

THE DANCE INTERPRETATION BY K. SOMOV AND S. SUDEYKIN IN THE CONTEXT OF RETROSPECTIVE ARTISTIC IMAGINARY NATURE

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Abstract: The article's urgency is caused by the special importance of both masters' creative stylistic nature. They had adjoined to different artistic groups at the turn of the 19th – 20th century – such as «World of Art» (known in Russia as "Mir Iskusstva") and «Blue Rose». Thus, both masters were striving to imprint the Russian ballet's image via the retrospective view of the romantic epoch. The author considers different relations between the dance and painting based on the different creations. These relations were reflected in multiple edges: spiritual, psychological, aesthetical, associative and visual. Following article is based on unique data and artifacts, which has been found in foreign and domestic private collections and partly upon public museum collections. Also, materials from the manuscript departments of Moscow and S. Petersburg museums were used in the article.

Keywords: dance, «the World of art», «Blue Rose», artistic imaginary, retrospection, interpretation, K. Somov, S. Sudeykin.

1 Introduction¹

This article is an attempt to describe dance images in art creation of both bright masters at the turn of 19th–20th century. K. Somov and S. Sudeykin are in the main ideological and stylistic trends. In general, it means those art phenomena in which something new discovered is caused by essential time requirements. This includes numerous searches including one-sided sometimes contradictory but has made a significant contribution to the choreographic culture of the 19th century. “In my opinion, a ballet has a great future but of course not in the form in which it exists now. We have to give the ballet modern color, to put it our life's expression, refined, painful feelings, sensations, and aspirations. The obscurity, vapidness, elusive must find and will find, in all probability, its existence in the ballet, as in any other field of art such as conditional and vague nature” (1) exactly determine the nature of its relationship to age, that the present-day literature tries to express submitting to the crisis needs of the modern spirit. These needs, more precisely - a new life's and art's sense make artists dependent and independent of each other to create new tools and to seek. K. Somov entered to the «World of Art» association. S. Sudeykin belonged to the «Blue Rose» but the desire to the ballet brought them closer. A theme of the dance in the art in the end 19th - early 20th century had run a new, interesting and perspective milestone. We can say that it was grown and was crystallized in a very special and unusual vast area, directly or indirectly affecting the creative experience of the majority art masters. The ballet was trying to enter the other arts in the form of artistic mean support of its ideas. The general plastic ideas of the era were fixed in the dance images. Thus, the analysis of the creative development ballet theme at the turn of the centuries opens close relationship between the artist from the social and artistic situation of the ballet. Deep social-historical changes in the choreography had identified a new perspective authors, dictated the art solution of dance images, the change, and the compositions and plot. Therefore, in most cases, works on the ballet theme of this time are not the only result of logical thinking artists but a consequence of their intuitive insight and aesthetic taste. The artists of the “World of Art” and the “Blue Rose” are seeking poetic dance images harmony of their own aesthetic culture. So,

there is an internal relationship of modern in painting and drawing with the aesthetics of the ballet at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries as an expression of style generality inherent in the era.

Oleographic symbol gets great importance from the artists of “Blue Rose” so typical for the drama and musical theater that time.

Therefore, the dance tune so naturally entered the elegant and decorative atmosphere of so-called “picturesque” and the graphic stylings of K. Somov and S. Sudeykin where elegance and plasticity of art language have played an active semantic role. Great opportunities were opened in the world of modern decoration, plastic depiction, mastering the art of new composite structures, elements, rhythms. The traditional genre forms were enriched in the line of this trend.

2 Materials and Methods

A careful study of the available publications about the artists, newspaper and magazine articles, reviews, exhibition catalogs and museum collections of foreign and domestic, as well as a direct acquaintance with the works of K. Somov and S. Sudeykin show their identity quest in the interpretation of the dance theme. Addition to the theatricality is clearly felt in the works of these painters. S. Ernst shows “The first strong theatrical impression of Somov is associated with the ballet – he was three years old child when he saw the now-forgotten historical ballet “Camargo” is presented in a weighty “Lunkeizn” decoration and his imagination was struck for a long time.” (2)

The authors repeatedly stressed by the available publications about S. Sudeykin, “Sudeykin thinks theatrical images, the theater completely captured his artistic conception of the world.” (3) “The ballet and the dance since the beginning of artist career were the elements permeating entire flesh of his art. A passion for the ballet, the dance was another aesthetic utopia captured Sudeykin like many of his contemporaries who saw the condition of a freedom in the emancipations' body, in the harmonies of its forms, in the beauty and relaxedness of his movements.” (4)

Works with the ballet plot can be identified in the individual, not quite similar group in the work of both the artists. Somov has graphic drawings, a theatrical theme with evident elements of dance plastic categories and easel paintings of the “Russian Ballet”. Sudeykin had paintings on the theme of “Ballet” as well as sets and costumes for the ballet performances. We'll try to find the common and special in their dance images considering the work of these masters in parallel. First of all, we should turn to the gesture drawings of K. Somov “Rehearsal of the ballerina” (1909, SRM), “The dancer Anna Pavlova in the ballet”, «Harlequinada” (1909, SRM), “A dancer”. “The gesture drawings for a costume of Anna Pavlova” (SRM) etc. which is common by their nature with gesture drawings costume design of S. Sudeykin “T. Karsavina in Salome” (SCTM) although they carry personal artistic objectives. It's difficult to establish whether the gesture drawings “Rehearsal of the ballerina” by Somov is a gesture drawing of a particular ballet but it is undeniable that it is made from nature. A half-figure of a dancer takes the central part of the sheet where a certain gesture of the hands is captured and it is repeated again in a smaller size just below. Single and duet figures in packs are illustrated along the edges of the sheet in different drawings. Rapid movement of the pen in a variety of perspectives: front, top, side imprint a series of ballet poses and movements from the simplest pas to the partner support. The gesture drawings by Somov is close to the choreographer gesture drawings in this sense and it reminds the creative work of the choreographer.

Although the other two gesture drawings: “A dancer”, “Anna Pavlova's ballet costume for “Harlequin” (1909, SRM) are

¹ Abbreviation:

NMFA - National Museum of Fine Arts of A.S. Pushkin.

SCTM - State Central Theater Museum of A. Bakhrushin.

SRM - The State Russian Museum.

STG - State Tretyakov Gallery.

YAG - Yekaterinburg Art Gallery.

KRAM - Kirov Regional Art Museum of M. Gorky.

NRAG - Novosibirsk Regional Art Gallery.

OAM - Oxford. Ashmolean Museum.

OAM - Odessa Art Museum.

PMTMC - St. Petersburg Museum of Theatrical and Musical Culture.

SAM - Saratov Art Museum of Radischev.

gesture drawings of costumes, the solvable problems in them correspond to more tasks are put in separate works. The choreography consists of motor action which is characterized by very complex anatomical and physiological functions and is subjected to the mechanic law.

First of all, our glance stops not on the image suit our view in figure "A dancer. The gesture drawings for the costume of Anna Pavlova" it is almost hasn't developed and the fourth leg position, live movement of the ballerina. It's not ballet clothes are shown on one sheet in the four figures and artists owning their body to perfection. The suit appears only a necessary attribute of classical dance here. This aspect of the theme - the mechanics of motion is shown in the gesture drawings of Somov "A dancer. Anna Pavlova's costume for the ballet "Harlequin" where one model - Anna Pavlova is presented in different phases of movement. If in the previous gesture drawing Somov shows the same model just in different static positions four times, emphasizing pose not dancing movement here he focuses on individual elements of the same movement as if he fixes its condition three times passing its amplitude from start to finish that allows feeling its significance, its previous and subsequent stages. The ability to think on paper appeared clearly here involving the audience in the process of his thoughts. If you look closely to the gesture drawing, you may notice that one support leg of Anna Pavlova remains unchanged with one hand motionless so. The motion is carried out by means of a second working leg, head and another arm also change its position. You can even define a particular motion shown by Somov - *rond de jambe par terre en de dans* or *rond de jambe en l'air en dedans* - circular movement of working leg on the floor or inside the air. Line motion begins with little marked by the artist leg which gradually straightens, the sock is pulled forward, then the motion is made along the arc on the floor or in the air and fixed by Somov's working leg is turned on the toe to the side, completing the movement. Fixed by Somov's running leg is turned on the toe to the side completing the movement in the arc on the floor or in the air. We can assume that another movement is shown attitude but it's the only one poses of illustrated figures. The other two figures fix movement *battement tendu simple* - putting of foot forward, to the side, back-to-toe. Moreover, the artist conveys easily recognizable movement *ballet pas de bourre* - quick run on the fingers in the upper part of the sheet in two moving figurines. It remains unchanged when we looking through in detail all specified by the artist phases of ballet movements we looking at the gesture drawing of the Anna Pavlova's costume we feel the mutual consistency of separately shown elements of pas.

K. Somov demonstrates how comfortable a suit he proposed for classical dance, as we said this a gesture drawing gives a spectacular example of a reflection in the ballet theme one of its aspects - the transfer mechanics, technicians of ballet movements and everything else is portrayal with A. Pavlova and the form of costume recede into the background.

Along the way, we'll stop at the most indicative for S. Sudeykin "Costume for T. Karsavina in "Salome". Immediately we can see their difference which consists not only in the fact that Somov is interested in the motion. Even if we compare finished version suit's Somov where the single pose is captured as with Sudeykin the main difference will be in the other. Gesture drawings of Somov do not carry the recognizable sign of Anna Pavlova in all the liveliness transmitted motion, we can catch not only the appearance of T. Karsavina in the gesture drawing of Sudeykin costume but also a deeply personal individual note of her work. The commonness of costumes of Somov and Sudeykin consists of attention both to the transfer of motion however if Somov deeps into the dance process but the Sudeykin's motion is typical as if it fix the most characteristic culmination moment typical for specific role from the ballet, not for nothing one of the foreign artists repeated it exactly in his sculpture showing of T. Karsavina in this manner.

It necessary to touch a series of easel works based on Italian comedies and Harlequinade as discussed about ballet images in the works of two masters that demonstrates special «theatrical»

view of artists seeking out in nature spectacular foreshortening, plastic motions, expressive silhouette rhythms. Aesthetic ideals of ballet are the harmony and beauty of human body is expressed in endless Harlequin and Columbine, there is a certain cultural and aesthetic canon biography of retrospection in their plastic poses. Here we meet with the ballet theme echoes in a different, much subtler and complex refraction. We find not a direct image of the dance and the transfer of its properties which appears only in the classical dance in the "Harlequinade", "Masquerade", "Columbine", "Ladies" and "Pierrot" of K. Somov and S. Sudeykin. The ability to plastically express the idea - that's what distinguishes a ballet dancer on stage. Works of K. Somov open imaginary world of fancy presentation, transmit artistic expression of choreographic art in this regard. J. Noverre wrote: «The human passions have a certain degree of ardor which can't be expressed in words or rather for which words are not enough. The triumph of effective dance comes then. "One pas, one gesture, one movement can express that can't be expressed by any other means, the stronger the sense that is necessary wrote alive the more difficult it is expressed in words." (5) Gestural speech is not primitive in ballet and it is able to talk about. And the heroes of Somov have it that is also unusually - expressive. Cutesy 18th century like comes to life in his paintings before eyes - the century of minuet and powdered wigs. The plot is completely subordinated to the aims and objectives of psychological acquire meaning and interest only in the psychological interpretation image. It's no matter how the events are significant in the picture themselves they acquire meaning and interest only in the psychological interpretation. The main characters of Somov and Sudeykin are highlighted almost all the time to the foreground. If they are more puppet, static and contemplative from Sudeykin ("Columbine and Punchinello" - GUTM, "Masquerade" - 1911, Coll. RE Krotte, "Harlequin's Garden" - 1915-1916, SAM, "Masquerade" - 1937, YAG, "Harlequinade" - KRAM and etc.) then the characters live as play from Somov as it is usual of theater actor, whose facial expression is emphasized in accordance with the specifics of the stage action.

Their "stage" the behavior is a few mannered but the gestures are in tune with the movements of their souls. The gesture of Somov opens the deepest inside, causes innermost thoughts peculiar to them alone. The action in the pictures of Somov - it's something that you can't express in words this is his analogy with the language of ballet. An example of this the works are: "Masquerade scene. Composition gesture drawing", "Cupid and the lady in the mask", "Masquerade" (1914), "The Marquise and Cupid", "Lady and gentleman playing music" (1896), "The Lady, a knight and Cupid" (all - NMFA), "Harlequin and Dame. Composition version" (1912, SRM). "Harlequin and Dame" (1912, STG), "The tongue of Columbine" (1913, SRM), "Pierrot and Dame" (1910, OAM), "Masquerade" (NRAG), "Fireworks" (1912, Brodsky Apartment Museum), and others. These pictures of Somov have bright hue of its slide, the element of theatrical dialogue dominates reflecting the inner rhythm of surrounding life, by Sudeykin - balanced front ceremonial picture dominates.

3 Results

The first search for ballet image from Sudeykin are related to 1906, when paintings have appeared in exhibitions, "Apotheosis of the ballet" and "Ballet pastoral" (both - CS). They also adjoin "Columbine and Punchinello" (SCTM) and two "Ballet pastoral" (both - STG). They have come still from the theatrical character of K. Somov with him traditional tired-beautiful Columbine and exquisitely relaxed Harlequins, plastic figure movement of which is always in harmony with their inner world. The measure of artistic generalization thoughts and typification of characters is the same in the imagery of the paintings of Sudeykin in their poetics.

The theater for two are conditional and initially the viewer set to "Paint lie of fictional world". A.A. Yevreinova recalled, "Pierrot, Harlequin, Sly Columbine pictured in a merry dance almost hypnotically have been taken me away from too unbearable reality ... Waking up in the morning, I loved to say hello to my

new residents over my bed – of Sudeykin colorful characters Harlequinade.” (6)

Traditional fairy tale lies from Sudeykin is stronger and brighter than from Somov not by chance he is interested in primitive rooted in the national consciousness, deliberately stylized art forms of this creativity. “An artist doesn’t afraid to do wildest experiments, to give the most unexpected combinations, to refer to the strangest sources. He sets in going Russian Cup and antique porcelain, a farce and a tapestry, wood, and lace. He is like magician waves his hand and lovely in his clumsy Russian oleographs are replaced by elegant and tantalizing silhouettes and masks of the “Italian” comedy affairs “Art-e” ... he goes to the production of “A Watteau” from the productions in the style of Shrovetide farce. Sudeykin is here too”. (6) K. Somov is not able to see the world through the clean children’s eyes which are inherent to Sudeykin. However, a fancy-theatrical form of the Fokine Ballet performance is felt in the works of such form, both artists revived after Didelot, certain motifs and themes are felt always interested in ballet of Meister.

The other side is the construction of multi-figure compositions bringing to mind the former quest choreography by M. Petipa and L. Ivanova, it is characterized for the creativity of the artists of the “World of Art” except such a typical example of an image of indirect forms of dance. Such works are seen through the filter of memories, sounds like nostalgia for the past, as the idealization of what is left behind. Artists attach fundamental importance to the structural similarity between the internal organization of individual scenes of ballet and figurative system of their paintings. Ballet motive was the perfect form embodiment of their artistic concepts for artists at the turn of century. They saw something consonant

with their joys and sorrows in it, they found moments of complete peace convergence there. They tried to go into freakish peripetias of plot choreographic, in it endless expanse fantastic, as if they afraid of hard reality, boring reality life. They often find material for his compositions in the legends and tales of romantic ballet. The essence of one of the retrospective areas is expressed in “Ballet Pastoral” and “Apotheosis” of S. Sudeykin, “Ballet” of K. Somov - it escapes from reality into the dream world and day dreaming and. Numerous ballet works of S. Sudeykin: “Ballet apotheosis” (1906, CS), “Ballet Pastoral” (1906, CS), the “Ballet” (1910, SRM), “Composition based on “Swan Lake” (1910, PMTMC), “Set design for the ballet A. Adama “Giselle” (1913, SRM, L.S. Sigalova), “Scene design of for the ballet “Swan lake” (1914, SRM) and not only directly ballet works are imbued by dance and represent wealth material for reasoning about their own individual vision of the artist this theme. Ballet images of S. Sudeykin certainly adjoin to the “World of Art” traditions but nevertheless, the artist stands for it endowed with such imagination and way of mentality that give us a different organization of theater world rather than the artists of the “World of Art” can imagine. A fundamentally different character includes with ballet image in Sudeykin’s work, he is unlike anybody decidedly - he lives alone, open emotionality isn’t peculiar to him. The scene design for the ballet almost impossible to be distinguished of easel paintings on the theme ballet of Sudeykin what is explained by an originality of creative thinking of the artist, whose paintings reflect the ballet in, whether it is scenery for a play or just ballet motive, it means to create visual image of a certain theatrical fantasy. Gradually Sudeykin goes away from stylized paintings of Somov where the catastasis tied to the main characters and environment of them appeared mostly as a background. He refuses from the picturesque effect of theatrical costumes. The faces of the characters Sudeykin haven’t deeply hidden emotions and feelings, the mystery of which appears from Somov with full force and exciting nakedness. His ballet composition reminding of the atmosphere paintings of A. Watteau and F. Boucher are built as a stage space on which a dreamy and ghostly theatrical performance deploy where the characters live as spontaneously, blissful thoughtlessness and disconnection. Poetic ballet works of Sudeykin is a sentimentalism peculiarly refracted through the prism of romance. He seeks to combine elements of both. The

surprising calm reigns in the paintings of the artist, it may be said some patriarchy. The action of dance always unfolds slowly as it close to the rhythm of a steady life. According to Sudeykin, the plastic of heroes is free from any hint of waste eccentricity, claims on the external effect of Somov. No wonder critic V.M. Solovyov recognizing the theatrical thinking of Sudeykin nevertheless called theatrical action in his “atheatrical” paintings. (7) “If only chance one magician is found who would restore life to these beautiful fragments with his miraculous wand, it is quite possible that theatrical characters would be surprised and a little embarrassed. They could not develop continue the stage position which is indicated on the canvas by the artist. In the best case, some of them would be able to perform gavotte, minuet or some role of the program fully choreographic character».

4 Discussion

We can say the emotionality of Sudeykin is a special nature, it’s not open but it’s directed to the viewer. The choreography is unique art of its kind in many respects. The empathy and co-creation play a significant role in the ballet. The artist encourages viewers’ activity, realizing this he outlines only basic contours of the psychological state of the characters but otherwise, he relies on the viewer’s imagination.

Duo or a group of dancers usually are placed in the foreground of S. Sudeykin’s compositions who divides into separate pieces gradually shaded by the sidelined. The duo who comes into the picture, doesn’t include “plug-divertissement” and it constitutes its atmosphere, it superimposed on its background exactly. There are no formal protagonists in the pictures. The group is their hero but also the life of this group doesn’t exhaust the content of the work. Allegorical figures of animals, cupids, and angels are so

beautiful and significant for Sudeykin, they wove into the character and melody of their dance quite organically, full of the cloth fine narrative because Sudeykin’s ballet is a ballet-tale, a ballet joke, a ballet-irony. The dancers know the value of silence, introspection, dive into some state unknown for us.

The topic of the landscape arises in collaboration with the characters. The environment nature in Sudeykin’s works is an essential part of that helps him to discover his own original method of understanding and interpretation of ballet story. The picture of the “Ballet” (1910, GRM) is particularly revealing in this regard. Nature and dance are probably the main theme of this work. Its meaning is dissolution state mind of the hero in the environment. The life of nature and the life of the soul, the nature of mood and the mood of dance are equal to each other. These traits become central here manifested before in other works, their vague contours coagulated, symbolism acquired some kind of poetic visibility. We must not forget that we are talking about sentimentalism in the poetics of which a landscape inspires the soul, calms passions, harmonizes the world. An equal cool color of the “Ballet”, giving a symbolist to feel a credo, is an aroma of flower fairy “Blue Rose”, it differs from a live color smear “Ballet pastoral” or “Ballet apotheosis”. Dancers in white and purple glare looked like hallucinations as they are woven from the water, mist, and fog. They are gently modeled by the artist, lose real contours, dissolve in feathered contours of blue landscape engaging with each other in pictorial and spatial harmony.

“Russian Ballet” (1931, OAM), “Russian Ballet. La Sylphide” (1930, OAM) of K. Somov - these works, as well as works of S. Sudeykin are interesting not so much for the foreshortening theme as expressed in it the artistic view of life is formed by the distance, which the preterit set. That is why the theme of these works isn’t the ballet and rather emotional memories of it. A dreamy illumined image of Sylphide returns us to the engravings of the 19th century, to the images of M. Taloni and A. Istomina, the then romantic direction in the ballet. But the fundamental difference between the works of Somov consists in other, it consists in an effort to see the ballet plot ambiguous, not straight forward and in the unity of the diverse qualities.

5 Conclusion

The combination of the real and the fictional attracts artists not so much as a borderland between reality and fantasy, that elusive moment when dance becomes a reality. If characters of Sudeykin's ballet are in the atmosphere, emitting mysterious and enigmatic mood, and their staying isn't momentary and eternal. They live and dance on these, created by the imagination of the artist, glades as on the stage among clean ponds reflecting in its waters their figures together with morning sunrises and evening sunsets, the "Russian Ballets" of Somov convey a very real situation that takes place in the auditorium. Though dancers of the artist are endowed with some feigned, purely gestures of Somov, they are still real people, they are only carriers of happening mysterious fabulously beautiful spectacle. The fates of romantic heroes are slightly opened only for a brief moment for them who fleeting living of his magic life. The artist directs the flow of light on groups of dancing ballerinas; shortening the distance between the auditorium and the stage. The fantasy of dance becomes an extension of his everyday life, but the works don't become poorer and nothing loses a magic. The dream becomes reality and the reality seems beautiful and long-awaited as a dream.

Those special interest is showed in the work of K. Somov and S. Sudeykin to the associative perceived world of a dance, to its substance, to the aesthetic and even philosophical comprehension of it. So, it's enough to slightly change the visual angle to cause the characteristic for the retrospective style of "eality shift" during the period of 19th – 20th centuries. The transformation that occurs with ballet image in time, is very interesting and revealing. It demonstrates how human perception change itself. A dance theme never had a penetrating power of "X-raying" era, such an expressive language that allows the painting to open direct access to the comprehension of the laws of art and life; visualize these laws across the image, psychology, attitude. The dismissal

gave the artist's creative method necessary distance with which we can judge enough about today's world through the metaphor, symbolism, association, allegory. The familiar reality was pushed from the eyes, seen from afar with impressive distance, from an unexpected side. They set as the purpose a remodel, re-creation of pass away eras in their tangible, visible images as the purpose, they had their own way in the world of theater, and of course, it was the way of the poet.

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