

Savdabīgu situāciju atspoguļo modernajai dejai veltītās recenzijas: tās regulāri rakstīja ne tikai horeogrāfijas speciālisti, bet arī mūzikas kritiķi, piedāvājot savu skatījumu uz mūzikas un dejas mainīgajām attiecībām. Nereti viņi kļuva par modernās dejas popularizētājiem un dažkārt arī par aizstāvjiem. Mūzikas kritiķu raksti par deju skolu koncertiem, izrādēm un viesmākslinieku sniegumu apliecina ieinteresētību un izpratni par jaunākajām dejas mākslas tendencēm, tādejādi tie būtiski veicinājuši šī žanra attīstību Latvijā 20. gadsimta pirmajās četrās desmitgadēs.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN DANCE IN LATVIA IN THE 1900s – 1930s

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Summary

Keywords: the interrelation of music and dance, modern dance schools, collaboration between Latvian musicians and choreographers, music critic reviews

This research paper reflects the collaboration between Latvian musicians and choreographers, viewing it in the context of modern dance in the first half of the 20th century.

At the turn of the 20th century, as a manifestation of the modernist paradigm, new trends also appeared in dance. There were notable attempts to break ingrained traditions. There was a repudiation of the canonised dance systems. And there were searches for new dance theories, techniques, and new aesthetics. Modern dance choreographers, as well as Latvian dance specialists, in their choreographies began to use all possible compositions – not only the music that was composed especially for dances, but also chamber music, symphonic, and vocal music. From 1910, the first modern dance performers were beginning to regularly visit Latvia – among them were Rita Sachheto, Sent M'Ahesa, Gertrud Leistikow, Clotilde von Derp, Alexander Sakharoff, and other artists.

In the first decades of the 20th century, as a result of the influence of the Émile Jaques-Dalcroze eurhythmic methods, the importance of music in choreography was hypertrophied – dance became the illustration and visualisation of music, its forms and rhythm structures. Even though Jaques-Dalcroze's eurhythmic method has a vital role in the formation process of modern dance, at the same time, as a result of the influence of the ideas of German modern dance, quite the contrary trend appeared, where the choreographic idea played the main role – dancers made performances without music or created innovative

choreography, first searching for a movement vocabulary and creating a composition, and only afterwards adding a musical accompaniment.

The Latvian audience could get acquainted with the German dancer's Mary Wigman's 'absolute dance' principles at the guest performances and concerts, as well as from the creative work of Latvian choreographers. Dances without music or with a gong accompaniment in the 1920s and 1930s were performed at Latvian dance school concerts and by individual artists (Elza Siliņa's plastic dance evenings, Beatrise Vīgnere's school concerts, Anna Kerē's dance school concerts, Marta Upesleja's dance evenings, and Sam Hyors' movement choir performances).

In the 1920s and 1930s, there were many dance schools that offered eurhythmics, plastic dance and art dance classes. In 1922, Anna Ašmane's Music and Rhythmic School was founded, in 1923, Beatrise Vīgnere's Physical and Aesthetic Education School and, in 1924, Anna Kerē's Plastic Dance School was established. Along with those, there were other dance schools in Riga, such like Gertrūde Domanger-Līcis', Erna Jērcuma-Leščinska's, Alma Kūmiņa's and Vera Kamina's schools.

However, the idea of 'absolute dance' did not become prevalent in Latvia, since choreographers maintained a vital role for music in their performances, additionally, they often used music created by Latvian composers (Jāzeps Vītols, Leonīds Vīgners, Emīls Dārziņš, Lūcija Garūta) and other composers living in Latvia (Jānis Suhovs or Ivan Suhov, Alexander Maria Schnabel). The composers wrote both miniatures as well as larger works specifically for modern dance performances. However, choreographers mostly chose already previously created musical works for their performances, and, in those cases, the musicians arranged these compositions for fewer instruments. And, of course, the musicians also accompanied the dance performances – piano accompaniment was the most often added while instruments like the violin, viola, cello, harp, etc., were used less often. In certain cases, the Latvian National Opera Orchestra participated in modern dance school concerts.

In the 1920s and 1930s, thanks to the varied new dance school programmes in Latvia, a close tie between musical and choreographic education was formed. The rhythmic method, which originally was created as a discipline in music education, found a broader usage and was also taught in dance schools, developing the musicality of the students and expanding their musical tastes. Particularly significant in this aspect was the education and creative work at the two largest schools – Anna Ašmane's Music and Rhythmic School and Beatrise Vīgnere's Physical and Aesthetic Education School. Excellent dancers, who worked not only in the field of modern dance, were educated at these schools. In the thirties Mirdza Griķe, a student at Ašmane's

school, became one of the leading Latvian ballet dancers. Another student of this school, Erna Garūta-Reinvalde, was invited to perform the main female role in Richard Strauss' *Josephslegende* at the Latvian National Opera.

A unique situation developed in dance criticism from the 1910s to the 1930s – the first critics were not just choreography specialists, but also music critics, and that is clearly explained by the large role of music in modern dance. Reviewers of dance school concerts, performances, and guest performances demonstrated an interest in the newest dance trends. In that way, they helped popularise these trends and, in certain ways, became their defenders. Among the reviewers of modern dance in the 1910s to 1930s were Nikolajs Alunāns, Volfgangs Dārziņš, Jēkabs Graubiņš, Eduards Ramats, Jūlijs Sproģis, Jēkabs Vītoliņš. In their reviews, they always noted the musicality, as well as the understanding and interpretation of the music by the dancers.

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