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MAYA PLISETSKAY AND HER CREATIVE WORK IN BALLET OF THE 20-th CENTURY

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МАЙЯ ПЛИСЕЦКАЯ И ЕЁ ТВОРЧЕСТВО В БАЛЕТЕ 20-го СТОЛЕТИЯ

Annotation

This article is devoted to describing of creative work in modern ballet by Maya Plisetskaya. The aim of the article is to provide the reader some material on famous ballerina Maya Plisetskaya as choreographer and as dancer of modern ballet. The authors draw to the conclusion Maya Plisetskaya's leading role in world ballet art.

Key words: modern ballet, Maya Plisetskaya, elements of modern dance, choreographers, dancers, modern ballet techniques.

I. Introduction. Plisetskaya is renowned as one of the world's greatest and most charismatic ballerinas. Her slender physique combined with outstanding technique and effervescent personality has enabled her to steal the hearts of India Gandhi, Robert Kennedy and Mao Zedong alike [11].

A.Voznesenskyi wrote about M. Plisetskaya:

В её имени слышится плеск аплодисментов.

Она рифмуется с плакучими лиственницами,

с персидской сиренью,

Елисейскими полями, с Пришествием.

*Есть полюса географические, температурные,
магнитные.*

Плисецкая – полюс магии.

Она ввинчивает зал в неистовую воронку

своих тридцати двух фуэте,

своего темперамента, ворожит,

закручивает: не отпускает.

*Есть балерины тишины, балерины-снежины –
они тают. Эта же какая-то адская искра.*

Она гибнет – полпланеты спалит!

Даже тишина её – бешеная, орущая тишина
ожидания, активно напряжённая тишина
между молнией и громовым ударом.
Плисецкая – Цветаева балета.
Её ритм крут, взрывен [1].

International ballet star Maya Plisetskaya is one of the most famous artists of the twentieth century. Her career took place at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, where she excelled in both the classical repertoire (*Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, Raymonda, Don Quixote*) that in contemporary ballets (*Carmen Suite, Romeo and Juliet, Laurencia*).

Maya Plisetskaya and Rodion Shchedrin were made *The International Foundation*. It is a public foundation incorporated under civil law. Based in Mainz, it was set up in September 2000. The Foundation purposes are: 1) to preserve. Document and, in any possible way, provide public access to the artistic carrier of Maya Plisetskaya and Rodion Shchedrin in the broadest sense, 2) to support talented young artists worldwide: interpreters, composers, dancers and authors in the field of ballet dance and music; 3) to foster the art of ballet dancing and composing worldwide. its purposes particularly by means of 1) contributions for the setting up and the support of an archive with written, film and phono records, secondary literature and personal items which are connected with the life and art of Maya Plisetskaya and Rodion Shchedrin, 2) contributions for the setting up and or maintenance of a museum, or for the organization of exhibitions on ballet dance, 3) contributions for the organization of ballet competitions, 4) organization of courses, classes, lectures and other educational events on the ballet and/or composition [5].

Writing in her autobiography, Plisetskaya says: «...a person's character is his fate» [10]. Indeed, more than most, Plisetskaya demonstrated how strength of personality can bring about amazing success. At eleven years old, she was labelled a “daughter of an enemy of the people”. By the time she was eighteen, she was the leading dancer at the most prestigious ballet company in the USSR [11].

II. The aim of the article is to investigate theoretical material and to analyze literary works on this theme. To achieve the aim we have defined *such tasks*:

1. Analyze and to learn the theoretical material on the topic.
2. To describe the creative work of Maya Plisetskaya.
3. To give characteristic of Maya Plisetskaya’s work.

III. The Results. Maya Plisetskaya, the Russian dancer (*born 1925*), studied at the Bolshoi Ballet's school in Moscow and joined the company as a soloist in 1943. Noted for her technical virtuosity and ability to integrate acting with dancing, she toured worldwide with the Bolshoi Ballet and appeared as a guest artist with several companies, including the Paris Opera. She also danced in several films, including

Swan Lake (1957) [9]. In the 1980s she was a guest ballet director in Rome and then in Madrid.

When Maya Plisteskaya was eight, her Aunt Sulamith took her to the Moscow Choreographic School, which produces most of the Bolshoi dancers. She requested that they admit Maya a year earlier than the usual entrance age because of the child's obvious talent and also because "at home, she just can't help dancing." Maya was accepted and began the hard and dedicated life of becoming a ballet dancer. Her teacher for six years was the legendary Yelizaveta Gerdt, whose equally famous father, Pavel, taught Anna Pavlova and Tamara Karsavina. Thus Plisetskaya is a direct link and continuation of the traditions of the Russian ballet.

Gerdt called Plisetskaya her «little diamond» and lovingly polished and refined the young pupil's talent. Upon graduation from the school in 1943, she was accepted immediately into the Bolshoi company, not as a member of the corps de ballet but as a soloist. For the role of Masha in «The Nutcracker», Plisetskaya received the coaching of yet another legendary figure in the history of Russian ballet – Agrippina Vaganova, the director of the Leningrad ballet school whose methods of teaching were the basis at all Soviet ballet schools. Among Vaganova's pupils in Leningrad had been Galina Ulanova and Marina Semyonova. Vaganova encouraged the young ballerina to find and bring out her own individuality in each role – to make them her own [6].

The ensuing years saw M.Plisetskaya performing in all the classical roles, offering individual but convincing interpretations. She danced Raymonda, the dual role of Odette-Odile (*Swan Lake*), Aurora (*Sleeping Beauty*), Myrthe (*Giselle*), Kitri (*Don Quixote*), Tsar-Maiden (*The Little Hump-backed Horse*), and, of course, *The Dying Swan* (we can watch one clip with Maya Plisetskaya and swans, and her dancing *The Dying Swan* (we see her in what became her visiting card *The Dying Swan* of which she gives an unforgettable interpretation [3]) which Michel Fokine created for Anna Pavlova [2] in 1907 and which later was associated as a showcase for Plisetskaya's famous plasticity – the suppleness of her back and the remarkable pliability of her arms, which ripple with grace, seemingly boneless.

M.Plisetskaya created leading roles in Lavrovsky's *Stone Flower* (1954), Moiseyev's *Spartacus* (1958), Grigorovich's Moscow version of *The Stone Flower* (1959), Aurora in Grigorovich's staging of *The Sleeping Beauty* (1963), Grigorovich's Moscow version of *The Legend of Love* (1965), the title role in Alberto Alonso's *Carmen Suite* (1967), Petit's *La Rose malade* (Paris, 1973), Béjart's *Isadora* (Monte Carlo, 1976) and his Moscow staging of *Leda* (1979), Granero's *Maria Estuardo* (Madrid, 1988), and Lopez's *El Renedero* (Buenos Aires, 1990).

M.Plisetskaya started choreographing in 1972; her first ballet was *Anna Karenina* (with N. Ryzhenko and V. Smirnov-Golovanov), set to a score by her husband, Rodion Shchedrin, and starring herself in the title role, which was staged at the Bolshoi. She also created *The Seagull* (mus. Shchedrin, Bolshoi Ballet, 1980) and *Lady with a Lapdog* (mus. Shchedrin, Bolshoi Ballet, 1985). She starred in the 1961 film of *The Humpbacked Horse*, and also appeared as a straight actress in several films, including the Soviet version of *Anna Karenina* (1968).

One of her most famous roles was Carmen, in the ballet «Carmen-Suite» by Cuban choreographer Alberto Alonso. The ballet gave full rein to her dramatic and artistic talent. She portrayed the young girl as a passionate, tempestuous, and sensual character. Bizet's famous score was arranged by Rodion Shchedrin, Plisetskaya's husband. The French choreographers Roland Petit and Maurice Bejart created «La Rose Malade» and «Isadora», respectively, for her.

Another facet of M.Plisetskaya's talent was her choreography. Her ballets «Anna Karenina», «The Seagull», «Lady with a Lapdog» are all based on Russian literature with music especially composed by P.Shchedrin and created as vehicles for her own star quality [6].

Among her most notable performances was her free-form, modern dance routine set to Ravel's *Boléro* in 1975 [7]. In it, she dances a solo piece on an elevated round stage, surrounded and accompanied by 40 male dancers. One reviewer writes, «Words cannot compare to the majesty and raw beauty of Plisetskaya's performance: What makes the piece so compelling is that although Plisetskaya may be accompanied by dozens of other dancers mirroring her movement, the first and only focus is on the prima ballerina herself. Her continual rocking and swaying at certain points, rhythmically timed to the syncopation of the orchestra, create a mesmerizing effect that demonstrated an absolute control over every nuance of her body, from the smallest toe to her fingertips, to the top of her head» [4].

IV. Conclusion. This article is devoted to the unique and eternal art of the prima ballerina assoluta Maya Plisetskaya: unique because of the height of her jumps, the incredible fluidity of her arms and the longevity of her career (she was born in 1925 and danced until she was seventy). Unique also because, like Maria Callas, another prima diva assoluta, she was able to reconcile the most amazing technique with the most dramatic expression; her dancing is intelligent.

To sum up, M. Plisetskaya eventually performed all over the world, working with such noted choreographers as Roland Petit and Maurice Béjart. She recounts the tumultuous events she lived through and the fascinating people she met-among them the legendary ballet teacher Agrippina Vaganova, George Balanchine, Frank Sinatra, Rudolf Nureyev, and Dmitri Shostakovich. Gifted, courageous, and brutally honest, Plisetskaya brilliantly illuminates the world of Soviet ballet during an era that encompasses both repression and cultural détente. Still prima ballerina assoluta with the Bolshoi Ballet, Maya Plisetskaya also travels around the world performing and lecturing.

M.Plisetskaya won the top civilian award, the Lenin Prize, in 1964 and the French Pavlova Prize in 1962. She taught master classes in many cities, including New York, and was the artistic director of The National Ballet of Spain beginning in 1988.

Her impulsive, dynamic, and expressive dancing in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s epitomized the highest qualities of the Soviet ballet. At the Bolshoi's gala

celebrating her 75th birthday, President Vladimir Putin presented her with Russia's highest civilian honor, the medal for service to the Russian state, second degree.

Maya Plisetskaya is a great ballerina and a great lady.

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