However, it is remarkable to reflect at to what extent the dance, as an organic necessity, it could further develop into hermetic structures that would still require analyses and studies from researchers in the field.

In today’s theatrical landscape, this formula of artistic expression which was called theatre dance evolved so much so that gesticulations and body exploration became its core components.

Key words: *syncretism, theater, artistic expression*

1. Introduction

One can perceive a gesture from an over-all perspective, making it difficult for both the performer as well as the audience to distinguish subtle elements, milestones and essential details that support its expressive value. Each individual, each social group who resonates with its own environment creates and experience its own body and movement mythologies, shaping the everchanging grids of their conscious or involuntary perception, in any case an active perception. Dance is, par excellence, the field in which we can see the whirlwind of confrontation between the forces of cultural evolution, an area that tends to produce, and simultaneously to control or censor new attitudes of self-expression and impress others. Thus, gesture and its visual perception manifests itself in an infinite variety of marvels that prevents any hope of identical reproduction.

2. Discussions

A gesture’s shape or form helps us understand its execution, but also the way it is perceived by dancers and spectators. Pursuant to studies made by Rudolf Laban and Erwin Strauss, beyond the question of mechanical locomotion orthostatic position already contains expressive psychological elements above all or any movement. The movement relationship with gravitation includes already a certain mood. This specific weight management makes us recognize someone from the sound of footsteps while climbing a ladder. Conversely, in a state of imponderability, the expression is radically different, as demonstrated by astronauts, because the essential indicator allows us to interpret the meaning of a gesture which has profoundly changed. We will call it “pre-movement” the attitude towards weight, gravity, already existent in the orthostatic position before we begin moving, which will provide expressivity to the movement to be executed. The pre-movement is responsible for the alignment with gravity, i.e.

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the way the subject aligns and prepare its posture to stand up and brings into line its weight in this position.

An entire system of so-called gravitational muscle, whose action is largely unconscious and involuntary, is in charge of ensuring posture; they keep us balance and allow us to stand upright without thinking about it. These muscles are also those that record changes of our emotional and psychological moods. Thus, any change in posture will affect our emotional state and, conversely, any mood change will lead to a change of our posture. The internal resistance to imbalance, generated by the gravitational muscle system, will create the quality and emotional impact of the gesture. The psychic is explained by the gravity system, which in turn enhances the gesture, providing a connotation, modulating it and colour it with desires, inhibitions and emotions.

The level of energy against gravitation is induced just before the movement while initiating the action without the subject being aware. That is why the professional dancers know that to diversify, to modify or improve the quality of the gesture must use all its dimensions, including the pre-movement which can only be achieved by accessing their artistic imagination. By using their superior understanding of gravitational movements and dance, Pina Bausch's dancers can distinguish/achieve two levels of expression: they improvise words while performing gestures contradictory with the meaning of their words. Individual gravitational organization is determined by a complex of phylogenetic, cultural and individual parameters.

It is equally moving from the standing position to the upright gait of evolution and cultural history in the individual inserted. This is equally about the progression from a four-legged position to upright posture, as well as about the walking evolution and individual history ingrained in the cultural environment. The body language myths assumed within a social group become part of an postural system, and vice versa, the individuals' body postures become the transmission channel for this mythology. Various complex angles of perception allow us to understand the creation process when we are spectators of a theatrical act or a dance performance. An actor or dancer's movement and gestures trigger the observer's own movement experience: visual information generates immediate kinesthetic experience of the spectator and internal sensation of movement of one's body. The changes and forces occurred in the performer's body space resonate with the spectator's body.

Two great choreographers and dance techniques trainers - Merce Cunningham and Trisha Brown - explain two perception techniques, that are different by nature of the moods and experiences involved. Both distanced from anything that could have been interpreted as a story, from any narrative idea that would have prompted the spectator to pay attention to the form. Cunningham's works require distance, forcing the audience to perceive the sign or figure for what they are. We can consider the postural attitude and pre-movement as the gesture prelude being the background which supports the obvious movement: Visible figure. The gap between dancer's emotions and the result of its craft is placed in between what once can see and the performer's own emotions.

The dancer cannot afford to let himself overwhelmed by the dance. The dancer recreates through its own internal upheaval the real meaning of gestures and expressions, focusing on the movement's fundamental language. Cunningham's dancer removes every trace of personal emotion and any form of interpretation of the figure presented. By contrast, Trisha Brown wants to bring to light into the final version of the gesture the original stages of the movement, pre-movement. By analyzing Trisha Brown's work, we could say that the stimulation begins with the kinesthetic sensibility (uninterpretable yet) developing into a conscious perception. By comparison, Cunningham opts for a perceptive interpretation (construction and deconstruction) that outlines first what you see and only after that reaching the audience's kinesthetic sensibility. When it comes to understanding the movement, the two great choreographers and scholars adopted two diverse political projects, two different ways of relating to the world.

The dance has no comparable scoring method as the one used in music. The first notation systems developed in the eighteenth century, while understanding the incipient form of ballet, is based on a steps system and a certain number of rules matching the music not allowing the scoring of movement in all its complexity. Rudolf Laban is the first to introduce a human movement notation system. "Kinetography" or "Labanotation" is a complex notation system for recording and analyzing human movement developed by Rudolf Laban due to his analytical thinking applied to human movement.

The core concept of the expressivity and plasticity of the human body movement is the body itself. Both actor and dancer can not relate to their bodies the same way as a person who do not have to express through his body movement does while performing a daily routine. However, dancer and actor can get into the cycle of insurmountable duality, if they have an instrumentalist attitude towards their own bodies. The actor-dancer represents a cultural product, being compelled to think and feel based on the structure of mental cultural paradigm that is driven into like everyone else, expressing his own attitude towards the human body. Our choice to use the term "body" is purely methodological, and it is used with the purpose to avoid any ambiguities that could lead us into the area we are trying to combat.

Yet again, considering the concept of dancer-actor's connection with its own body I wish to bring to your attention the exceptional importance of the choreographical concept in rapport with other arts. The choreographical concept gives the body a clear direction, eliminating any ambiguities, and enhances the body's superior level from the spirit, soul and mind. There is an essential connection between the dancer and what it must deliver. The dancer's body transforms itself into a channel to convey the artistic message. The purpose of dance as an art transforming the body movements and gestures into messages, leading to an identity rapport between the dancer and his craft or message, must be supported by Friedrich Nietzsche's corporal theories since they are the first of this kind in the history accrediting the idea of body's liberation from the dualistic conceptions' sway.

Pina Bausch invented a new concept of spectacle by presenting stereotypical loss of human social systems and where power games seem artificial. Pina Bausch is a leading influence and reigns as a stellar international artist one of the creators of the “Tanztheater” due to the way she elaborates her performances and dance pieces introducing the abyssal element catalyzing the scenic performance and through her active engaged dance concept. Her performances include elements from theater, musical shows and happening concept shows. Her preferred theme is the alienation between men and women transposing them into various metaphors, as illustrated eloquently in “The Bluebeard” (1977) by Bella Bartok. Descendant of German expressionism, disciple of Kurt Jooss, a famous ballet dancer and choreographer mixing classical ballet with theatre, Pina Bausch imposed this form of art in perfect correlation of the socio-historical context with Germany’s traumas and anxieties following the decades after the Second World War. Pina Bausch's creations “Orpheus and Eurydice ”(1975) and “Rite of Spring” (1975) are the performances that shape structurally her extensive choreographic discourse inherited from German expressionism.

Exceptional dancer and choreographer, Pina Bausch will be the artist who imposes the concept of the dancer who integrates a theatrical speech in his own body. Pina Bausch’s entire artistic heritage speaks about the concept she created: TANZTHEATER. The evolution of dance resembles a real uprooting. Pina Bausch breaks away from the classic dance history and creates a new scenic language branded by the apparent lack of movement and dance. The central concepts of my scientific research and theater pedagogy are the necessity of combining the body language expression with modern dance techniques, and the non-verbal and body movement exercises with theater dance elements.

Pina Bausch was born at Solingen in 1940 and died in 2009 at Wuppertal. She studied dance with Kurt Jooss at the Folkwang School in Essen. The young dance student Bausch thus acquired techniques for free creative expression as well as the command of a clear form. She was awarded the highest international distinctions and accolades for her art, and she is one of the most important choreographers of our times. From Kurt Jooss she learned “honesty and precision”. Pina Bausch used these two values to create a volcanic dramatic energy in a way that was not seen before.

She created a world theatre, which can incorporate all cultural colourations and treats every person with the same respect. It is a theatre that does not aim to preach, instead creating an elemental experience of life, which each spectator is invited to participate in along with the dancers. This global theatre is generous, relaxed in its perception of the world and thoroughly charming towards its audience. It invites them to make peace with life, and trust their courage to go on living and their own strength. A mediator between cultures, it is a messenger of freedom and mutual understanding. It is a theatre which remains free of all ideology and dogma, viewing the world with as little prejudice as possible and acknowledging life - in all its facets.

The thoughts and body movements are connected through dance. The core concept of the human body's movement while dancing is the rhythm. Our human body has a permanent rhythm: our heart beat, our breath, each movement of our body while walking, running, dancing, writing has a rhythm. From this point of view, the human body has a rhythmical design. Understanding genuine theater-dance requires knowledge of conditions in which crystallized phenomenon and how speech theater and the scenic intertwine in a new form of discourse, one in which we can not speak only of dancers or actors but also artists who embodies messages.

3. Conclusions

To have an in-depth and genuine understanding of the theater dance, one should learn about the incipient notions contributing to the creation of the concept, as well as the way that the theatrics and stage narrative are merged creating a new style where the performers are not only a dancer or actor rather they are transformed into artists conveying a message. A logical approach involves the conceptual delimitation of the phenomenon, i.e. not only that we need to specify the genre where dance theater belongs to, but also showing the difference that differentiates theater dance it from other form of art on stage. Theater dance is a genre that belongs to the performing arts field. However, what makes the theater dance different is that by using a certain dance technique the artist creates a theater dance performance.

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