

UNIVERSITY OF ART AND DESIGN

Cluj-Napoca

Field: Fine and Decorative Arts

## THESIS

### **Image contrast and consonance in the early twentieth century choreography**

Art scenography in Russian Ballet and Swedish  
Ballet

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## ABSTRACT - Summary of Thesis

**Keywords:** scenery, ballet, background set, costumes, choreography, dance, ballet play.

The chapters included in the thesis examine the historiography and the critical responses in the modern and contemporary period, in the context of experimental eclecticism and the spirit of collaboration between the arts in the early twentieth century. The research focuses on identifying the art of ballet with contemporary innovations in other artistic fields, including scenic experiments of modernity and its relationship with art and aesthetics of dance. The first chapters explore the life and in particular the activity of the Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev, who continued to transmit school modernist ideology by cubism, metaphysical painting, surrealism. Lover of art, with a clear sensitivity to the art of dance, the manager has worked with artists and composers, such as Picasso, Satie, Derain, experimental art scene of the early twentieth century. Its creative eclecticism proved to be an important source for transmission of dance and art modernism in the early twentieth century Europe. Art ballet and dance involves an evocation of the human body, being projected on the background of scenic art avant-garde. The chapters included in research work focus on the field of art ephemeral, the link between dance, music and visual art in a permanent process of formation and transformation given period rich in experiments of the early twentieth century. Between the years 1905-1914, the artistic experiments succeeded brisk important transformations, fundamental, who later founded the whole creation. The chapters included in his research, summarize the context in which his design greatly developed, as art itself, with the early twentieth century. The old theories of naturalism traditional art have been removed, "white ballet" associated with feminine grace and sensitivity, was replaced by the main objectives of the artists of the early twentieth century designers.

Recontextualizing the role of the ballet dancer in the ballet scene, the avant-garde artists have proposed experimental stage of the beginning of the century. Artists have captured the reality of the human condition, the geo-political context of the First World War. Based on these assumptions, the methodological research approach is structured from a triple perspective: aesthetic, technical and experimental research, the work is divided into four chapters, as follows: In the first chapter of the research we analyzed the context in which the late nineteenth century, art traditional scenic influenced scenographic art of the early twentieth century, taking symbolist concepts and theories. Diaghilev focused on theoretical principles symbolist after 1880 that simplify scenic scenery and emphasized the harmony of decor and costume. The research of the paper remains an important moment in the history of scenography, in 1899, when for the first time, the role of autonomous art decor is intended to be more than just a ballet background, evoking the image of the atmosphere or captured in ballet era, thus becoming an autonomous art with a life of its own. The creative processes of artistic avant-garde line drawn on the early twentieth century are seen by critical opinion also forms an experimental discontinuity. The first chapter research Decor Ballet - from traditional to modern ballet discusses the context in which art as a symbol of feminine beauty and grace is replaced by avant-garde artists' creative imaging, transposed on canvas, in the context of geo-political world War. The boundaries between the arts undergo a process of liquidation, ceasing to exist, scenography developed as art itself, removing the idea that the decor was regarded as a simple framework of other arts, thus it raises a subtle interference between the two arts . Problematizing modernity and dancing after mid-twentieth century, ballet tends to form "non-ballet, modern dance", in which dancers silhouettes draw contours and shapes in constant motion. Painted canvas backdrop over the role of space, which in essence has three dimensions, turning into a cloth that ballet dancers silhouettes outline outlines, in a continuous transformation, earning extra volume. Study Noverre's scenic scenery leads to the theory that ballet is a fine art, whose ballet master painter, emphasizing the role of color in assembly and scenography of the show.

The principles of Noverre, theorist of choreography, according to whom a chromatic contrast between the scenery and costumes, as inspiration for future artists and designers is developed by the visual effect of the stage space, which changes the background

"color-suits" of dancers, as opposed to color with so-called "color-objects", used in the interpretation of plastic decor. Total Synthesis of the elements of a show, or "literary text, scenic space, costumes, set design and music" are theories that will reappear in modern art as a reference source or exuberant color distribution in the forefront of the stage, and in the background of the scene, pale and less bright shades communicating through images, like a work of art that respects the distribution of color theories in aerial perspective. Noverre directed the distribution of the ballet dancers in the ballet stage, depending on the color tone and exuberant costumes that stand out by their color, against a background painted in neutral tones. In section 1.2., Entitled White Ballet, research has focused on the classical sense of the idea of romantic ballet elegance and grace in all its forms, from the etymology of the term ballet that comes from the Italian word *balletto*, a diminutive of the word *ballo*, which means to dance. White Ballet beginning of the century, the mobility of the ballerinas of the Romantic period is associated with the movement found in nature, providing naturalness and normality principle. Ballerinas sketched in shades of pastel by Edgar Degas, meet line experiment early twentieth century, when Picasso introduces mobility function setting, viewed through the scope "ballerinas-setting" and a personal vision, creative, proposing dancers hidden inside some buildings cardboard, like some skyscrapers. Associated with the art of design, scenography is found within the context of ballet dancers. The dance uses the human body as an element of beauty hidden inside of stage costumes, giving ballet dancer pictorial image and sequence kinetic schemes. The art of dance is a land art, limited to space scenes and scenery inclusion in the stage space, there are included in the ballet, the rules of perspectival representation in space and rules of temporality, in classification, in context. Considering the period of the nineteenth century romantic ballet, Rudolf Arnheim mentions "the dancer was only interested in the pure external elegance and beauty."

White ballet "Balanchine style," as it was called by Oleg Danovski, its structure was built on classical dance and classical technique study, needed in the formation of a dancer. Noverre concluded that dance could be seen as a kinetic composition, including compositions or dark lines, assuming connotations of a work of fine art, with many centers of interest or ballet dancers bodies that gives the viewer many expressive images.

Set art, by the function and the cultural and ideological ballet dimension, associated with ephemeral art, including dance, music and scenography, like a unified whole artistic dancer is one who "draws" dance on canvas as a painted decoration, a sequence of kinetic sets. In section 1.3., Entitled Ballet Degas and Toulouse art-Lautrec - I insisted on ballet as the main subject of the artist Edgar Degas' pastels or the image of the woman and the eternal feminine, transposed on canvas by studies ballerina in tutu classic costume, in classical ballet. According to the findings of Paul Valery, Degas, "seduced by the movement of a ballerina jellyfish," a restored, crystal elastic in various attitudes "being known as" the painter of dancers ". "Flower of human sensitivity", as it was called romantic ballet was reflected in the imagery of Degas, reflecting idealism, elegance, grace, beauty and freedom of expression of the dancers in the dance class work, Dancer with bouquet, respectively the sculptural creations, Little dancer for 14 years, which captures the realism, classical image of the ballerina. The artist who introduced silhouettes of dancers as Jane Avril, La Goulue and his works is May Milton Lautrec, attention focusing on the "demi-monde of the" Paris of the end of the nineteenth century. Totally different subject painted by the proposed works, Degas and Lautrec capture the image of the woman symbol in different representations and situations. In subsection 1.4. "The art of ballet in Symbolism" mentioned innovations created since 1880 by Paul Fort and Lugné-Poe, who proposed the use of double decoration ballet scene or part of the far delimitation of the stage through a curtain to be used as a continuation of the scenic space, the use of inclined planes in decor, the use of chiaroscuro effects and transparency curtains to highlight ballet dancers silhouettes. Innovations symbolist art of the late nineteenth century were reflected in scenographic art of the early twentieth century, set designers focusing on natural coordination of ballet dancer costume and scenery scenographic. Through successive innovations, fine art was seduced by artistic experiments of the early twentieth century. In Chapter two of this thesis research, entitled Russian and Swedish Ballet - art enters the ballet, I followed chronologically, art scenography in 45 of the most important ballets of the early twentieth century, the Company Russian Ballet and Swedish Ballet. In section 2.1., Entitled Life and work of Serge Diaghilev in the company, I watched Serge Diaghilev and his booking agent activity in the Russian Ballet Company, he was among the founders of the artistic

movement Mir Iskusstva and director of the magazine "World of Art", a magazine founded in St. Petersburg in 1898. "Entrepreneur of any kind and any shades of contemporary art," as they called him. Serge Diaghilev ballet troupe focused on art and the culture line inspired by Russian folklore, "sketching" one of the brightest periods in the history of ballet art. Renowned artists were called as decorators, since 1907, to collaborate in the famous Russian Ballet Company of Serge Diaghilev's. The Russian Ballet Company, Diaghilev opened early twentieth century in the history of choreography, under the sign of art impresario managed to achieve a synthesis of dance, art and music, bringing the greatest painters, designers, musicians and dancers in the same space: the ballet scene. In section 2.2., Called The Silver Age - The new Russian-inspired decor, scenographic art briefly watched or created sets and costumes for ballet Russian painters of Russian Ballet Companies. Amid new avant-garde art movements, co-opt Diaghilev Russian painters as Alexander Benois, Leon Bakst, Nicholas Roerich, Goncharova, Larionov, Russian season which opens by presenting them in Paris and in western Europe since 1906. In the 20 years of the company, the famous "Saison Russe", created by his stage performances of enthusiasm for the Parisian public, the original fine arts, the colorist, music, talent and impeccable execution of the dancers. A cultural and artistic refinement was brought to the ballet stage sets and costumes by Russian artists, in a note of originality, color and exuberant exoticism.

In the subsections contained between 2.2.1.-2.2.9, the research work focuses on identifying the art of ballet art innovations including Russian painter Leon Bakst scenographic art. The sets and costumes designed specifically highlight the fascination for exotic tales and Russian folklore, sumptuous and refined oriental strident tones of color, framed by an exact study design. The costumes created from choreographies thoroughly developed and painted decorations based on the idea that reality configures fantastic ballet scene, inspired her. The ballet is perceived as a catalyst of cultural experiments with inflections and Russian folk elements. The model of Russian artists creative vision, ballet performances have been fantastic and gives a touch of the sublime. Russian painter Leon Bakst brings a touch of fantastic ballet "Firebird" by fascinating costumes, full of sublime, surreal and exoticism of the prince and the bird of fire or a touch of sophistication of ancient Egyptian ballet "Cleopatra", carefully developed after

studying ancient decoration of ancient Egypt, with insertions in the design capitals of the columns papiriforme Egyptian temples and statues of pharaohs large various dynasties. The Ballet 'Scheherazade', a success thanks to oriental influences and harmonious music, art and stage choreography, keep a decor reminiscent of representation and influences of Eastern and Oriental elegance. Rendered on canvas decor with a fine design is the line that refers to the symbolism, flat tints of bright colors, arranged in a quasi-fantasy fairytale architecture, fall decoration painting, giving the show a touch of enchantment. In the ballet "Narcissus" Leon Bakst ballet scene brings the beauty of the old mythology Hellas, through the artist's return to form classical Greek and canon of perfection and beauty, plastic interpreted by Olympians and studies for the body of the gods of mythology ancient art scenographic translated into an exact and well built drawing, exuberant colors, in a specific Russian manner . One of the themes of ancient Greek mythology is transposed on canvas painted by the Russian ballet "Daphnis and Chloe" by developing imaginative and conceptual theme of love sacred and profane lovemaking, highlighting "the experience of contemplation of beauty as an act of birth of love." In "rose spectrum", one of the most popular ballets, the painter captured in costumes and scenery the painted beauty and elegance of form and the study from raea elements, overlapping fantastic scope. Theme domination of Russian culture in the Caucasus was staged by ballet "Thamara" painter designer inspiration from folklore and traditional grounds in southern Russia in the 19th century fairytale theme ballet scene is painted on canvas decor song "Beauty in sleeping Beauty "by Leon Bakst, by a refinement of chromatic exuberance, decorative grandeur and wealth. For the ballet "Magic Night" for which Staats wrote one of the most beautiful choreographies, painter Leon Bakst proposed as a painted decoration, a language of fluidity, elegance and ornamentation, recalling the construction drawing of imperial palaces. In subsections 2.3.0.-2.3.4., the research paper emphasizes the color and sumptuous grandeur of refined design, the painter Alexander Benois, one of the greatest painters and decorators, one important artist of Russian Ballet Company's Serge Diaghilev, founder of Iskusstva Mir magazine. The topics covered in ballets and "Armida's Pavillion", "Giselle", "Petrushka", "Marriage of Psyche Amor with" Russian painter recalls the romance art by introducing the painted canvas decor items architectural French royal court of the seventeenth century, medieval

architecture in Germany, Russian fairy life and St Petersburg eighteenth century by a mixture of realism and fantasy, the history of Russia and France, respectively Scandinavian mythology, Celtic and Germanic peoples. The artist develops the theme attributing fantastic beings endowed with grace and elegance. The subject of ancient Greek mythological ballets addressed by the song "Amor's marriage with Psyche", proposed in art production design, the beauty of classical antiquity epoch, a specific coloring Russian art, the richness of ornament, and the detail of the classical form.

Russian painter Alexander Benois, the refinement of color, reminiscent of one of the great French decorative artist, Boccione. Alexander Benois, along with other artists of the "Silver Age" of Russian Ballet, created a school of stage painting, which Russia has held the world, first in the scenography. In subsections 2.3.5.-2.3.6., the research work aims at Russian painter Nicholas Roerich, the sets and costumes for ballet, he created "Dances from Prince Igor" and "Sanctity Spring", inspired by the Russian archaic folklore studies scenery that highlights similarities color art painter Gauguin. Nicholas Roerich, one of the most talented painters, Russian admirer of ethnology, archeology and ancient past through its theoretical study proposes beauty ethnographic folklore that can be inferred by Russian Ballet Company painted decorations. In the ballet "Polovzean Dances from Prince Igor" the painter studied the archaeological documentation and certificates of Scandinavian settlements, the lands of ancient Scythians and Eastern Slavs respectively Norman population who founded colonies and formations between the centuries VIII and XII. For the ballet "Sanctity Spring" the artist starts from Russian archaic folklore ethnographic sources, drawing from an ancient fertility ritual, with the specific primitive dances. The originality of fine arts and cultural refinement of the painter Nicholas Roerich resembles the versatility of the "Silver Age" in Russian Ballet. In chapter 2.4., we have introduced aspects of research on the creation of Natalia Goncharova and Russian artists Mikhail Larionov, representatives of Rayonism, using as inspiration for the sets created ballets, traditional folklore from Russia, translated into a modern version. The painted decors are distinguished by a design of the line, with a rich ornamentation and stylized plant forms and motives to Goncharova, interpreted as a characteristic of Russian folk aesthetics in ballets such as "Golden Rooster" and "La Foire de Sorochinsk". Mikhail Larionov painted decors for the ballets "Fox", "Sun Night" and "Russian

countesses" remember ballet lovers of 20s folk tradition about the fascinating Russian or Slavic rituals. In Chapter 3, entitled Scenography cubist and constructivist research we focused on the line of artists Pablo Picasso cubist experiments, Leopold Survage, Henri Laurens, Fernand Leger, Marie Laurencin, Pedro Pruna, Picabia and Brancusi, artists who focused on drawing shapes, the art of dance, which, in a state of flux and movement, becomes a priority for Cubist artists . In section 3.1., entitled cubist décor of ballet in line experiment, cubist Picasso and Leger brought the ballet scene to what was called "mechanical ballet" phenomenon that met the vision of a group of avant-garde artists, proposing a depersonalization role in the art of the ballet dancer, dressed in heavy cardboard, like of "skyscrapers", using unusual materials for tights or cloth, cardboard, metal. The ballerina "yielded" the role assigned to the scene of "White Ballet", a character of impressive artistic experiment. The ballet scene became a meeting space of visions and techniques of artists who proposed the mechanization theme or the power machine as artistic phenomenon of the early twentieth century. Artists were seeking innovation of the scenographic idea to propose something new, by the effect of processing on the art of dance. The decor proposed by the Cubist artists took over some of the stances ballet dancers, contributing to the proliferation of communication channels of scenery scenic, taking over the role of mobility by Cubist constructions. Fine Arts became active in ballet or mobile setting. The idea of machine is an allusion to the entire mechanical technology progress, which was in full swing in the early twentieth century. The fluidity and elegance of the beginning of the century white ballet or "silver Period" Russian ballet is replaced by the tubular construction and cubes, by deforming artistic vision of Cubists, vis-à-vis of the romantic ballet art. In section 3.2., Entitled constructivist décor research approach focused on the artistic possibilities implemented in ballet by the constructivist artists Naum Gabo, Antoine Pevsner, Paul Georges Yakoulov Tchelichev, artists proposing Stage ballet, limiting artistic creation scenography repertory, totaling a formalist construction or installation inventive components, assemblies functionalist interpretation of artistic possibilities, construction space, three-dimensional movement aiming for stage light and color in ballet scene, directions focused on the fusion of aesthetic function art ballet and experimental field of Russian constructivism as a celebration of Soviet industrialization in the early years of the

twentieth century. Naum Gabo, Antoine Pevsner, Georges Yakoulov and Pavel Tchelichev are artists, sculptors who propose architectural forms made of materials that provide an artistic image of transparency and flexibility in ballet scene, giving the decor, the transparency of bodies, created visual image mobility as a function of kinetic and visual means of expression. In Chapter 4 of the research work entitled Fauvist décor and surreal ballet scene, the approach developed a research on the of the experiments fauvist scenic artists and surrealists in the Russian Ballet Company and Swedish Ballet, continued after the mid-twentieth century in the Russian Ballets de Monte Carlo by the surrealist stage design. In section 4.1., entitled Fauvist Scenography, artists André Derain and Henri Matisse proposed for art decoration, color contrasting shades, pure tones, arranged on large areas of color, applying creative concepts and artistic interpretations of the ballet subjects, being included in a drawing full of accuracy and rigor. Scenography painter Henri Matisse's highlighted areas are dominated by colors and arabesques, bringing the innovation stage ballet dancers placement groups in height, creating human pyramid building body for the Swedish Ballet Company. As innovation in creating the costumes, the artist was inspired by the traditional costumes of the yard line Ming Dynasty in China, using the technique of cut and colored paper. In section 4.2., entitled Scenography in metaphysical image from Giorgio de Chirico, I studied the painter's scenography created for Swedish Ballet Company, which includes elements of ancient Greek architecture and remains of ancient art, widening the perspective of the ballet stage. In section 4.3., Entitled Scenography in the image surreal choreography, scenography experiment line of Russian Ballets de Monte Carlo Company, the ballet themes resume the beginning of the century, making the décor art, through the field of fantastic universe of painters Marc Chagall and Miro Juan. In Chapter 5 of the research, entitled Conclusions, we highlighted the methodological research approach, structured from a triple perspective: the aesthetic, technical and experimental scenographic art of the beginning of the century.