

## CHOREOGRAPHY AND CHOREOGRAPHS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:** *The content of the article is based on the general scientific principles of the knowledge of the creative process; a multidisciplinary approach is implemented in the sphere of plastic arts. By reviewing the common points between choreography and the concept of "choreographics" introduced within the study, potential links between graphic representations and the staging of culture in the world of ballet theater are discussed. Analyzing the experience of available achievements, starting from the path of linear movement left by performers on the stage floor and the formation of a stage image to the application of innovative graphics technology on stage, the author considers various aspects of the points of contact and the interactions between ballet and graphics (choreographics).*

**Keywords:** dance patterns, linear plastics, choreographic geometry, ballet shows, associative links.

The spiritual needs of modern society require a high level of understanding of twenty-first century works of art in relation with this century's overall cultural objectives. Currently, problems relating to the perfection of the theory and practice of the staging of cultural works, including in the sphere of ballet, are being discussed. This requires the professional development of directors, writers<sup>1</sup>, cameramen, stage managers, artists and actors, a revival of the spirit of innovative ideas, and a courageous search for new themes and expressive possibilities regarding dance language. Hence, this article is focused on the problematic-theoretical study of both the external and internal structures of ballet shows in the context of the graphic structures reflected in the creation of choreographic images<sup>2</sup>. Currently, problems of the interactions between choreography and graphics are more debated than scientifically developed. Despite the fact that the choreographic theater is synthetic in nature, in traditional theoretical works the role of music is more noted than that of painting in the creation of a performance, while graphics, as an operative form of art, is completely forgotten in this process. However, it should be noted that, although this phenomenon is independent, choreography as

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<sup>1</sup> N. Orazbayeva, K. Nurgali, "Russian writers with bimental thinking and the formation of readers' multicultural competence", in *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2017, vol. 25, no. 2, p. 823-836.

<sup>2</sup> T. Portnova, "Genre and style interaction in solutions staged ballets of the nineteenth, twentieth centuries", in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 689-694.

an art of visual action has already taken many directions facing towards the future<sup>3</sup>.

The aim of this research is to provide a comprehensive multi-aspect view of the dialogue between graphics and dance – not only as a historical fact and as a part of the world’s artistic heritage<sup>4</sup>, but also as a living practice of contemporary art – to reveal the specificity of the graphic component in the context of its interaction with the plastic components of choreographic works. The author does not give a comprehensive analysis in each of the indicated forms of the synthesis of choreography and choreographics, as it is not possible within the framework of one article, but thus points the way for further research<sup>5</sup>.

In this regard, the following tasks are supposed to be solved in the article: to describe the role and functions of graphics in integrative processes with choreography; to structure types and features of their interaction; to set out the genre<sup>6</sup>, stylistic, imaginative and linguistic ranges of the synthesis of dance and graphics and to show these with regard to a number of examples embodied in choreographic and ballet-master practice; and to determine the specifics of choreography in the context of the development of the most important innovative trends in contemporary graphic art, which often become a kind of a constant in the scenic culture of the twenty-first century<sup>7</sup>.

In the study and analysis of related literature, it was found that there are no works specifically devoted to this topic. There are only brief mentions in periodicals and books in various languages dedicated to the history and theory of ballet and interdisciplinary art studies, and a few mentions in monographs on ballet dancers and choreographers.

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<sup>3</sup> K. Nurgali, K. Assanov, G. Shashkina, M. Zhumabekov, F. Kultursynova, “The concept of dionysism in the legacy of Friedrich Nietzsche and Vyacheslav Ivanov”, in *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2018, vol. 14, no. 2, p. 99-108.

<sup>4</sup> T. Portnova, “Artistic heritage of V. Nijinsky”, in *Information (Japan)*, 2017, vol. 20, no. 7, p. 4775-4782.

<sup>5</sup> T.V. Portnova, “Synthesized nature of fine arts and ballet theater: System analysis of genre development”, in *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2018, vol. 14, no. 5, p. 189-200.

<sup>6</sup> T.V. Portnova, “Genre art system: Experience of a comparative analysis of theatre (ballet, opera) and pictorial arts”, in *Ponte*, 2017, vol. 73, no. 8, p. 194-211.

<sup>7</sup> T.V. Portnova, “Historical aspects of project technologies development and opportunities for their use in scenic arts”, in *Space and Culture, India*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 4, p. 48-56.

## Methodology

The main hypothesis of the study is based on the comparative analysis, which was previously indicated in the formulation of the research topic above. The research tasks involve the formation of a holistic, systematic approach to the study and understanding of choreography as a single developmental process. A number of dances are reviewed in relation to the graphic and inherent internal compositional structures and the external graphic aesthetics of style in connection with the history and theory of related arts.

On the one hand, as a result of comprehensive research, a vast complex of visual sources related to dance (choreographic sketches<sup>8</sup>, graphic explications for ballets, anatomical sketches of motorial dance movements, easel drawings based on ballet themes, graphic sheets in choreography of dance routines and performances found by the author in museum and private collections and collected together – which constitutes the main scientific novelty) is interpreted by the author as an actual material applied for choreography<sup>9</sup>.

On the other hand, the elements of penetration of the forms of graphic language into the art of dance, comparative parallels in lexical, genre, stylistic and figurative aspects based on illustrative, poster and computer forms of stage synthesis, and the author's own observations are considered both separately and on the level of their inclusion into a theatrical action.

Therefore, the author adheres to this proposed sequence of presentation of scientific questions that inevitably arise in considering the research subject. The research methodology is explicated in the following main aspects:

- a system analysis, which is based on the observation of the choreographic material in the context of the art of graphics in terms of its specificity and functioning in a dance;
- interpretation of the identified graphic sources related to choreography, which implies the decoding of the meanings of pictorial symbols on some examples of choreography sketches;

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<sup>8</sup> T.V. Portnova, "Choreography sketches as a representational system of dance recording: From M. Petipa to M. Fokine", in *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 2016, vol. 9, no. 29, article no. 88740.

<sup>9</sup> T.V. Portnova, "Structural features of theatrical excursions (Methodology based on theatre museum exhibitions)", in *Mathematics Education*, 2016, vol. 11, no. 8, p. 2963-2973.

- a comparative analysis of choreography and choreographics applied in this article not only when comparing artistic statements, but also in determining basic personality characteristics and the ways of choreographers' thinking;

- a method of extrapolating graphic phenomena into the sphere of their staging.

The photo-archives of the Historical Public Library, the Foreign Literature Library, the Central Theatre Library and the Scientific Library of the Theatre Union, and the collections of the State Academic Bolshoi and Mariinsky Theaters were used in carrying out the comparative study. However, we are interested not only in purely informational and illustrative materials and artistic qualities and features of works, but also in the personal creative methods used by choreographers, fragments of their biographies, the circumstances of creation and methods of work relating to one or another image. The author managed to identify certain data from archival sources and videos found in the Central State Archive of Literature and Art, the Manuscript Department of the A. Bakhrushin State Central Theater Museum, the St. Petersburg Museum of Theatrical and Musical Culture, the Archive Fund of the St. Petersburg Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinematography and the private collections of the heirs of some choreographers and ballet dancers<sup>10</sup>.

## Results

Graphics comes from a Greek word (to write, draw or paint). The origins of the word *choreography*, which originally denoted the recording of a dance, contain a graphical component present in the word's meaning even now. A dance pattern is a determinant factor in dance related graphics; we can also talk about the pattern of movements and postures in a dance. The Russian Chamber Ballet (Moscow) called one of its choreographic divertissement programs *Graphic Ballet* (choreography by G. Peschanniy) not by coincidence, finding common stylistic language in both arts. The book *The Line Stretches to Infinity* describes the ballet graphics of this choreographer in the following way:

*Graphic Ballet* staged by the prematurely deceased Gennady Peschanniy creates an extraordinary image of a plastic energy generator.... Black sculpted figures with mysteriously frozen faces slowly draw

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<sup>10</sup> T.V. Portnova, "Classification of the theatrical exposition and methodological approaches to the study of choreographic exhibitions (On materials of theatrical museums of the world)", in *Opcion*, 2018, vol. 34, no. 85, p. 687-697.

mysterious signs, letters, creating the unknown, but strong energy, the stream of which penetrates the audience.... Using mainly only a vertical movement vector and transferring the movements out of the three-dimensional space into the two-dimensional space, the choreographer creates graphically sharp forms striking with the strength of some unusual inner light.<sup>11</sup>

For example the nature of the part of the Copper Mountain hostess in the ballet *Stone Flower* played by A. Osipenko (choreographer – Y. Grigorovich; Kirov Theater, premiere April 22, 1957) and her dance style can be described as graphic.

Sketches for ballet costumes created by L. Bakst, who worked together with the choreographer M. Fokin around the turn of the twentieth century, are characterized by a high culture of graphic presentation; their plastics are exquisite and perfect. Each sheet can be considered as an independent work of graphic art. But their beauty is not inherently valued— rather, they allow the expression of the idea of a choreographic work. These examples provide an analogy between the plastic organization of a graphic work and the phenomenon of graphics in a ballet.

The ancient Greek writer Lucian wrote that a choreographer should know how to combine the talents of a choreographer and a graphic artist, so making it possible to create clear shapes and figures. Noverre emphasized the same point of view in his works: “Some knowledge of geometry [as he called graphics] can bring many benefits: this science puts some clarity to dance figures, the order of their combination, makes forms clearly defined and, reducing the transitions from one figure to another, makes performance brilliant.”<sup>12</sup>

As is well established, a dance pattern is the location and relocation of dancers on a stage floor<sup>13</sup>. If we follow the dancers, not paying attention to their movements (actually to the dance text), but only their relocation on stage, and fix their movements on a sheet of paper, in this way we can fix a dance pattern, a trace, which can be straight, diagonal, circular (centric), spiriform, zigzagging, and so on. Thus, we can say that the dance is created on the laws of choreographic geometry. A pattern is a frame of dance, as well as a frame of painting. However, a dance pattern is found

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<sup>11</sup> Y.M. Churko, *The Line Stretches to Infinity. Subjective Notes on Modern Choreography*, Polymya, Minsk, 1999.

<sup>12</sup> J.J. Noverre, *Letters on Dancing*, Lan, Saint Petersburg, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Artifex, *Dance Captured on a Plane*, 2017. Available at: <http://artifex.ru/графика/танец-запечатанный-в-плоскости/>.

not only on the horizontal surface of the stage floor; it also applies to the figures of artists. Kazarinova's article *The Magical Power of the Stage Space* contains a rather convincing description of some dance patterns<sup>14</sup>. The author reviews just some linear structures (vertical, horizontal and circular ones) very briefly. Indeed, Giselle's dance in the second act of the *Giselle* ballet of A. Adan is directed vertically upward, while the sliding shadows in *La Bayadere* or the dancing swans in *Swan Lake* have a different type of geometrics of direction: they move horizontally. Circular composition, in the form of circle dances, was used in folk choreography. The linear directions mentioned by Kazarinova (vertical, horizontal and their combinations) should be complemented by diagonal ones, and all together they can be called axes or linear directions, forming the graphic composition of a dance. In choreographic constructions, where the patterns are close to the above-mentioned directions, their statics and dynamics are defined by the ideological conceptions of the works, graphically – the constructive thinking of a choreographer becomes particularly important. It should be noted that in graphics the contour is generally understood not as an independent line, independent of any factors, but as a line of transition from one form to another, taking into account its perspective reduction, the structural regularities of construction of each form and the distribution of gradations of light and shadow.

In this representation of the contour, the line is not flat and wire-like, but is a line which contains dimensional planes in perspective, the boundaries of the dimension's contact with and division from the world around it, like a line revealing the position of the volumetric bodies of actors in space. The line and contour retain their organizing importance in the dance, but they manifest in different ways depending on various conditions and tasks arising in the process of the dance's creation. The system of lines establishes links between the internal space (the contour which includes the actor's figure) and the external space (outside that contour). Lines organize the movement and stage behavior of a dancer, and form the emotional mood of the image. Thus, the image of the main character of the ballet *La Sylphide* by J. Shneytsh offer is composed of slight, fractional, impressionistic line marks, while the figure of James has a more specific, rigid and closed contour. In the art of graphics there is such a concept as "a sense of line": this sense is not only the correct understanding of the line's meaning, but also the ability to feel the line's

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<sup>14</sup> T.A. Kazarinova, "Magical Power of the Stage Space", in *Soviet Ballet*, 1991, no. 5, p. 25-29.

own beauty and everything that is not included in the line's proper meaning but that expresses something: that which is outside the line, above the line. Therefore, when we speak of the *Graphic Ballet* of G. Peschanniy, the graphically created performances of E. Panfilov in the Perm Dance Theatre *Experiment*, or the graphics of the lines of dancing of I. Rubinstein, A. Osipenko or Maya Plisetskaya, we mean that these lines do not simply depend on the actor's state of the actor's emotional state, they are self-sufficient: it seems that they have plastic linearity. A graphic representation is impossible without a sense of linear drawing, of the artistic nature of a dance image. The linear plasticity of ballet is of paramount importance, just as the line is for the graphic artist. Assessing graphic choreography as the development of the language of visual dynamics, Angel said: "My basic element is a line. Then, the line can be the outline, then the outline becomes a form, but primarily I work with the line on paper and with methods of the rhythmic organization of these worlds in sequence one after another, i.e., I become a choreographer, a graphic choreographer.... The emphasis is on the development of the language of visual dynamics, independent of literature or theatrical traditions, demonstrating pure choreography of graphics, which is possible only on the basis of its own wordless truth."<sup>15</sup>

Despite the diversity of materials and techniques used in graphics, gradations of light and shadow, line and bar are the main means of expression. Each artist uses graphic materials in his/her own way, taking maximum advantages from them. Color is rarely used in graphics, but using black and white an artist creates the illusion of tonal variety. Similarly in ballet, while dancers sometimes wear single-color tights, they may create an emotional and plastic wealth of created characters. Choreographic works may give a sense of depth and seriousness even when the authors (choreographer and artist) choose black, white or monochrome colors instead of more winning color combinations, which is a fundamental feature of graphic art that was manifested even in some forms of traditional shadow presentations and remains almost unchanged up to this day. It is characteristic that in the scenic area of the interior, where its elements are functionally substantiated, the problem is most successfully solved by identifying the brightest and most impressive forms, and neutralizing factors of minor importance. This is achieved by a single character of geometry or, on the contrary, by the use of contrasts, as well as by the limitation of color, that is, excluding all the excess. Failures occur due to uncertainty and incompatibility of forms, colors and materials,

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<sup>15</sup> A. Smirnov, *Visual Music. Anthology of Russian Video Art*, MediaArtLab, Moscow, 2002.

which complicate the process of perception and annoy. Therefore, it should be noted that the practical mastery of the basics of graphic art, such as perspective, linear structural arrangement of the form on the plane, and rules of distribution of light and shadow on the form depending on its structure can massively help a choreographer's or stage director's thinking.

A specific feature of the graphical language is the laconism of artistic means which quickly transmit a perceived image of the main (fixation of fugitive impressions). The same can be said about the creation of choreographic miniatures, sets of a few minute plays or sketches, that was typical especially of M. Fokin, K. Goleizovsky and L. Jacobson. This is a focus not only on instantly sharing an inspiration, but also on the desire to abstractly represent the dynamism of time, time's passage itself, its linear movement. The operational capabilities of graphic language were used by choreographers starting during the stages of the formation of the classical dance into a certain strict system of performance of movements<sup>16</sup>. A significant correlation of temporal and spatial relations artistically mastered by choreographers in graphics can be called a chronotope (literally "time-space"). In the choreography-graphic chronotope, space and time signs emerge into a meaningful and specific unity. Time is stretched and extended here, includes a whole series of figures-movements, while space is intensified and drawn into the movement of dance time. Dance figures are revealed in space, and space is interpreted and measured by time. This intersection of a series and the merger of movements is characterized by M. Petipa and M. Fokin as a "choreographical chronotope". They divide the graphic material inside the sketches into rhythmic units, set their priority, and determine the compositional drama of each episode of the movement of dancers.

The principle of dynamic balance and a correctly found scale of choreography allow the integration of rather different structures and schemes of figures located on a plane into one unit, creating the multifaceted composition on their basis. These are preserved in the choreography explications (sketches) of M. Petipa to the scenes from the ballets *Sleeping Beauty* (1890), *Nutcracker* (1892) and *Swan Lake* (1895; from the A. Bakhrushin State Central Theater Museum), and *La Bayadere* (1871, Russian State Archive of Literature and Art). These are plans (top views) and schemes of movements to specific scenes and episodes, representing the search for variants of the corps de ballet groups, their rearrangements

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<sup>16</sup> Y.A. Kondratenko, *Language of Stage Dance: Types and Morphology*, Mordovian University, Saransk, 2009.



and figures. Some pictures drawn in graphite pencil and ink show the way the right solution is found.

Exhibition drawings of the choreographer M. Fokin are similar to the sketches of M. Petipa, but, from the artistic point of view, they are more professional, having a more detailed structure. They are clearly divided into two groups. One group includes plans (top views) of choreographic compositions. Fokin's sketches are not the monumental baroque heaps of M. Petipa; the sketches are of a multipart composite nature. A sheet of paper is divided into parts (small formats) just as a ballet show is divided into acts, scenes and episodes. Sketches of groups of compositional, linear, circular, oval, diagonal, grouped or scattered composition follow one another in sequential order under the numbers 1, 2, 3, etc. This is so in an explication of the order of dances for the ballet *Firebird*(1910, St. Petersburg Theatre Museum). Another group of drawings includes specific sketches of three figured compositions – sketches for the ballets *Blue God* (1911) and *Egyptian Nights* (1908, St. Petersburg Theatre Museum). Drawings are specific; each drawing indicates a certain movement of a dynamic or static posture. This is not only a scheme, but also an image of movement.

An image of the magnificent baroque dance is drawn in pictures for the ballet *Sleeping Marquess* accompanied by the music of Mozart (1921, St. Petersburg Theatre Museum). Three figures of the king, the queen and the pageboy carrying the Queen's dress train vary figures of a circular dance, which frontally moves towards the audience and is horizontal-linear. These drawings brilliantly executed in black ink create an image of the lush and grandiose Baroque style, which manifested itself so clearly in the costumes of the eighteenth century. Heavy framed skirts, tied bodices, tall powdered wigs, ceremonial movements and slow demonstrative poses can all be seen in these small but expressive choreographic sketches of M. Fokin. They contain the plot and stand on the boundary between choreographic expositions and graphic ideas.

Highly artistic choreography is a process which is not always simple but which is, nevertheless, steadily growing. This is a process of enrichment of expressive means, leading to expanded boundaries of thinking; it requires new discoveries<sup>17</sup>. If a figurative series is formed in the mind, and takes shape and rhythm, it can then be edited just as in cinematography. An image-frame then becomes the continuation of a choreographic idea. Thus, the graphic drawings of O. Vinogradov, a chief

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<sup>17</sup> R.V. Zakharov, *Creation of a Dance. Pages of pedagogical experience*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1983.

choreographer of the Mariinsky Theatre, for his productions reproduce their unique visual-culture choreography and help in the understanding, in the “seeing”, of the structure and content of the dance. The graphic storyboard of the dance for the ballet *Assef* of V. Vlasov (A. Bakhrushin State Central Theater Museum, the Mariinsky Theater Museum) represents future choreographic work, in which an artistic image is reproduced by the method of time extension. The motive of dance is implemented here through the dynamics of the movement of identical figures of dancers depicted on dark toned paper, dressed in light tunics and linked by a common rhythmic pattern in the graphic work. At the same time, this is also a fixation of the moment in a dance, as indicated in its syntactics.

Knowledge of anatomy is another important fact bringing together the creative processes of a choreographer and an artist. A choreographer, and especially a teacher of classical dance, needs to know the physiology of the body, and the structure and life of muscles and those organs which are connected with them and participate in movement, in addition to an artist ideally being able to penetrate the human body structure. There are illustrative examples from the practice of the arts: the artist Leonardo da Vinci and the choreographer-teacher V. Tikhomirov. Both refer to anatomy as a science, although they apply different methods. Leonardo da Vinci dissected corpses in underground catacombs and published an anatomical atlas for a better comprehension of the origins of human beauty. V. Tikhomirov used anatomical atlases and textbooks, understanding that without a knowledge of anatomy he would not unveil all the secrets and classical laws of barre. He needed to know what muscles and joints are involved in movement and what muscles those movements develop. Thus, in Moscow University he asked to be allowed to audit the lectures of “the founder of Russian physiology”, I. Sechenov. The choreographer studied this work and discovered that it contains “sketches of human working movements”. It turns out that the famous scientist studied the motor functions, which is the basis of the classical dance school. In addition, V. Tikhomirov attended anatomical theaters, and in Paris he visited morgues for the same purpose, examining the structure of the human body. In the choreographer’s notes there are sketches of facial muscles with detailed descriptions of the roles of certain muscles in facial expressions. Noverre, who has already been mentioned above, emphasized the same thoughts in his works, saying that a choreographer, like an artist studying anatomy, should understand that for the figure to be “drawn in accordance with the true nature and the laws of art, it is

necessary that a person is felt under the clothes, muscles – under the skin and the skeleton – under the muscles”<sup>18</sup>.

Numerous sketches of movements for ballets and choreographic shows and performances (Goleizovsky Family Collection) give an important opportunity to become acquainted with the original works of the renowned choreographer and author of the extensive graphical cycle for the 1946 ballet *Layla and Majnun*, S. Balasanyan. The ancient oriental legend shows new boundaries for the choreographer’s creative nature. Kirilov, in his study *The Language of Dance: Historical-systematical-semiotic Development and Substantiation*, writes the following: “It is established that the language of dance as a system consisting of potential and actual structures through plastic movements reflects the meaning of the reflexive human experience, and the source and the result of the expression of meaning is the material of dance – the human body.”<sup>19</sup>

Examining the sphere of plastic specificity, K. Goleyzovsky masterfully reaches a new level of poetic generalizations. He can exhaust the human passion, bring his character to the extreme, to the very limit, beyond which there is something different and unknown. A choreographer works hard, feels, improvising, searching for a momentary nerve in each scene, which is born in mind, but the pulse of which only begins to beat on paper. Here his characters appear in the sphere of linear and spatial biomechanics, as if touching the science of the movement of organisms and living systems. Their environment is of a special kind of intimate gestures that are prone to change and transformation; it is a world of nuances and shades, an area of vibrations and moments. K. Goleyzovsky remained an artist not only when in front of a sheet of paper or on the stage of the theater or rehearsal hall, but also in those hours that, it would seem, were not directly related to his creativity, which was natural and the only possible form of existence for him.

A series of his sketches of ballet supports was created not during rehearsals; however, he appears a perfect master of improvisation with a rich imagination. They present a variety of parterre and air supports: lifting a partner with fixation of poses on one and two raised hands of the partner, supports in “falling” poses and positions, and lifts on the chest and shoulders of the partner. K. Goleyzovsky had his own subjective vision of plastic movements that he wanted to see on stage. He taught the

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<sup>18</sup> J.J. Noverre, *Letters on dancing*, Lan, Saint Petersburg, 2012.

<sup>19</sup> A.P. Kirilov, *The language of dance: historical-systematical-semiotic development and substantiation*, Moscow State University of Culture and Arts, Moscow, 2004.

actors to skillfully control the body<sup>20</sup>. Under the choreographer's direction, the actors discovered rich expressive possibilities related to the amplitude, biomechanics and plastics of movements. In K. Goleyzovsky's ballet shows, even beginners, actors who were on stage for the first time, gained an amazing plastic expressivity and precision of gesture. These sketches can be called scientific to some extent, since the author attempts to penetrate the mechanism, the "anatomy" of movements, the laws of their interaction. The bodies of dancers demonstrate the wealth of dance forms, a kaleidoscope of ballet supports and poses, as well as their athletic builds and well-developed muscular systems. Looking at them gives a truly professional delight. The athleticism is more important for him than a meaningful expression. The pursuit of virtuosity in some drawings blurs the spirituality of the image.

However, in most of the works, Goleyzovsky exclusively focuses on the intimate topic of a duet, a dance of two, where dancers face each other and make contact, or, in other words, focuses on the area of contact between them. The narration takes place as a chain of short stories, sketches, and, at first sight, they have no close logical links. But it is hardly necessary to prove that these groups cannot be regarded as certain, even dynamic, but self-contained sets. The boundaries between them are relative, fluctuating and flexible. Sometimes, it seems that on the graphic sheets of K. Goleyzovskya qualitatively new dimension appears – time. A particular moment of movement lasts endlessly. These moments are eloquent, expressive, they constantly impress with their novelty and suddenness. There is an opportunity to see the way an emotion embodied in a dance is born. Here it finds its meaningful use and becomes a separate unit, a frame in a general assembly chain of choreographic arguments.

P. Goncharov, a ballet dancer and an artist, created drawings for the first textbook of A. Vaganova, *Fundamentals of Classical Dance*, and the textbook *Fundamentals of Character Dance* (one of his last works, which provides more than 900 figures). Such graphics solve purely professional problems, but not artistic and creative ones. Using thin lines and dotted pictures, the artist has consistently illustrated and visually deciphered bar exercises, exercises in the middle of the hall and on fingers. Subsequent reissues of dance textbooks preserved Goncharov's concise and succinct drawings.

A series of lithographs, *Ballet in P. Goncharov's drawings* (1922), of short-run publication that became bibliographic, or rather a museum rarity, should also be noted. The series of lithographs depicts famous ballet

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<sup>20</sup> A.L. Volynsky, *The book of exultation*, Artist, Moscow, 1992.

masters (artists and choreographers) and reveals specific features of their performance, which influenced the formation of P. Goncharov's individual style. However, P. Goncharov's artistic and stylistic manner stands close to the art of *The World of Art* artists, lying in the context of Russian and European modernity, which, in turn, led to the birth of a whole imitative system that appeared in the choreographic culture of the turn of the twentieth century. Thus, the contact of graphics and dance here is at a stylistic level, as a "meeting" of masters of different arts of the same era, when the creative discoveries of one artist, an interpreted artist in this case, are actualized through the artistic discoveries of the other artist – an interpreter. Understanding the same techniques of stylistic borrowing in the choreographic practice makes it possible to reduce all the disparate form-making processes into a single whole and call them polystylistics.

In addition, many types of graphics have similarities and links to choreography in various aspects of their manifestations. For example, the fine arts concepts implicit in the sketch as a preliminary drawing fixing the main idea of an artwork, and in the etude as a work (usually preparatory) drawn by the artist from nature for the purpose of its study, can also be used in choreography<sup>21</sup>. However, the semantic emphasis is displaced to short-term, few-minute-long stage times or to the creative intent of the author (without producing major dance scenes, a choreographer creates short dance sketches). This corresponds to the choreographic concept of dance laconism, which, in a number of productions, does not take on independent importance (a ballet fragment), but which sometimes feels like a certain set course (choreographic miniature).

In our opinion, laconic forms of the etude in graphics are more often used in a choreographic miniature – a genre associated with the names M. Fokin, K. Golezovsky and L. Jacobson, who have already been mentioned, among other choreographers. A miniature, in common with an etude, differs from a fragment in its strict internal steadiness, its perceptible compositional structure. As a rule, it is "self-directed", complete, definitive, centric, since it has a "rounded" view of the world and a concentration of a single thought and expression. Meanwhile, a sketch is rather close to a fragment. Its composition seems imperceptible. As part of the process, it is correlated with the "large whole" and seen on the edge of the finite and the infinite. This immediacy of graphics and dance imposes additional requirements as to the skills of an artist and a choreographer: infallibility of line, lightness and reliability of stroke,

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<sup>21</sup> V.Y. Nikitin, *Composition in modern choreography*, VLADOS, Moscow, 2012.

laconism of expressive means and the ability to select the strongest and most characteristic detail.

Other associative contacts between ballet and graphics can be found in connection with another kind of graphics – engraving. We can speak about the engraving-related expressiveness of dance language in connection with the works of the famous ballerinas M. Taglioni, A. Pavlova and O. Spesivtseva. Critics often noted that many episodes of their dances resembled engravings brought to life. Their performing manner was distinguished by subtle filigree, elegance of lines and refinement of poses. Their appearance can hardly be presented as a picturesque weightiness or sculptural physicality: graphicality over picturesqueness, contour instead of volume, discontinuity rather than continuity. Light flights of female dancers, their light soaring leaps alternating with precise pauses, resembled refined drawings copied from engraved originals. Thus, this contrasting influence of the graphic image on choreography not only directed its development towards the stylistic principles of Romanticism, but also helped to strengthen ballet's distinctive aesthetic principles.

In the process of creating an artistic whole, close links are to be found between the sometimes greatly varied components, whether by an illustrator or a choreographer working on a stage version of a literary work or any libretto, or by a drawing artist or easel painter creating a whole series of drawings united by a common theme. Karp says: “The literary ballet is an illustration without text”<sup>22</sup>. A talented illustrator has always considered a book as an integral entity, in which the text, illustrations and all design elements are closely interconnected and express one idea. He/she must deeply and subtly examine the literary work in its entire artistic form, sensitively capturing the rhythms of the literary text and its style. So that a choreographer has the right to share with the audience the images that appear in mind when reading a literary work, he/she, as an artist, should read it correctly. This means he/she should not only understand the nature of the characters, the motives of their behavior, and understand certain thoughts of the writer, but also understand the content of the book as a whole, its main idea, for the sake of which it was written. This does not necessarily entail a faithful retelling of the story, since the plot can be changed, but is, rather, an opportunity to convey in the most emotional way in a fundamentally different form what the ballet's or book's graphics are. Like the words in literature, there must be an action, plasticity and behavior; only then will the images correspond to literary

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<sup>22</sup> P.M. Karp, *Ballet and drama*, Iskusstvo, Leningrad, 1980.

ones<sup>23</sup>. In addition, in the explicit analogy between the work of a theater artist and the work of a book illustrator, it should be noted that the former work is more difficult. Theatrical scenery is located in a space, and the viewer sees it from many different points. Against the background of theatrical scenery, people are moving and acting; not only must it take these movements into account, but also contribute to the creation of what is called “stage setting” as conceived by the choreographer. However, neither choreographer nor illustrator can reveal to the audience the true content of a literary work if they just retell the plot of the story. When they realize the essence of a writer’s work, they acquire the opportunity to choose, whether staging or illustrating the work, the most important moments, those moments which help the viewer to understand the plot. When their images match the literary original’s in their psychological depth, it may then be assumed that they have succeeded in this task.

It should be noted that the poetic language of ballet, which is not intended for the detailed retelling of events, gives a common ground between the creative activity of a choreographer and an illustrator. Any art illustrations in a book, along with their scenic interpretation, are selective, since they cannot comprise all the multidimensionality of a literary work. They provide no gradual movement from simple to complex, but a rapid immersion in the unknown, like an intuitive insight. A good interpretation of a literary source in a ballet show, like a successful graphic illustration, requires an in-depth comprehension of the source, technical skills and artistic passion.

It remains to be added that a book and its illustrations or a ballet show based on this book can be closely interrelated. Illustrations or a ballet show awake interest in the topic (its characters, the era of its setting, etc.), create a visible image from the once invisible, and embody complex movements of the human soul and even abstract philosophical ideas in visual models<sup>24</sup>. There are quite a few such performances based upon literary works: *Romeo and Juliet* by S. Prokofiev based upon the tragedy by William Shakespeare (choreographer L. Lavrovsky), *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* by B. Asafiev based upon the poem by A.S. Pushkin (choreographer R. Zakharov), *Anna Karenina* by R. Shchedrin based upon L. Tolstoy’s novel (choreographer M. Plisetskaya) and *Annie* by V. Gavrilin

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<sup>23</sup> G.L. Ermash, *Art as a way of thinking*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 2011.

<sup>24</sup> B. Reade, *Ballet designs and illustrations 1581-1940*, H.M.S.O., London, 1967; L. Salmina-Maskell, *Catalogue of Russian drawings in Victoria and Albert museum*, H.M.S.O., London, 1972; L. Salmina-Maskell, *Russian drawings in the Ashmolean museum*, University Press, Oxford, 1970.

based upon A. Chekhov's story *Anna on the Neck* (choreographer V. Vasiliev), to name but a few well known examples<sup>25</sup>.

Genre convergence with the form of posters using caricature and parody is another point of interaction between graphics and dance. Art characteristics borrowed from such graphics can be used in the imagery in a ballet work when there is a need for metaphor, vivid symbolism, allegory, unnatural colors in design or elements of caricature and parody, deliberately using methods of hyperbole sharpen some features of an image. Complexity, excess of detail and too much undesirable similarity to the model are unacceptable in the caricature character on stage, as in the graphic caricature, because otherwise the main qualities to be caricatured are lost.

Exaggeration, grotesque and deformation became widespread mainly in a number of late ballets: *Russian Seasons*— burlesque scenes in *Petrushka* by I. Stravinsky (choreography by M. Fokin and design by A. Benoit), the suite of choreographic miniatures and dances *Russian Fairy Tales* by A. Liadov (choreography by L. Miasin and design by M. Larionova), *Parade* by E. Satie (choreography by L. Miasin and design by P. Picasso), *Jester* by S. Prokofiev (choreography by M. Larionov and T. Slavinskiy and design by M. Larionov) and *Ball* by V. Risti (choreography by G. Balanchine and design by G. Chirico) among others. In these works the plastic irony and graphic grotesque are important, sometimes the main planes and techniques of the choreographic image, while sometimes serving as the decoration (*Jester, Parade, Ball*). A principle of poster and caricature was subsequently extensively used in the ballet theater of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, participating in the formation of performance genres.

Thus, the ballet poster, the satirical ballet, the choreographic grotesque and other genres appeared. Examples include *Annie* by V. Gavrilin (choreography by V. Vasiliev), *Bug*, with the plot of the satirical comedy written by V. Mayakovsky and staged by F. Otkazov and G. Firtich (choreography by L. Yakobson), *The Lady and the Hooligan* by D. Shostakovich (choreography by K. Boyarsky), *Lieutenant Kizhe* by S. Prokofiev (choreography by O. Tarasov and A. Lapauri) and *The Three Musketeers* by V. Basner (choreography by N. Boyarchikov).

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<sup>25</sup> T. Portnova, "Giants against Gods (regarding the plastic nature of sculpture and theater by the example of the exhibition and installation of the pergamon altar in the Pushkin State Museum of fine arts)", in *European Research Studies Journal*, 2015, vol. 18, no. 4, p. 189-196.



The genre form chosen in the choreography of these performances is characterized by the development of an image-based origin to achieve a pictorial effect in any stage element, which becomes bright and memorable mainly due to the art of acting with a tendency to solve specific problems. Metaphorical characteristics of the expressive language, which are well-established in the lexicon of specific dances—such as disharmonious harmony, hyperbolization and intertextual context, related to the combination of the incompatible – prompt the more careful consideration of the problem of genre synthesis in the aesthetics and practice of the ballet theater.

Finally, modern dance can adopt new advanced multimedia and digital technologies using laser beams, drawing light lines in the stage space, implanting them within a theatrical performance<sup>26</sup>. Special programs in the sphere of graphic web design, replacing traditional methods of a fixed image with digitalization and visualization of artists' movements captured on video carriers, are also created. Pathfinder, a visual language to generate choreography, allows for innovative performances, offering new ways of perceiving dance. The creators of the pilot project noted: “Our algorithms generate graphic patterns that stimulate the creativity of dancers and open up new prospects. Pathfinder is a tool to create a source of visual inspiration, rather than a model for reconstruction, so it becomes a new structural block of creativity, challenging a master-slave paradigm.”<sup>27</sup>

The ideas of V. Kandinsky concerning the abstraction of the main objects of an image – point, line and plane – influenced the creation of the visual language of the system. The program's algorithm can convert one shape to another, generate a creative impulse for improvisational dance and influence the process of art speciation. Nowadays, graphic projections are actively introduced in the scenography of a ballet show. Video graphics are projected both on flat screens and on much less usual surfaces: fabrics, glass, mirrors or water, for example. The modern ballet theater may even use techniques of interactive communication between real actors and animated cartoon characters, opening up new opportunities for visual impact upon the viewer.

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<sup>26</sup> T.V. Astafieva, *New technologies in the modern staging process: upon materials of theatre arts of St. Petersburg 1990-2010*, Saint-Petersburg University of Humanities and Social Sciences, Saint-Petersburg, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> Geektimes, Pathfinder – Visual Language to Generate Choreography, 2015. Available at: <https://geektimes.ru/post/262786/>.

The introduction of computer technologies in the creation of theatrical works has greatly expanded the range of artistic means of choreographic direction. Now the methodology of stage design is focused on the creation of design concepts. The constant evolution and improvement of the methods of working with graphic elements, including three-dimensional images, as well as with the design of the layout of future performances, have made possible the most courageous experiments in the sphere of visual dance forms<sup>28</sup>.

### **Discussion**

The creative process in dancing combines theoretical understanding and the use of practical knowledge gained, which are gradually expanded and deepened through integration with other areas of choreographic specialization. The disclosure of the role of a graphic component as one of the important aspects of the synthetic art of the ballet theatre, showing the value of previously created and potential artistic images to affect the viewer through expressive graphic means, is relevant and important, since in the modern world of ballet this role is not fully appreciated and has been partially forgotten. Despite the numerous photos and art exhibitions dedicated to the art of ballet<sup>29</sup> conducted around the world, comprehensive scientific research in the context of the interpretation of graphic education as an important part in choreography has not been conducted. A specific interest in dance morphology is characteristic of modern cultural and theatrical research<sup>30</sup>. However, associative links and parallels between the linguistic systems of graphic and dance creativity remain especially poorly studied. In comparison with all the available scientific descriptions considering the expressive structure of choreography, our study draws attention to the specifics of the art-graphic dance language both in its plane model and simultaneously in its space model, a variety of figurative-expressive means participating in the organization of spectacular image in theatrical productions. The author tried to outline the scope of the constituent elements of the choreography

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<sup>28</sup> T.V. Portnova, "Principles and opportunities of the study of pictorial heritage in the practice of choreographic education", in *Journal of Siberian Federal University – Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2018, vol. 11, no. 12, p. 2043-2055.

<sup>29</sup> Co Sotheby, *Catalogue of Important Canadian Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors, Books and Prints of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Sotheby & Company, London, 1973; Co Sotheby, *Catalogue of Modern British Drawings, Paintings and Sculpture*, Sotheby & Company, London, 1973.

<sup>30</sup> Y.A. Kondratenko, *Language of stage dance: types and morphology*, Mordovian University, Saransk, 2009.

involved in any dance work (line, dance pattern, silhouette, perspective, etc.), as well as choreographics, serving as a special subject of interpretation in a number of stage solutions.

Firstly, the identification of these solutions allowed the formulation and substantiation of the basic methods of work in the creation of graphic images related to given dances (choreographic shows, graphic signs and sketches for dance recording, theatrical sketches for performances, etc.) and the conducting of artistic and stylistic analyses of these works. Secondly, this allowed the drawing of parallels both between related specific works and between similar genre systems of graphics and dance, and the correlating of their features by the representation of capabilities of their artistic languages<sup>31,32</sup>.

The practical significance of the points brought to light in this article lies in the fact that its content and conclusions can be used when creating new choreographic works and in the educational process in the basic study of the art of the choreographer and choreographic direction. They may be included in the content of the lectures of a number of specialized courses at universities of creative arts and in the educational context of new programs teaching innovation in project activities in the context of the retraining of theater directors. Additionally, the study of choreography from the perspective of graphic interconnections and interpretations opens prospects for further developments in the sphere of theater studies.

We have conducted an analysis of the main artistic directions to have shown points of interaction between choreography and graphics (choreographic graphics and graphic choreography), movements transformed firstly by a dialectic of development and changes of the stylistic and image-bearing structures of choreographic and scenographic solutions in theatrical performances, and secondly in the course of the evolution of the art of dancing in connection with changes of genre and thematic focus. These examples navigate choreographers to the analysis of the graphic structure of a choreographic work, and emphasize the skills of consistent independent creative work and analytical work with an art director as important components of professional activity.

Thus, we have shown that a basic knowledge of theoretical problems pertaining to the development and enrichment of the language

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<sup>31</sup> K.R. Nurgali, "Representation of ancient times in Kazakh historical novel", in *Life Science Journal*, 2013, vol. 10, no. 11, p. 298-301.

<sup>32</sup> K.R. Nurgali, K.M. Baytanasova, J.K. Kishkenbaeva, "Author's role in the literary field by the example of Kazakh literature", in *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 2013, vol. 25, no. 9, p. 1290-1294.

of the choreographic art in its historical perspective gives an idea of the diversity of forms and methods contributing to artistic and imaginative performance solutions. Such theoretical underpinnings also help in the development of the creative abilities of both active and future professional choreographers, aiding their acquisition of a knowledge of the compositional laws behind directors' thinking, a knowledge attained by studying the best examples of the staging techniques of the great masters of dance. Experiencing the interaction between the arts examined proves the unique vitality of a graphic image: its ability to change, update and respond to the urgent aspirations of the time, to adapt and live alongside dance, while still being itself.