

RU

Борис Эйфман: на пути к современному театру балета

Катышева Д. Н.

Аннотация. Целью данной статьи является исследование факторов, определивших путь становления, творческих открытий самобытного авторского репертуарного Театра балета Бориса Эйфмана – выдающегося балетмейстера рубежа XX и первого десятилетия XXI века. Научная новизна исследования обусловлена тем, что тема авторского балетного театра мало изучена в искусствоведении, однако его роль в развитии современной хореографии значительна. В результате исследования феномена Театра балета Бориса Эйфмана были выявлены составляющие подобного типа театра: освоение творческого наследия великих хореографов, продолжение традиций русского балета в создании многоактного сюжетного спектакля на основе литературной классики (и других источников), обновления одухотворенной пластикой и полистилистикой хореографического словаря, её драматизации, музыкальной драматургии.

EN

Boris Eifman: On the Way to the Modern Ballet Theatre

Katysheva J. N.

Abstract. The aim of this article is to study the factors that determined the way of formation, creative discoveries of the original author's repertoire Ballet Theatre of Boris Eifman – an outstanding choreographer of the turn of the 20th and the first twenty years of the 21st century. The scientific originality of the research is due to the fact that the topic of the author's ballet theatre has been little studied in art history, but its role in the development of modern choreography is significant. As a result of examining the phenomenon of Boris Eifman Ballet Theatre, the components of this type of theatre have been identified: mastering the creative heritage of great choreographers, continuing the traditions of the Russian ballet in creating a multi-act plot performance based on classical literature (and other sources), updating the spiritualized plasticity and polystylistics of the choreographic vocabulary, its dramatization, musical drama.

Introduction

Modern ballet theater in Russia and abroad is currently under the influence of historical and civilizational changes dictated by the processes of the era of globalization. The latter circumstance contributes to the development of standardization tendencies, the partial loss of cultural national codes in the field of art, especially drama and music theater. The growing flow of pop culture with its commercialization, addressed to the mass audience, often responding to its mundane interests and low-grade artistic tastes, influences it to a certain extent. All these circumstances negatively affect art, its types, value orientations, semantic, moral, ethical, philosophical and, as a result, artistic parameters.

In this regard, those phenomena of choreographic art that are of artistic value, continuing and updating the best traditions of the Russian art, acquire relevance.

Eifman's name became known not only in Russia, but also in other countries on different continents thanks to his modern productions, particularly, the Ballet Theater with its creative program, repertoire, masters, dancers-actors, unique originality. Eifman Theater managed to deal with ballet performances of tragic genres based on masterpieces of classical literature, marked by genuine drama, dance and acting skills of soloists and corps de ballet. The idea of creating and successful functioning of a ballet school under the theater made its contribution to the phenomenon of Eifman Theater. It discovers new talents from different regions of Russia training a worthy generation in the choreographic art.

The research task is to comprehend the sources of the originality of Eifman Theater, which opened up new prospects for modern theater in the field of repertoire, updating the choreographic vocabulary, taking into account the traditions of the national ballet and the development trends of the world dance culture.

Results and Discussion

B. Eifman went through a long forty-year path of formation and consolidation of his ideological and artistic principles for the Ballet Theatre. Having started with the formation of the New Ballet troupe, he received negative comments from colleagues, theater critics, near and far circles, in contrast to the growing interest on the part of the audience.

Today it is already obvious that this theater was based on the traditions of the Russian ballet art, starting with M. Petipa, L. Ivanov and then the theater "Russian Ballet" by S. Diaghilev, M. Fokin, continued in the creative work of Yu. Grigorovich, I. Belsky, L. Jacobson. The connection with the latter is revealed in terms of the development and approval of choreoplasticity in dance, creation of images in the performance. As B. Smetanina correctly notes, "L. Jacobson believed that B. Eifman became an heir to his method. It is symbolic that when L. Jacobson staged his last performance, he congratulated young Eifman, who had then staged his first big ballet, on his success and blessed his creative daring" (Сметанина, 2008, p. 3). At the same time, B. Eifman was creatively included in the space of the world ballet art. However, he was not attracted by the avant-garde small forms of the European ballet but followed the activity of the author's ballet theaters of M. Bejart, R. Petit, J. Neumeier. This reflects the centuries-old dialogue of cultures, which continues at the present time, in the era of globalization. Like Eifman, these ballet-masters, in their experimental search, did not reject the foundations and understanding that "the classical heritage, – as the philosopher Yu. M. Shor (Шор, 2009) writes, – is a basic fund of culture, a kind of encyclopedia of norms, values, patterns that acquire different facets, sides in different historical epochs; it acquires specific spiritual and aesthetic faces" (p. 19).

B. Eifman, following in line with the search of the world and domestic ballet in the field of new forms with the enrichment of lexical resources, was one of those ballet-masters, organizers and creators of the repertory theater who reflect the historical and cultural process of updating traditions, entering the formation of modern choreography. Both ballet theaters in Russia, including the Bolshoi and Mariinsky, and foreign troupes are concerned with its creation. And in this lies the understanding of the regularity of the inevitable renewal of dance directions, styles, techniques, ballet-masters' directing and staging activity. Dance at its core is a modern statement, reflecting the awareness of oneself, one's essence, innermost "untold" spheres of the inner world and the surrounding being in the context of time, socio-cultural environment in the human personality.

In modern experiments to update the choreography, however, there are destructive phenomena (especially widespread in the drama theater). We are talking about the author's creativity "without limits", with a purely subjective interpretation of the literary basis in the performance, with a vulgar, simplified image of a person on the stage, rejection of clear meaning formation and dynamics of the stage action development. However, Eifman, as a genuine artist, initially defined for himself the boundaries between true art and profanity, non-art with a commercial purpose. He often talks about this in his interviews, statements about creativity. One recalls the thoughts of N. Berdyaev (Бердяев, 1991) about freedom, which is associated for him with creativity, cognition and striving for the rebirth of the soul. He wrote: "But in reality, collegiality is my quality, expansion of my experience to supra-personal, universal one. Freedom is not individualism. Freedom is not self-closing and isolation, freedom is opening and creativity, a path to the revelation of the universe in me" (p. 69).

Eifman, throughout his artistic development, refers to the topics that reflect a person and their being in a combination of transient and eternal, personal and universal, which distinguished the great classics of theater, drama, literature from Antiquity to Shakespeare, classics of subsequent centuries. In this process, special attention was paid to the complex philosophical, aesthetic, spiritual and moral problems of human existence, to the choice between good and evil in the dramatic struggle of more perfect, ideal and real in life, as well as in a man's inner world. What Berdyaev (Бердяев, 1991) had in mind, relying on the Russian philosophical thought with its orientation towards "liberation of spiritual culture from the oppression of social utilitarianism" (p. 292), was also stated by Eifman, referring to eternal enduring spiritual values in culture and art, a human person's being, and not in abstract, but in historically conditioned time.

Thus, the defining theme of his creative work was formed – "history of human soul" and then more specifically – "history of the Russian soul in various dramatic situations" (Эйфман, 2009). And this is considered as the continuation and development of the tradition of the national theater bequeathed by A. Pushkin (Пушкин, 1962) with his assertion of the "truth of passions" and "outpouring of the soul". That which is "always new is always entertaining, great and instructive. Drama began to head the passions and the human soul" (p. 147).

Here Eifman refers to the memory in the field of the national cultural tradition and enduring values that have evolved over the centuries, when not only specific problems of human existence, but also "eternal" problems were solved... "And every era – G. D. Gachev (Гачев, 1968) writes, – must reveal, "recognize them in its appearance"... and at the same time contemplate in this "recognition" its special, inherent only in this very era" (p. 17).

In this regard, Eifman forms the repertoire of his classical ballet theatre, relying on the domestic classical literature (A. Pushkin, L. Tolstoy, F. Dostoevsky, A. Chekhov), or on the fate, life history and creative work of outstanding figures of art – theatre, music, visual arts. He initially abandoned the illustrative principle of solving the interpretation of the text, realizing that no one can exhaust the semantic resources of the thematic richness and depth of such texts, reflecting the specific reality of time and human existence, as well as the eternal, universal. Each era, its different periods form their own context. Eifman determines his own angle of perception and understanding the text. And it emphasizes and conveys in the language of dance and musical action those tempos, motives, meanings

that correspond to the spirit of modernity (the most important task) and are capable of feedback from the audience who came to the performance. After some time, which the ballet-master is sensitive to, he performs the previously staged ballet in a new version: "Onegin. Online", "The Brothers Karamazov" and to some extent other performances. But the master stayed loyal to his theme of the artist. In close-ups, he embodies the inner spiritual dramatic world of a hero with hidden interests, passions, desires. The inner man with his history of the soul and predominantly the Russian one is the main subject of Eifman's creative ballet-master's interest. And from the very beginning, he faced the task of finding those dance means with which he could express his ideas. He wanted to find his own unique language, unlike the language of other choreographers.

But at the same time, Eifman continued to follow previous discoveries not only in the Russian ballet, but also in the theatre in the field of dramaturgy, directing, acting art, the technology of transforming into a stage image with the understanding of the music theatre specifics. Here, in many respects, the path to transformation was conditioned by musical themes and dance-plasticity characteristics of the image. He understood that the rigid "canon" in classical choreography, metaphorical, but abstractly expressed plasticity, dance movements are conditioned by their bodily laws. L. D. Blok (Блок, 1987) wrote: "Classical dance is a system of artistic thinking that shapes the expressiveness of movements inherent in the dance manifestations of a person at various stages of culture. These movements are included in classical dance not in an empirically given form, but in a form abstracted to a formula" (p. 25).

But classical dance has the dynamics of self-development, so professional academic choreography is never conserved. It constantly experienced updates, transformations, generating new formations, offering an updated language. The classics by M. Petipa and L. Ivanov was transformed by M. Fokin, later by A. Gorsky, K. Goleizovsky, L. Lavrovsky, Yu. Grigorovich, L. Jacobson and other masters.

B. Eifman is one of the founders of the developing modern dance formation, which is more closely turned to the inner world of a person. Sharp accusations of "heresy" were thrown at him, mainly from critics, ballet experts. But he went his own way, asserting choreoplasticity, transforming the canon of the classics. He made dance physicality speak, inspiring it to reflect the most dramatic passions and changes of the time. And it became obvious that Eifman the choreographer is an inventor of the original ballet vocabulary, which combines the concepts of classical and modern dance, embodying his own choreographic idioms.

Eifman knew that the process of updating the dance vocabulary is associated with active experiments that are being carried out in the modern world and domestic choreography. It is clear that this was a general trend. Innovations arose in the fight against automatism in dance, especially at the end of the last century. There appeared clear signs of emancipation of forms that can reflect the new content. The dancer's attempts to embody the canons of the classics resulted in the loss of poetic imagery, the lack of transformation into an individualized image of the heroes and characters of ballets. The inevitability of updating traditions and creating a new formation in modern choreography was historically obvious and conditioned by the need to embody previously unexplored areas of philosophical, aesthetic, spiritual and moral issues in the reflection of a modern man. This was also required by the evolution of new stylistic and genre formations in art. A distinctive feature of that period, as of the first half of the 20th century, is striving for stylistic and genre universality. It is not the coexistence of genres that reveals itself here, but their interaction and combination.

This refers to the counterpoint of styles, polystylistics in the embodiment of choreographic texts, interaction, interpenetration of the vocabulary of the classics, modernist style, neoclassics, Duncanism, folk and ballroom dance trends, including sports, social dances, oriental techniques. In addition, innovations in the field of dance vocabulary, made at the previous stages of the ballet development, were introduced. Such was the search for a way to update it in art as a whole. D. S. Likhachev (Лихачев, 2006) wrote: "Style has a kind of crystalline structure subordinate to some single stylistic dominant" (p. 334-335). But at the same time, the ingrowth of some crystals into other stylistic principles, as Likhachev further notes, is a common phenomenon in art. He gives many examples of such process in various art forms and their influence. And then he says: "This apparent violation of unity, in fact, as we will see, not only creates a new, higher unity, but is an important historical feature of art as well that allows it to develop successfully..." (p. 341). As a ballet-master, Eifman is aware of these possibilities of counterpoint of styles, polystylistics.

But there is also a subjective reason for Eifman's appeal to renewal of the vocabulary, the language of the ballet performance, which is confirmed by his personal evidence. He was initially determined to create his own author's world of choreography, in which he saw new plastic ideas that develop the discoveries of choreoplasticity originally probed by outstanding ballet-masters – M. Fokin, V. Nizhinsky, Yu. Grigorovich, L. Jacobson and the pleiad of western choreographers.

Conclusion

Let us sum up the proposed research on the process and essence of the formation of the author's Ballet Theatre of Boris Eifman. He continues the tradition of the Russian ballet, paying tribute to the major theatrical form in the vein of the story ballet, which is most in demand on the stages of Russia, Europe and America.

An important factor in the formation of Eifman Ballet Theatre is the repertoire that determines its unique creativity, ideological and artistic credo. At the same time, Eifman is ready for constant renewal, the study of new topics, plots of literary historical and documentary sources of the world and domestic artistic culture.

And finally, another factor in the formation of the author's Eifman Ballet Theatre is the updating of the choreographic vocabulary. For a long time, a peculiar choreographic language has been developing – Eifman's language

of dance. His goal is to maximally visualize all the hidden, true, “inexpressible” spheres of the hero’s inner being, using both the counterpoint of styles and polystylistics – the classics, modernist style, neoclassics, folk, ballroom, sports ballroom dancing (up to hip-hop). Dance movements, choreoplasticity are created in complete correlation with the stylistic and genre synthesis of the musical dramaturgy of composers – sonnet-symphonic plane, jazz, pop, folk and other modern music and dance styles. This tradition is no exception in contemporary art.

All of the above mentioned factors condition the existence of the author’s original Boris Eifman Ballet Theatre, many years of creative activity and success not only among the Russian audience, but also among admirers from other countries.

Источники | References

1. Бердяев Н. А. Самопознание. Размышление об эроте // Бердяев Н. А. Самопознание. Л.: Лениздат, 1991.
2. Бердяев Н. Л. Русская идея. Основные проблемы русской мысли XIX и начала XX века. Париж, 1971.
3. Блок Л. Д. Классический танец. История и современность. М.: Искусство, 1987.
4. Гачев Г. Д. Содержательность художественных форм. Эпос. Лирика. М.: Просвещение, 1968.
5. Лихачев Д. С. Контрапункт стилей как особенность искусств // Лихачев Д. С. Избранные труды по русской и мировой культуре. СПб.: СПбГУП, 2006.
6. Лотман Ю. М. Семиотика сцены // Лотман Ю. М. Об искусстве. СПб.: Искусство-СПб, 2002.
7. Порфирьева А. Л. Мейерхольд и драматургия века // Русский театр и драматургия начала XX века: сб. науч. тр. Л.: ЛГИТМиК, 1984.
8. Пушкин А. С. Собрание сочинений: в 10-ти т. М.: Гослитиздат, 1962. Т. 7. 1962.
9. Сметанина Б. О. Сценическая интерпретация литературных произведений в творчестве Б. Эйфмана (последняя треть XX – начало XXI в.): автореф. дисс. ... к. иск. СПб., 2008.
10. Шор Ю. М. Классическое наследие в контексте современной культуры // Современное искусство в контексте глобализации: наука, образование, художественный рынок: материалы II Всероссийской научно-практической конференции (30 января 2009 г.). СПб.: СПбГУП, 2009.
11. Эйфман Б. Онегин в режиме онлайн. 2009. URL: <https://rg.ru/2009/02/20/eifman.html>

Информация об авторах | Author information

RU Катышева Дженни Николаевна¹, д. иск., проф.
¹ Гуманитарный университет профсоюзов, г. Санкт-Петербург

EN Katysheva Jenny Nikolaevna¹, Dr
¹ Humanitarian University of Trade Unions, Saint-Petersburg

¹ kafrezh@yandex.ru

Информация о статье | About this article

RU Перевод статьи опубликован по инициативе автора. Первоисточник: Катышева Дж. Н. Борис Эйфман: на пути к современному театру балета // Манускрипт. 2021. Т. 14. Вып. 11. С. 2455-2458.

EN The translation of the research paper is published on the authors' initiative. The original source: Катышева Дж. Н. Борис Эйфман: на пути к современному театру балета // Манускрипт. 2021. Т. 14. Вып. 11. С. 2455-2458.

Дата поступления рукописи (received): 04.10.2021; опубликовано (published): 30.11.2021.

Ключевые слова (keywords): author’s ballet theatre; spiritualized plasticity; choreographic vocabulary; polystylistics; acting art; авторский театр балета; одухотворенная пластика; хореографический словарь; полистилистика; актерское искусство.