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Dear members and readers,

Welcome to the summer 2005 issue of *Choreologica*, the first to boast an ISSN number. Not unlike the previous issue, the first one with the new format, this one too is rich with different examples of historical writing on dance.

We hope that the second instalment of Victoria O'Brien's MA dissertation will be greeted with the same enthusiastic reaction that followed the first instalment. We have received a considerable number of letters and e-mails praising the ground-breaking research of this new Irish dance scholar and we hope that the rest of her work will elicit equal interest.

Although Leonide Massine's influence on contemporary ballet has often been acknowledged, his works do not seem to attract much interest among contemporary dance researchers. Former dancer and scholar Lisa Fusillo fills this gap with her ongoing investigation of the life and works of the celebrated Russian choreographer, as demonstrated by her paper on *Le Tricorne*, presented at our 2004 international symposium "Spain in the Eyes of the Dancing World" in Logroño, Spain.

Spanish influences are also the main theme of Gabor Kovacs' article, which was also submitted for the study day in Logroño. As you will see Kovacs' writing explores and documents early artistic interactions between different European cultures.

Finally, we are particularly excited to publish Ricardo Barros' article on the Rhetoric and the Theory of the Passions in 17th and 18th-century dance and music compositions, which provides a considerably stimulating insight into the research of this young dance scholar.

Giannandrea Poesio, Editor
Astrid Bernkopf, Co-Editor
Elena Grillo, Co-Editor

The Abbey School of Ballet
Part 2

Victoria R. O'Brien

CHAPTER 2

This chapter discusses the location, premises and facilities of the Abbey School of Ballet. It addresses how de Valois' preferred methods of dance training affected the school's curriculum, and the influences on her choreography staged in Dublin. It also investigates certain aspects of a typical student profile, and attempts to determine the various dance teachers' influences and teaching styles. As many of the dance productions were staged at the Abbey Theatre, the final section investigates the front of house and backstage facilities, the Abbey Orchestra and the costumes worn for performances.

The Abbey School of Ballet found its home at the newly opened Peacock Theatre. The building, which originally consisted of a basement, library and a billiard room, was attached to the Abbey Theatre. A then unknown young architect and actor with the Abbey Company, Michael Scott, was commissioned by Yeats to design the conversion. This Georgian premises became known as the Peacock Theatre, so named because of the green, blue and gold colour scheme. The inveterate theatregoer and original architect of the Abbey Theatre, Joseph Holloway, was at the opening of the Peacock. An entry from his 1927 journal gives us one of the first recordings of the opening of the Abbey School of Ballet

and suggests that it coincided with the establishment of the Peacock:

> Friday, November 11... A big room in the front building of the Abbey has been converted into a tiny theatre seating 100. It has been named The Peacock Theatre, and seats and decorations have all been carried out in peacock blue -- even the front of the building facing Abbey Street has been painted a similar colour. A blue lookout truly, but I hope not for the little playhouse. A company calling themselves The New Players open the theatre for two nights on Sunday and Monday next with a play translated from German of Georg Kaiser called *From Morn To Midnight*. 3/6 is the price charged for a seat. The Abbey is also starting a school for Ballet with one of the Russian Ballet for teacher. It also has a School for Acting as well -- all finding a home in the Peacock Theatre.
>
> (Miller:1977;267-8)

Unlike the Abbey, the Peacock did not have a theatre company attached to it. It was rented to the experimental Dublin Drama League mentioned in the first chapter, and amateur groups such as the Jewish Dramatic Society. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Peacock Rental Book.) The ground floor of the Peacock was used as the rehearsal rooms for the Abbey Company and was also home to the Abbey Theatre School of Acting. The auditorium, which seated an audience of one hundred, was on the first floor and the dance studio was located on the top floor of the building. The piano,

played by Julia Gray, was in one corner of the dance studio while in another was a little dance library arranged by de Valois. The books were covered in the same peacock colours as the theatre, some holding the exotic images of Diaghilev's dancers. (In conversation with Jill Gregory.)

The sequel to de Valois' meeting with Yeats in Cambridge was swift. By the end of November, Vivienne Bennet, an actress with whom de Valois had previously worked, was engaged to open the School. (Sorley Walker:1998;81) While few records exist of the techniques taught at the Abbey School of Ballet, it is possible to imagine what de Valois practised in Dublin from her own background. As de Valois was a student of Edouard Espinosa, Enrico Cecchetti and Nicholas Legat, her influences were a blend of the French, Italian and Russian schools. The School of Cecchetti was de Valois' preferred system of ballet training. It has, nevertheless, to be remembered that this Italian style was influenced by Cecchetti's experience in Russia where he had taught at the Imperial School in St. Petersburg. The rigid system of Cecchetti would not have been the only method she employed. De Valois would have developed her own ideas of dance education and choreography out of the diverse methods she had experienced. She was influenced by the choreographers she worked under at Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. The experience of dancing in innovative works by Fokine, or with the choreographers themselves, notably Massine, Nijinska and Balanchine, would have impacted significantly on her choreography and teaching. These iconoclastic choreographers interlocked a blend of modern and classical movement; Fokine's romanticism, Nijinska's blocks of movement which look simple but

belie a complicated structure, Balanchine's neoclassicism and Massine's development of character dance in ballet all would have influenced her style and approach. In particular, de Valois' deep interest in character dance would influence the choice of repertoire at the Abbey. Many of de Valois' character divertissements such as *Mexican Dance, Russian Court Dance, Serenade, Tambourine* and *Polka* were performed regularly on the Abbey stage. Her interest in Plastic Movement, based on geometric and sculptural foundations related to music, would also be seen in her *Rituelle de Feu* and *The Faun,* both performed in 1928.

An insight into the school's curriculum can be found in a notice from a 1932 school programme. (Dublin City Archives: Abbey School of Ballet programme, April 10, 1932.) The notice records a wide range of standards, from amateur to professional dance classes as well as senior morning and junior afternoon classes. There are references to evening classes for "business girls" on Monday and Thursday evenings at seven. The Monday lesson was eclectically classified as "General dancing with music, Character, Plastic Movement, etc.", whereas the Thursday session was billed simply "ballet." The "business men" sessions were held on Wednesday and Friday evenings at seven. Apparently the men's classes were reasonably attended. (Sorley Walker:1998;118) While de Valois' lessons at the Abbey were freestyle and not based on examination syllabi (letter to author from The Royal Ballet Archives, September 19, 2001), the resident teacher in 1931, Nesta Brooking, taught the pupils the elementary, intermediate and advanced syllabi of the Operatic Association of Great Britain examinations. From an announcement in a theatre programme Brooking explained that this dance

examining body "sends over an Examiner every summer to hold a private examination at the Abbey Theatre for the Abbey students." (Dublin City Archives: Abbey School of Ballet programme, April 10, 1932.) Unfortunately, few records of the associations' early activities in Ireland have survived, but it is believed that the Abbey School of Ballet was one of the first dance schools in Ireland to implement this method of evaluation.

With regard to recruiting potential new students and announcing future performances, the school used notices in the Abbey Theatre programmes to promote the dance school. The first notice announced that: "Classes of instruction in the Art of the Ballet are about to be started. Prospectus may be had from the attendants." (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre programme, November 8, 1927.) From photographs and cast billings in theatre programmes there were approximately sixteen core students, aged between eleven and fourteen, at the school by autumn, 1928. (Photograph No 1.) The core group was made up mainly of girls; there were, however, two boys, Arthur Hamilton and Toni Repetto-Butler. Although it is somewhat difficult to profile the dance students collectively, it seems unlikely that many had previous formal dance training. One ex-student, Jill Gregory, started dance lessons because her mother had seen Anna Pavlova perform in England and was so entranced that she was determined her daughter should take dance lessons. After attended a dancing school in Rathmines, Gregory moved to the Abbey School of Ballet in 1928, when she was eleven years old. Gregory, who took the tram into Dublin City two or three times a week for classes at the Abbey School, remembers that dance students wore practice tunics of maroon crêpe-de-

chine with matching under-shorts. These after-school classes were mostly classical; character lessons were introduced later when the students understood the basics. The classes were not divided for the most part. Initially, the students were taught together because they were all the same level (Jill Gregory), but this may have changed later with the introduction of examinations. It is of interest to note here that Gregory's school took a very dim view of her dancing activities as they prevented her from participating in sports. (Jill Gregory.)

It has to be remembered that each of the teachers who worked at the Abbey, although following de Valois' method of dance training, would have brought with them their own influences and adaptations of dance techniques. De Valois would cross the Irish Sea once every three months for ten days or so, to teach, set new choreography, oversee the final rehearsals and dance in productions. It was, however, the teachers who organised the day-to-day running of the school. Less than six months after the opening of the school, there was a change of teachers. Sara Patrick, an English dancer trained by de Valois at the London Academy of Choreographic Art, was engaged to run the Abbey School under de Valois' supervision. Patrick is perhaps the most interesting of the Abbey's dance teachers. She came from a theatrical family and was the daughter of the theatre director Ben Iden Payne, who in 1907 spent a brief time as director of the Abbey Theatre. Her mother, Mona Limerick, an actress, was a member of the Abbey Company during Iden Payne's directorship. During Patrick's three years with the Abbey, she taught, performed and choreographed many pieces for the school including a work, *When Phillida Flouts Him,* with music composed by the school's pianist, Julia Gray.

Patrick choreographed and performed in productions for the Abbey Company as well as the Dublin Drama League at the Peacock. In 1931, Nesta Brooking, who had performed with the Carl Rosa Opera Ballet, replaced Patrick. (Patrick would later work with de Valois again at the Royal Ballet School in London.) Brooking was a Cecchetti-oriented teacher. Her contract with the Abbey was similar to Patrick's: "£5 a week for forty-four weeks' work, £2.10.0 a week for eight weeks' vacation, and an extra £2.10.0 for any week in which she performed on stage." (Sorley Walker:1998;117-18)

Although it has been somewhat difficult to reconstruct details of the day-to-day running of the Abbey School of Ballet, many records do exist for the school's interaction with the Abbey Theatre itself, where the school's productions were performed. The existing facilities, sets and props, as well as the Abbey Orchestra, were all used by the school on these occasions. In addition, records also exist for the designers and costumes associated with performances.

The vestibule of the Abbey Theatre was decorated with a collection of foreign playbills, Sara Purser's stained glass windows, large copper-framed mirrors and John Yeats' portraits of the leading figures of the Abbey. The auditorium, which held an audience of a little over 550, also had a horseshoe balcony, which was rakishly off-centre. Unfortunately the lop-sided dress circle included seats from which it was possible to see only half the stage. There were very few facilities backstage: a couple of dressing rooms, but no scene dock, and the sets had to be stored underneath the hollow stage. Another problem was that the stage did not have access behind the backcloth. Performers who needed to cross the stage out of the audience's sight had to use an

outside passage at the back of the stage. Even if this passageway had been covered to keep the dancers dry, it would have caused a great inconvenience, particularly if they were performing, as they often did, in bare-feet. Although the school's repertoire became quite varied between neo-classical, character and plastic movement, one possible explanation for the regular practise of short divertissements could be the problem of the Abbey's stage. Whatever the logistics, there was one area backstage which compensated for these downfalls, that of the cosy atmosphere of the green room:

> The famous green room, hung with framed copies of Yeats's early poems, was furnished with comfortable chairs, a coal fire burnt when necessary and there would always be a pot of tea brewing. This room might so resemble the parlour scene just enacted on the stage that to join the players in the interval was to make one feel that we were all continuing the play.
>
> (de Valois:1992;90)

The school was fortunate as the Abbey already had a small orchestra attached to the theatre. It was conducted by J.F. Larchet, who along with his compositions of incidental music for Abbey productions, composed the score for Yeats' *The Dreaming of the Bones* and *The Cat and the Moon*, as well as *Bluebeard,* one of de Valois' last works associated with the school and Larchet's longest composition. A typical musical interlude during a dance performance could include music by Humperdinck, Beethoven, Dvořák and

Debussy. Lennox Robinson humorously wrote about the effect the orchestra had on some theatregoers:

> For many years to come the little Abbey Orchestra was to be one of the features of the evening; indeed there were people who would leave the theatre for what they called "the intervals" (i.e. the plays) and return for what the players did call the intervals.
>
> (Robinson:1951;51-52)

While there is often little information on certain aspects of the Abbey School of Ballet, we are fortunate that there are records of their costumes. It is therefore important to discuss in some detail the costumes and designs used in the performances. With regard to their costumes, it can be presumed that there were few suitable dance costumes in the Abbey's wardrobe. The Abbey Players were often cast as Irish farmers or peasants, which would hardly have made appropriate *ensembles* for the dancers, especially when many of the National Theatre's costumes "seemed to have been woven from some basic material closely resembling turf." (Ryan:1998;167) In contrast, Jill Gregory remembers that the wonderful silks for some of the specially-created dance costumes came from Cassidy's fabric shop. (Jill Gregory.)

There are early references to costumes designed by Rosalind Patrick, the sister of the school's teacher Sara Patrick. Rosalind also trained under de Valois at the Academy of Choreographic Art, and interestingly, both siblings went on to work for her as dance teachers. Evidently, Rosalind also was engaged as occasional *costumier.* For the school's opening performance on

28th January, 1928, Rosalind designed the costumes for the premiere of de Valois' *Venetian Suite*. (Sorley Walker:1998;343) In September 1928, Rosalind created the costumes for de Valois' work, *The Faun*. A photograph of this piece shows soft Grecian-like, crêpe-de-chine dresses with futuristic designs painted on some of the costumes, while the elves wore simple tunics, head-dresses with pixie-ears and blue makeup on their faces. (in conversation with Jill Gregory.) There are also records of costumes made by parents. In two theatre programmes, the costumes are cited as "executed by Emily Cuthbert". (Dublin City Archives: Abbey School of Ballet programmes, January 13, 1930 and February 14, 1931.) This Dublin dressmaker was the mother of Doreen Cuthbert, a student at the school. Finally, there is one reference to costumes borrowed from Lilian Baylis in London for de Valois' *Nursery Suite*. (Dublin City Archives: Undated Abbey School of Ballet programme.) Nancy Allan is accredited as the costume designer for this piece, which had been staged by de Valois at Sadler's Wells the previous month.

With regard to de Valois' costumes, she was much photographed during this period and Katherine Sorley Walker has listed the designers in her appendix of de Valois' choreography. Of interest are two striking photographs of de Valois in costume taken in England in 1927 and 1928. (Sorley Walker:1998;83 and 89) These costumes were later worn at performances staged in Dublin. The first photograph is of de Valois in costume for her famous solo dance, *Pride*, for which she wore a sleeveless leotard, a short, light-coloured skirt with cut-outs, and a small trail at the back representing peacock feathers. Also worn were ballet tights and pointe shoes, and a most impressive headdress. The other fascinating

image shows de Valois wearing the Katherine Dillon-designed costume for *Beauty*, from *Beauty and the Beast*. The costume was comprised of an asymmetrical, knee-length dress, with only one flowing sleeve. The diaphanous fabric is light in colour with bold, flower-like shapes. Again, de Valois wore a stunning headdress, but curiously, for a classically trained dancer, dark footless tights, and bare feet.

As for Yeats' dance dramas, we are lucky to have not only descriptions and photographs of the symbolic costumes, masks and curtains, but also many of the original design sketches. Perhaps one of most interesting of the photographs is the 1916 image of Michio Ito, in the Edmund Dulac's costume for Yeats' London production of *At the Hawks Well*. The Guardian of the Well's costume consisted of a dark, hooded cloak and full-length black and white gown. The long sleeves of the dress covering the hands are shaped to resemble wings. The fabric is printed with designs that resemble clouds and feathers. There was also a fitted headdress to complete the impression of a predatory bird. In 1933, de Valois would don the same costume at the Abbey production, describing Dulac's designs as "austere, and very pure, with a penetrating intellectual approach". (de Valois:1977;181) Dorothy Travers Smith, the wife of Lennox Robinson, is often associated with design of Abbey productions during this period. Travers Smith created costumes for Yeats' *Fighting the Waves* in 1929, as well as *The King of the Great Clock Tower* in 1934. It is also possible that she designed costumes for *The Dreaming of the Bones* in 1931, although no costume designer is credited in the programme. A photograph taken of a scene from the 1929 production of *Fighting the Waves* depicts Travers Smith's striking pattern of

waves on the backcloth. This design seems to be repeated in the movements of the dancers. (Flannery:1989;200) The masks for this production were designed by Hildo Krop and made it appear that the heads were out of proportion to the body. De Valois described the masks she wore in these dramas and their influence on her movements:

> They were beautiful masks and caught the spirit of the poet's dream world. I always studied my masks very carefully, and then I knew what I had to express with my movements so as to illustrate both action and meaning. In the end I just felt that my face was a part of the mask's own projection.
>
> (de Valois:1977;184)

While a relatively small number of students attended the dance school, as we have also seen in this chapter, the school carried out its activities within the professional structure of the Abbey Theatre. The unity that existed between the dance school and the directors, musicians and designers of the theatre suggest a commitment and belief in the little school and their performances. As we will see in the next chapter, these collaborative productions mirror the development and demise of the Abbey School of Ballet.

CHAPTER 3

The three sections in this chapter investigate the performances by the Abbey School of Ballet. The first part reviews the development of the school through five dance productions from 1928 until the end of 1930. The second section examines three performances of Yeats' dance dramas and addresses the diversity of the school's activities, both at the National Theatre and with other theatre companies. The final part of this chapter is an account of some of the school's performances between 1931 and 1933. But first we will look at certain general features of the performances.

From the references and material available it would appear that fourteen different dance programmes were performed during de Valois' directorship of the school. There were three productions during the first year, four in 1929, two in 1930, three in 1931 and one programme a year for the last two years. Most dance productions opened at the Abbey Theatre on Tuesdays and ran until the following Saturday. There was one performance a day at 8 p.m., except for Saturdays, when there would have been a matinee as well as the evening show. The dance performances shared the billing with a play, performed by the Abbey Company. There did not seem to be a standard running order of plays and ballets. Sometimes the play would open the programme, other times it would be sandwiched between two dance programmes. The order of these programmes changed regularly.

The school's first performance took place at the Abbey Theatre on January 30, 1928, less than three months after the dance school opened. The dancers shared the bill with the play *The Eloquent Dempsey,* a

comedy by William Boyle, which opened the programme. The production relied heavily on de Valois and her students from the London Academy of Choreographic Art, but a few Irish students were cast in the dances. Interestingly, amongst the Irish students were three girls, Cepta Cullen, Doreen Cuthbert and Margaret Horgan, who were to make up part of the core group and remain on until the end of de Valois' directorship over five years later. The dance programme was choreographed entirely by de Valois. As with many of the school's performances it was divided into three Parts. It commenced with a piece choreographed for the school's opening, *Venetian Suite,* to the music of Respighi. *Pastoral*, performed by Cullen and Cuthbert, followed, after which came two well-known solo compositions performed by de Valois, *A Daughter of Eve* and *Pride*. *Beauty and the Beast* was performed between the two solos, probably to allow de Valois time to change costumes. The second Part started with a group piece called *Rhythm*, then de Valois performed *Dance of the Russian Peasant*, Vivienne Bennet danced the *Mexican Dance* and the section closed with *Fantasie Russe*. The final Part of the evening was *The Curse of the Aspen Tree*. The dances were well received by the *Irish Independent* reviewer:

> What lent a special and particular interest to the programme was the remarkable series of ballets by Ninette de Valois and her pupils. This proved to be, in fact, an experience far and away beyond what many people anticipated. Exquisite movements in rhythm, such as the Venetian suite, the 'pastoral' 'pride' and the Fantasie Russe were among

> the most remarkable of the illustrations given. What amazed one most was the extraordinary intelligence and supreme grace with which every movement was apparently spontaneously developed.
>
> (*Irish Independent,* January 31, 1928.)

The second production, in April, 1928, was more ambitious. From the theatre programme it can be seen that the dance school had recruited new students and was able to stage productions without depending too much on de Valois' dancers from the London Academy. The show opened with Lennox Robinson's play, *The White Blackbird*. The dance programme, again all choreographed by de Valois, was made up of nine works divided into three Parts. The performance opened with *Théme Classique,* followed by *Silhouette* and *The Goldfish.* The second Part consisted of one group piece, *Les Buffons*, and three solos of which de Valois performed *Serenade* and *Yarabe Tapatto*. For the final section de Valois choreographed a new work called *Rituelle de Feu* with music by Manuel de Falla. A photograph of this work shows de Valois as the Maiden and a group of ten girls in a rather stylised angular composition. Again, the *Irish Independent* appreciation of the school's work is evidenced by this review:

> Ninette de Valois and her pupils made a most welcome reappearance in ballets. Those who have seen these charming performers on their previous appearance at the Abbey were unanimous in their praise. Last evening the dancers gave a performance that transcended in merit that of the former occasion. In Mlle.

> de Valois the dancers have not only a clever leader but a sympathetic teacher and in the nine items interpreted, covering a wide range of ballets, they displayed exquisite grace.
> (*Irish Independent*, April 17, 1928.)

It is of interest to note here that de Valois chose to use a photograph of *Rituelle de Feu* with the Abbey students to advertise her teaching in 1928 in the English periodical, the *Dancing Times*. (Photograph N°3, *Dancing Times*, September, 1928.) This could be interpreted as an early sign of de Valois' belief that her association with the Abbey Theatre was an excellent means of advertising her work.

The final dance performance of 1928 was five months later. De Valois choreographed the dances, but this time only students from the Abbey School were in the cast. The show again opened with *Theme Classique,* which would suggest it had proven popular in the April performance. (It is important to note here, as this work was often performed at the Abbey, that Kathrine Sorley Walker believes that *Theme Classique* is probably the same as *Les Sylphides.* (Sorley Walker:1987;343)) This was followed by four divertissements, *A Daughter of Eve, Idyll, Dance of the Russian Peasant* and *Les Buffons* and Yeats' *The Player Queen.* (Not to be confused with one of his dance dramas.) The final Part of the evening was a new piece of choreography by de Valois entitled *The Faun.* It was performed to music by the Irish Composer Harold R. White. White's arrangements of old Irish airs had won a competition, held by the Abbey, to encourage musicians to compose or arrange music for new Irish Ballets.

(Sorley Walker:1987;87) At the end of the first year de Valois' work was highly praised in the *Irish Statesman:*

> After a year's work at the Abbey, she has produced a group of Irish dancers whose work is a revelation of beauty.
> (*Irish Statesman*, September 29, 1928.)

The following year, the Abbey School of Ballet produced four dance programmes, in April, May, August and November. This *Irish Times* critique from the first performance of 1929 gives an insight into Dublin's appreciation for de Valois and the Abbey School, and evidence of four young students' progress:

> No more delightful or attractive programme has yet been presented by the Abbey School of Ballet than that of Miss Ninette de Valois and her pupils at the Abbey Theatre this week. Rarely has such choreography been seen in Dublin, and the patronage of the public is the least reward that such artistry deserves... In "Jack and Jill" (Bach) two tiny children, Toni Repetto Butler and Eileen Hare, gave promise of developing into very fine artists, while at the same time showing mimetic talents of a very high order. In "Idyll" (Schubert) Jill Gregory and Geraldine Byrne, two little girls, again demonstrated the excellence of Miss de Valois's training... A programme of which the school and its director may feel proud.
> (*The Irish Times*, April 23, 1929.)

The dance programme was divided into eight pieces. Four of the divertissements, *Pride, Fantasie Russe*, *Serenade* and *Idyll* had been performed at the Abbey the previous year. De Valois staged *Rout* for the first time in Dublin and there were also two works, *Turkish Ballet Suite* and *Prelude,* choreographed by Sara Patrick. While De Valois has previously been cited as choreographer for *The Turkish Ballet Suite*, the theatre programme states that Patrick actually choreographed this work. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre programme, April 22, 1929.) Interestingly, *The Turkish Ballet Suite* is the same work as the divertissement from the play, *The Would-be Gentleman* by Molière. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre programme, January 7, 1929.)

There were two dance productions in 1930. Perhaps the most fascinating and neglected of all the Abbey School of Ballet performances took place on January 13 of this year. The programme, which did not share the billing with a play, was made up of twenty-two separate works divided into three Parts. De Valois, Sara Patrick, and surprisingly, Leonide Massine created the choreography. Many of the pieces had been performed before by the school and had remained in its repertoire. The performance opened with *The Faun.* Four solo divertissements followed, and then came *The Tease*, a dance by Patrick. Part one closed with *Rituelle de Feu.* The second section included *The Art of the Theatre, Pavane, Pas de Trois* and nine other works. The final Part included, amongst others, de Valois' *Pride, Les Sylphides* and Massine's *Dance of the Snow Maiden.* Although there is no cast listed for Massine's piece, it was most probably a solo performed by de Valois, created from his Diaghilev Ballet *Le Soleil de Nuit* to

Rimsky-Korsakov's score. (Letter to author from Kathrine Sorley Walker, February 25, 2002.) The programme ended with the previously performed *Rout,* de Valois' ballet inspired by Ashley Duke's translation of Ernst Toller's poem. *The Irish Times* was delighted with the performance. The reviewer gives an insight into de Valois' performances in Dublin, and interestingly, hints that the Abbey Theatre would be an ideal centre where dance could be developed in Dublin:

> Spectators at the Abbey Theatre yesterday were provided with a treat such as they seldom have in these days. The Abbey School of Ballet presented a programme that consisted of twenty-two items, and engaged the services of the entire resources of the School. It was the most ambitious programme yet presented by the pupils, and the manner in which it carried through well deserved the enthusiastic applause when the final curtain fell. Of course, Miss Ninette de Valois was easily the outstanding performer, appearing in nine ballets and dominating the scene all the time she was on stage. To see her dance in such diverse ballets as "Rituelle de Feu", "Valse Arabesque", "Fantasie Italienne", "Pride", and the dynamic energy of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Dance of the Snow Maiden" were each interpreted in gestures which were a delight to the eye and a drug to the intellect. While one would have desired to have seen her with M. Anton Dolin, it must be said that she was ably supported by Miss Sara Patrick and the pupils of the Abbey

> school of Ballet will be now well known by everyone who has seen them together...The programme opened with Mr. Harold White's "The Fawn" in which a corps of twelve presented "the argument"; here one liked particularly the Fawn Master Toni Repetto-Butler. The presentation of this work by the Abbey School suggests that some other Irish composer might be encouraged to submit ballets based upon essentially Irish themes. The folk-lore of this country is rich and varied enough to suggest many fitting themes, and would be in keeping with Abbey Theatre tradition if the Art of the ballet were to be acclimatised here...The choreography by Miss de Valois and Miss Patrick can only be praised in superlative terms, and Dr. Larchet's orchestra performed its part in its usual very accomplished style. The settings and the costumes by Miss Emily Cuthbert were effective and beautifully coloured.
>
> (*The Irish Times*, January 14, 1930.)

No records of this production are found in the memoirs of de Valois and it is not cited either in Sorley Walker's appendix of de Valois' choreographic creations and performances or Lennox Robinson's list of dance productions at the Abbey. There are two possible explanations for the oversight of this performance. Firstly, the Abbey Theatre did not catalogue the programmes for the dance performances unless they shared the bill with a play. (In conversation with Mairéad Delaney, Abbey Theatre Archivist.) The programme for this performance was not housed at the Abbey Archives

but found instead at the Dublin City Archives. Secondly, and probably more importantly, the originally planned production was cancelled. Anton Dolin, as alluded to in the above review, was due to come to Dublin to dance in two performances with the Abbey School of Ballet on January 13, 1930. In a letter to Yeats, dated January 8, 1930, Lennox Robinson, described what happened:

> We had a big disappointment over Anton Dolin who promised to come over and dance at the School of Ballet's show - at the last moment America claimed him – and every seat sold!"
>
> (Finneran and others:1977;502)

An apology was printed in the Abbey programmes one week before the show was due to take place: "Antonin (sic) Dolin regrets that, having to sail for America earlier than he anticipated, he will be unable to dance at these performances." (Abbey Theatre Archive: Abbey Theatre programme, January 7, 1930.)

This performance is of particular interest because it implies that some of de Valois' choreography was performed in Ireland earlier than previously thought. An important example of this is de Valois' *The Art of the Theatre,* choreographed to Ravel's score. The Irish premiere of this work has been previously recorded as April 10, 1932. (Sorley Walker:1987;341) The theatre programme for January 13, 1930, indicates that *The Art of the Theatre* was produced at the Abbey two years earlier than thought. It is also of importance to note here that de Valois was cast in the role of 'Dancing' in the 1930 performance, as unfortunately she did not perform in the later production. With regard to Massine's work,

Dance of the Snow Maiden, this must be one of the only references to the work of another choreographer, apart from de Valois' or one of the teachers', being staged by the Abbey School of Ballet.

The first three years of the school were important and as we have seen from the newspaper reports, the performances were not only well received by the audiences and critics, but were ambitious in their choice of repertoire and their scale. As well as these specialised dance programmes, the Ballet school also performed in Yeats' dance dramas and other theatrical productions staged at the Abbey Theatre. As we will see in the second section of this chapter, the school also performed at a private venue, the Peacock and the newly opened, Gate Theatre.

Dance students from the school appeared in three of Yeats' dance dramas choreographed by de Valois: *Fighting the Waves* in 1929, followed by *The Dreaming of the Bones* in1931 and *At the Hawk's Well* in 1933. In *Fighting the Waves*, as in all her dance drama roles, de Valois never undertook a speaking part. In this production she performed the masked role of the goddess Fand. Hedley Briggs, from England, danced the part of the Ghost of Cuchulain and six girls from the school produced the effect of the waves. The play was well received by the audience and in response to their call for the author, Yeats summarised the collaborations:

> "Your thanks are due" he said, "to the actors, the producer, the musician, the dancers and the mask-maker. My part has been but small." It was an entrancing performance, for which credit must go primarily to Miss de Valois and her pupils, but only slightly less so

> to the producer (Mr. Lennox Robinson), and Miss Travers Smith, who designed the beautiful costumes and curtains.
>
> (*The Irish Times*, August 14, 1929.)

De Valois has written of the effect of the dance dramas on the selected audiences who attended these productions:

> We had many nights when the vision of Yeats, intangible as it was, became a unifying effort between players and audience and we were completely one; nights when the playing of the players and the watching of the playgoers was made aware of the far-reaching exploration of a poet's mind. This liaison produced an unearthly quietness, but never a sense of deadness.
>
> (De Valois:1977;184-85)

Another dance drama production of interest was a joint venture of *At the Hawk's Well,* produced with the students of the Abbey School of Ballet and the Abbey School of Acting. (Dublin City Archives: Abbey School of Acting programme, 17 November.) The theatre programme is dated November 17, and although there is no year mentioned on the programme, records from the Abbey Theatre Archives indicate that this performance took place in 1930. The play was performed at the Peacock Theatre to a small audience, including Yeats. The cast included two Abbey Players, Joseph O'Neill and Michael J. Dolan. Dance student Christine Sheehan played The Guardian of the Well. Another student, Doreen Cuthbert, was cast as one of the musicians, as

was the school's pianist Julia Gray. The costumes and music were accredited to Edmund Dulac; there is however no choreographer listed. It seems unlikely that de Valois participated in this amateur show. The Peacock production is of importance though, as it is the only reference to collaboration between the two Abbey Schools. It is also one of two references that record a Yeats dance drama produced without de Valois' choreography, but with the involvement of the dance students. A letter written from Yeats to Dulac two years later provides us with the poet's lasting impressions of this performance:

> I saw my *Hawk's Well* played by students of our Schools of Dancing and of Acting a couple of years ago in a little theatre called 'The Peacock,' which shares a roof with the Abbey Theatre. Watching Cuchulain in his lovely mask and costume, that ragged old masked man who seems hundreds of years old, that Guardian of the Well, with your great golden wings and dancing to your music, I had one of those moments of excitement that are the dramatist's reward and decided there and then to dedicate to you my next book of verse.
> (Yeats:1983;598)

An unknown production of a Yeats dance drama during this period was an "At Home" held at the Vice Regal Lodge, Dublin, on January 18, 1931. (Programme from Jill Gregory's collection.) The programme commenced with five dance divertissements: *Solitude, Russian Court Dance, Pastorale, Waltz* and *Sunday Afternoon.* This was followed by a group of three songs,

sung by Joseph O'Neill. Yeats' dance drama *At the Hawk's Well* followed, and finally the programme closed with the popular *Les Sylphides.* Dulac's costumes were worn once more, but again there is no choreographer accredited in the programme and it seems unlikely that de Valois was involved in this one-off production. The premiere of her ballet, *Cephalus and Procris,* was being performed by the Camargo Society in London the following week, and most probably was still in rehearsal. It is more likely that Sara Patrick, who performed the role of the Guardian of the Well, would also have created the movements. Jill Gregory, who performed in *Waltz* and *Les Sylphides,* remembers this production well, as the actors, musicians and dance students were served tea and cakes from a silver service by the butler following the performance. (In conversation with Jill Gregory.)

Parallel to the dance programmes and *Plays for Dancers*, students from the Abbey School of Ballet also performed in plays staged at the Abbey, as well as one or two other theatres in Dublin. The first of these collaborations came about as early as September 1928, in Yeats' play, *The Player Queen.* (Not a dance drama.) It is not possible to ascertain if dance was performed in this play as no choreographer is listed in the programme. Nevertheless, among the cast of players are the names of four dance students, Arthur Hamilton, Margaret Hogan, Rachel Law and Chris Sheehan. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre programme, September 24, 1928.) As mentioned in the previous section, Molière's *The Would-be Gentleman* was produced with Sara Patrick's choreography, *The Turkish Suite,* in January 1929. This was performed with Patrick and six dance students. Of the six plays involving the school are two plays of interest to note here: *Peter* by Rutherford Mayne

and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Critic*. (Abbey Theatre Archives.) *Peter* is the only record that we have of pupils from the school on tour and *The Critic* is impressive by the scale of the production alone. Both plays were produced with choreography by Patrick. Three dancers from the school as well as Patrick performed the dance from *Peter*, which became part of the Abbey Company's regular repertoire in 1930. It was first mounted for a week's run in January, again in May and later in the same month it went to the Opera House, Cork. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre Programme, May 26, 1930.) *Peter* returned for another run at the Abbey in October. The second play, *The Critic*, was produced a year later and modernised by Lennox Robinson. (Abbey Theatre Archives: Abbey Theatre Programmes, January 6, 1931.) This big production had a cast of over twenty actors and included eight dance students. (Robinson:1951;145) The *Critic* was produced for a second run in May, 1931.

As well as the productions mounted at the Abbey, the dance school was involved in two plays staged by the Dublin Drama League. These were both produced at the Peacock Theatre. The first, produced in May 1928, featured Sara Patrick's choreography for the *Indian Dance* from Eugene O'Neill's *The Fountain*. (Katz Clarke and Ferrar:1979:37) The second play, *Give a Dog*, written by Lennox Robinson, included dance student Rachel Law in the cast and was performed in May, 1929. (Katz Clarke and Ferrar:1979;38)

One of the other drama societies that rented the Peacock Theatre was the Gate Company, founded by Michael MacLiammoir and Hilton Edwards in 1928. It is therefore no surprise that some students from the Abbey school also became involved in performances when in

1930 the Gate moved to its new premises on Cavendish Row. As early as the 1930 Christmas Pantomime, the names of Abbey students can be found cited in Gate Theatre programmes. (Dublin City Archives: Gate Theatre Programme, December 26, 1930.) In April, 1931, dance student Muriel Kelly choreographed the divertissement, *La Chèvre Indiscrète*, with decors by MacLiammoir. This started what was to become a long association between the Gate Theatre and Kelly as choreographer. Another Abbey dance student, Ginette Waddell, later became a leading actress associated with the Gate Theatre. (FitzSimon:2002;137) When Abbey teacher Sara Patrick returned to Ireland during the Second World War, she choreographed the two Christmas pantomimes at The Gate in 1943 and 1945. (Dublin City Archives: Gate Theatre programmes, December 26, 1943-45.)

Based upon the evidence found, the first three years saw not only the school's diverse performances, but also productions outside the realms of the Abbey Theatre. These activities trailed off in the early nineteen-thirties. By 1931, it seems that de Valois' work in England began to overshadow the Abbey School of Ballet. As well as her choreography in the plays, operas and ballets given at the Old Vic, de Valois had founded a dance school at the newly opened Sadler's Wells Theatre. Like the Old Vic, this theatre was under the direction of Lilian Baylis. The same year, the Abbey Theatre began to experience severe financial difficulties. The Abbey's first company was sent on a tour of America, and a series of Sunday performances called "Mainly Ballet: The Abbey Directors' Sunday Entertainments" was organised to keep the theatre active. (Dorn:1984;86) These productions, which depended on the ballet school to provide the

entertainment, were often performed without the support of a play. One such Sunday programme took place on the December 6, 1931. (Dublin City Archives: Abbey School of Ballet programme, December 6, 1931.) Unusually, de Valois did not perform in this production. The show opened with *Les Sylphides*, followed by nine divertissements, including *At the Ball* by the new teacher, Nesta Brooking. It seems, however, that the school was experiencing problems:

> "Fedelma," the mime ballet with music by William Alwyn, was repeated, with Miss Nesta Brooking in the part of The Hag. The production last night did not seem either so definite or so finished as on its first production but it was, nevertheless, a delightful thing to have a chance to see again... In the absence of Miss Sara Patrick and Miss Ninette de Valois, this part of the programme suggested that the members of the School have still a long way to go before they can be accepted as a *corps de ballet.*
>
> (*The Irish Times*, December 7, 1931.)

Nineteen thirty-two saw the return of de Valois to the Dublin stage in the only production by the Abbey School of Ballet that year. The theatre programme, housed at Dublin City Archives, is undated, although there is evidence from a newspaper critique to suggest that the performance was given on April 10, 1932. (*The Irish Times,* April 11, 1932.) The dance programme was divided into three Parts. The programme opened with *Dance of the Three Peasants*, followed by *The Art of the Theatre* and three solos performed by de Valois,

Variation from Faust Ballet, Pride and *Prelude Oriental* with an interlude between them of *Tambourine,* danced by Nesta Brooking and Chris Sheehan. After the interval, Yeats' dance drama *The Dreaming of the Bones*, with choreography by de Valois, was performed. A cut version of de Valois' *Nursery Suites* set to Edward Elgar made up the final Part. The *Suite* was comprised of *Georgie Porgie Pudding-Pie, Little Bo-Peep, The Three Bears, Rose Red and Snow White, Jack and Jill* and lastly, *Envoy.* Despite the scale of the production, de Valois' performances were not well received by *The Irish Times* reviewer:

> Last night Miss Ninette de Valois made a very welcome return to the stage of the Abbey Theatre when she appeared in a programme with some of the pupils of the Abbey Theatre School of Ballet. While Miss de Valois received an extremely cordial reception it must be said that her dancing lacked something of the sparkling vivacity which characterised it on many previous occasions.
>
> (*The Irish Times*, April 11, 1932.)

The decision to include *The Dreaming of the Bones* in the programme is curious. The dance drama was first performed, with choreography by de Valois, in December 1931. This second production, again with de Valois' movement, is of particular interest, as it is the only reference that indicates de Valois' choreography for a Yeats dance drama was performed for more than just one run.

The students from the Abbey School of Ballet took part in what appears to be the school's final production

under de Valois' directorship on July 25, 1933. The programme opened with *At the Hawk's Well* choreographed by de Valois. This was followed by Lady Gregory's play, *Hyacinth Harvey*, and finally, two dance works by de Valois. The first of these was *The Drinking-Horn*, set to the music of an Irish composer, Arthur Duff, who also wrote the libretto. The second piece, *Bluebeard*, was a ballet poem by Mary Davenport O'Neill performed to music by Larchet. The programme, directed by Arthur Shields, included Ninette de Valois and many of the school's core students: Cepta Cullen, Doreen Cuthbert, Jill Gregory, Muriel Kelly, Margaret Horgan, Thelma Murphy, Chris Sheehan and Toni Repetto-Butler.

Apart from one last piece of choreography for Yeats in 1934, de Valois' work with the Abbey School of Ballet had come to an end. Sadly, this dance drama, *The King of the Great Clock Tower,* was the only production by de Valois in which no students from the Abbey school performed.

De Valois' last memory of the poet is a sad one. They met in 1934 in Liverpool, where de Valois told Yeats that because of her increasing workload at Sadler's Wells she could no longer come to Dublin to choreograph his plays: "'And who' he said gazing elsewhere as usual, ' will do my Plays for Dancers'." (de Valois:1977;186)

As we have seen in this chapter, the school's lifespan under de Valois' directorship was relatively short. The first three years saw the development of the school and nine of the fourteen dance programmes staged. In contrast, due to de Valois' commitments in London and financial difficulties at the Abbey Theatre, the last three years saw its decline. As we have also seen from the

results of the research carried out for this study, the diversity of the school's activities were not confined to the National Theatre. In addition to the two previously unrecorded performances discovered, there is also material that records the unique collaborations of the Ballet school with the Abbey School of Acting, the Dublin Drama League and the Gate Theatre.

Massine's Le Tricorne – The Russian-Spanish Collaboration

Lisa Fusillo

Le Tricorne (*The Three-Cornered Hat*) is a signature work of Leonide Massine's career and was the culmination of the collaboration between Massine, Manuel de Falla and Pablo Picasso, under the direction and supervision of Serge Diaghilev. Felix Fernandez Garcia, the Spanish dancer and teacher, is often overlooked as an integral part of the creation, yet he provided essential schooling in Spanish dancing. Martinez Sierra, the final Spanish collaborator, adapted the story of Pedro de Alarcon's novel for the libretto of this Spanish ballet, devised and choreographed by Russian artists. This ballet established Leonide Massine as a superior artist, both as choreographer and dancer. Massine's choreography, inspired by his studies with Garcia, brilliantly captured and illuminated the passionate Spanish rhythms of the score by Falla and the vibrant colors of the sets by Picasso.

Under the tutelage and watchful eye of Diaghilev, Massine learned the craft of both choreography and collaboration. According to Massine,

> Diaghilev himself was a giant of knowledge. He had intuition to help young artists to understand what ballet performance really is . . . in music my education came entirely from

> Diaghilev . . . he showed me the greatest in everything: poetry, painting, art.[1]

This paper will focus on *Le Tricorne* as one of the most significant influences in Massine's career. It is important to understand the initial collaboration with *Parade*, the transitions in artistic style which occurred between the two ballets, and the profound impact that the Spanish collaboration in *Le Tricorne* would have on Massine's later works.

Picasso was one of the first contemporary artists with whom Massine worked. The Massine-Picasso collaboration had been established with *Parade* two years prior to *Le Tricorne*. Picasso had been introduced to the world of ballet and stage design by a rather circuitous route. In 1916, he met the renowned poet, Jean Cocteau. Cocteau began to mingle in the Montparnasse in Paris, where many of the contemporary artists were working, including Picasso, but Cocteau was rather disliked by many of the painters there. However, Cocteau and Picasso got along well, and he convinced Picasso and composer Erik Satie to collaborate with him on a ballet.[2] Cocteau was eager to involve himself with the theatrical world, and he had already established contact with Diaghilev, after having seen the highly acclaimed first Paris season of the Ballets Russes.[3]

[1] Interview recorded on tape. Marian Horosko interviewing Leonide Massine; 1969 in the Dance Collection of the Library of Performing Arts, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.
[2] Patrick O'Brian, Pablo Ruiz Picasso, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976), p. 219
[3] Ibid.

Cocteau had already collaborated with Frederic de Madrozo on the scenario for the ballet *Le Train Bleu* by the time he had begun to persuade Picasso to join his group in its venture in ballet art. According to the personal account by the photographer Brassai:

> The poet [Cocteau] succeeded in wrenching the painter [Picasso] away from his studio in Montparnasse and dragging him to Rome to create "Parade" with Diaghilev and himself. Cocteau has often said that his meeting with Picasso was the capital event of his life. The audacity and clarity of vision of the artist have doubtless attained his quicksilver mind, and so too have Picasso's humor, his verbal comedies, his ellipses, his genius for breaking-off and for change, his piercing definitions, his "profound fantasy".[4]

The decision to enter into theatrical scene and costume design must have been a very difficult one for Picasso as his contemporaries, the avant-garde painters of Montparnasse (especially the Cubists), considered the idea scandalous, and even more sacrilegious than realistic drawing.[5]

Cocteau had already devised the scenario for the new ballet *Parade*, when he engaged the services of Erik Satie and Pablo Picasso. However, Cocteau did not dictate the direction of the ballet. In fact, the musician

[4] Brassai, Picasso and Company, (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1966), pp. 125-26
[5] O'Brian, p. 219

and painter understood each other very well, and upon occasion stood together in disagreement with some of Cocteau's ideas.

The collaborators, Cocteau, Picasso, Satie and Massine gathered in Rome in 1917 and began their work on the ballet. Satie then returned to Paris to compose the score. In Cocteau's words, the score "was meant to supply a musical background to suggestive noises such as sirens, typewriters aeroplanes and dynamos."[6] Satie was to write music which would represent the scene of a side-show outside of a fair.

Picasso brought the preliminary models of his stage settings for the ballet to be called *Parade*, to the meeting in Rome. The story idea by Cocteau, was based upon a *parade* which was "the sample [demonstration] given outside a fairground booth, of the entertainment to be seen within." [7] The characters included a Chinese Conjuror, a precocious little American Girl and an Acrobat. The setting was suburban Paris, in a music-hall or circus environment. Picasso was very enthusiastic even though he had never seen a ballet, and relied on his knowledge of the circus to create the necessary atmosphere.[8] At Picasso's insistence, more characters were added to the ballet including the French and American managers of the troupe. Patrick O'Brian, a Picasso biographer, gave an excellent description of the Picasso inventions and designs:

[6] Ibid., p. 221
[7] Richard Buckle, Diaghilev (New York: Artheneum, 1979), p. 323
[8] Ibid.

These characters were essential to his view of the ballet: the two human managers were to be huge architectural figures ten feet high, something in the nature of his constructions, who would lurch about the stage bawling through megaphones, more real than common reality, dwarfing the ordinary performers, and imposing an essentially Cubist conception on his otherwise fairly traditional sets, costumes, and curtain. . .

The background against which these tremendous figures were to appear was conventional enough: monochrome houses with a gap in the middle for depth. As for the dancers' costumes, the two acrobats, blue and white with curving stripes, were reminiscent of Picasso's earlier circus people; and only the conjuror was really startling in his brilliant orange and yellow, black and white, with asymmetric curves and spirals. And the curtain was a gentle mockery of such compositions, with an added charm of its own. It was an enormous expanse of cloth, over fifteen hundred square feet . . . On either side of the background are conventional great curtains, looped back to show a pillar and far away an arch, perhaps a ruin; in front of these and on the right a group of strolling players including a harlequin, sit on boxes and trestles drawn up to a table, while one of them, a traditional Spaniard, plays his guitar. Over the left a gentle winged mare suckles her foal, while standing on her back a winged girl

> reaches up to a monkey on a striped ladder. In the foreground an acrobat's ball, a sleeping dog, a drum, circus impedimenta. Red and green predominate, and a mild happiness.[9]

Picasso's sets and costumes were sophisticated and ingenious in their elegance, but were in sharp contrast to the music.[10] The music was essentially popular in nature and somewhat brash, with a fairground atmosphere.

The ballet was performed on the 18th of May 1917 at the Théâtre du Chatelet in Paris, but the ballet was not a major success. It shocked and stunned the Parisian audiences. The spectators were not prepared for a ballet where the standard classical ballet movements were replaced with stylized interpretations of everyday movement and behavior patterns.[11] "Massine's comedy was something new for the Russian Ballet; new, too, in being neither Russian nor Oriental."[12]

Just as Picasso was the pacesetter of the Western avant-garde painters, so then was Massine the new light in Western modernity in dance. The choreographed movements, the abstract music, and the Cubist designs were the essential elements in the emergence of the "new" style of ballet. Overall, the use of modern art forms alienated the public and press, and marked the beginning of the general air of controversy that would surround many of Massine's future ballets.

[9] O'Brian, p. 221
[10] Ibid., p. 242
[11] Buckle, p. 331
[12] Ibid., p. 327

When Diaghilev's Ballets Russes company was performing in Spain at the request of King Alfonso, Diaghilev was intrigued with the idea of creating a Spanish ballet using authentic Spanish steps and rhythmic patterns.[13] Diaghilev arranged for the company to travel through Spain to Saragossa, Burgos, Salamanca, Toledo, Seville, and Granada. During their travels, the company performed, visited the museums and cathedrals, and watched local dancers.

It was Diaghilev's custom to associate with well-known artists, so it was natural that he had become friends with Manuel de Falla, a very talented Spanish composer. Diaghilev encouraged Falla to compose a work for the Ballets Russes company. This suggestion was to become the outlet for an idea which had long interested Falla.

Early in his career, Falla was fascinated by the novel *El Sombrero de Tres Picos (The Three-Cornered Hat)* by Pedro de Alarcon.[14] Alarcon had based his novel on the popular Spanish folk-tale called *El Corregidor ye la Molinera (The Corregidor and the Miller's Wife)*. Falla had tried to compose a Spanish opera from the novel but was halted by a clause in Alarcon's will which prevented such an adaptation.[15] However, with the invitation from Diaghilev to compose music for a ballet, the Alarcon heirs granted permission for a ballet to be created on the theme of the novel.[16]

[13] Ibid., p. 239
[14] Leonide Massine, My Life in Ballet (London: Macmillian and Co., Ltd., 1968), p. 159
[15] Ibid., p. 169
[16] Ibid., p. 256

Diaghilev engaged Falla to compose an authentic Spanish score and they were eager to begin the endeavor. Leonide Massine, the newest choreographic protégé of Diaghilev, was preparing to do the choreography and Martinez Sierra was contracted to do the libretto. Picasso was not part of the collaboration in the initial stages.

The artists gathered and were very enthusiastic, but in 1917, the First World War was in the midst of its agonizing terror and the Bolshevik revolution had severed members of the Russian company from their country. Funds were frozen and the company had no direct means of sponsoring new ballets. Furthermore, the company was banned from France, Italy and England because of its Russian nationality. The war situation immobilized the company and they found refuge in Spain where the royal family particularly favored them.

While in Spain, Massine had become enraptured with Spanish *flamenco* dance and made friends with Felix Fernandez Garcia, the exceptionally gifted performer of Spanish dance. The two first met when Garcia had been performing in a café in Granada and after the performance, Diaghilev invited the exciting young Spanish dancer to join the table of Ballets Russes dancers.[17] Diaghilev also offered Garcia tickets to see the performances of the Russian company. After attending, Garcia was so excited that he asked to join the company, and Diaghilev was most obliging.

[17] Massine, p. 114

As a member of the company, Garcia became Massine's teacher of Spanish dance. Garcia was a brilliant artist and according to Massine, "not only had he devised a written system of notation for the *zapateado*, the foot movements of the *flamenco*, but he also taught himself to sing the difficult *seguidilla* and *allegria* songs while dancing."[18] He became an integral part of the newly conceived Spanish ballet that the Russian company was planning to create.

The small entourage of collaborators, Diaghilev, Falla, Massine and Garcia continued to travel around the country, this time with a focus on the new ballet. Garcia was indispensable, as he made special arrangements for many performances by the local artists. Their visits took them to many of Spain's most architecturally impressive cities, as well as to some of the local areas where Falla gathered folk tunes for the ballet score. One tale that is widely known concerned an incident in one small village: Diaghilev and Falla were walking when they heard a blind man playing a melancholy tune on the guitar.[19] Falla recorded the tune and used it in the ballet. They also watched many Spanish dancers, studying the nuances of the Spanish regional styles of dance.

Garcia remained with the small group, providing personal and intensive dancing lessons in *flamenco* to Massine. "Under Felix's guidance, I [Massine] had begun to grasp the fundamental grammar of the Spanish folk-dances, and I was now able to see how they might be given a

[18] Ibid.
[19] Buckle, p. 337

more sophisticated choreographic treatment."[20] Garcia also arranged for Massine to study the *zapateado*, the footwork/heelwork in Spanish dance, with Garcia's own teacher, Senor de Molina. [21]

When Massine began the choreography for *Le Tricorne*, Garcia was close by, coaching and providing details and nuances of the Spanish movement.[22] As Falla integrated basic form of Spanish music into a ballet score, Massine translated ethnic dance onto the ballet stage.

The Spanish dance suited Massine in style, temperament and costume. His study of the different Spanish dance forms gave him great freedom in movement that classical ballet had not, and this style of movement suited his physical body type much more than classical ballet. The style of the Spanish *flamenco* trousers, which were tight fitted at the waist, slightly flared in the leg and then tapered down to the ankle, was very flattering to Massine's physique, making his legs appear longer and hiding any unflattering structural lines.

Massine's immersion into Spanish dance heightened his acute rhythmic understanding and sensibility. He found the passion of the Spanish artists with whom he worked, particularly Garcia, to be *simpatico* with his Russian temperament. He also found that the traditional Spanish music had intensity and passion in the pulsating rhythms, which ignited his own Russian passion. The vibrant, vivid colors he saw in Spanish art and life reflected that

[20] Massine, p. 116
[21] Massine, p. 115
[22] Conversations between Leonide Massine and Lisa Fusillo, Dec. 1976

same passion and added another dimension to the influence of Spanish culture on Massine's life and work.

The artistic exchange had begun in 1917, but progress on the ballet was halted and the ballet stagnated for nearly two years. When the work resumed in 1919, Diaghilev engaged Picasso to design the sets and costumes.

Picasso's designs were marked as "Goya-like" by critics and the intelligentsia, yet were perfectly congruous with the ballet, *Le Tricorne*, set in the eighteenth century. "The designs were based on typical costumes of the period such as one can see in early works by Goya."[23]

> The ballet, set in a small, eighteenth-century Spanish village, centers around the flirtations between the Miller, his Wife, and the Corregidor, who wears a three-cornered hat emblematic of his position and social class. Picasso effectively captured the essence of the Spanish temperament in the drop cloth; black borders denoting Spanish dignity enclosed bold colors reflecting the gaiety of the people. The costumes were based on authentic eighteenth-century styles.[24]

The costumes were described by author Douglas Cooper as "eminently theatrical and suggest no less of the gravity than of the gaiety which are characteristically

[23] Parmenia Migel (editor), Pablo Picasso: Designs for "The Three Cornered Hat", (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1978), p. viii
[24] Lisa Fusillo, contributor, "Le Tricorne", International Encyclopedia of Dance, (London: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 192

Andalusia, by his lavish use of bright colors in opposition to the black and by his recourse to very bold stripes and arabesques."[25] Patrick O'Brian, author of *Picasso Theatre*, gave another good description of some of Picasso's designs for *Le Tricorne*:

> His curtain was a view into a bull ring, with women in mantillas and men in cloaks watching from the shade of an arched box, while in the brilliant sum beyond, a dead bull is being dragged from the arena. The back-cloth showed a great arch among houses—perhaps the gateway of a fortified village—with a bridge in the distance: all pink and pale ocher under a blue starry sky. And his costumes were fairly straightforward versions of Spanish tradition. If it was not particularly significant, it was remarkably effective.[26]

Massine was inspired by the music, as was Picasso, and wrote "Falla's score, with its pulsating rhythms, played by eleven brass instruments, seemed to us very exciting, and in its blend of violence and passion was similar to much of the local folk-dances."[27] The opening movement of the music is a festive rhythm played by the brass and percussion. Falla cleverly wove the traditional Spanish rhythms – *fandango, farrucca* and *jota* – throughout the score and was hailed for his brilliance as

[25] Douglas Cooper, Picasso Theatre (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1968), p. 41
[26] O'Brian, p. 238
[27] Massine, p. 115

a composer.[28] Historian W. A. Propert wrote "no man understands and expresses better than Falla the musical traditions of his country and *The Three-Cornered Hat* is undoubtedly the most complete embodiment of modern Spanish music existing."[29]

> The dancing was lively, to an underlying *jota* rhythm. Massine's understanding of the use of groups on the stage and the coordination of their movements as a congruent whole was very evident. The crowds were necessary within the story to create atmosphere, but there was always a logical reason for the group to exit when a solo was to be performed. The Miller's Wife had a brilliant fandango solo heavily laced with traditional Spanish steps yet in keeping with the theatrical setting. The *pas de deux* between the Miller and his Wife was also a kind of *fandango*, but it had more classical steps in its teasing, flirtatious content. Finally, the Miller's solo was an explosive, fiery *farruca*. With rapid *staccato* footwork, treat jumps, and *tours en l'air*, this solo, like the *fandango*, integrated authentic Spanish, classical, and theatrical dance."[30]

Massine was highly acclaimed for the rhythmic nature and musicality of the choreography in *Le Tricorne*. The

[28] Robert Lawrence, The Victor Book of Ballets and Ballet Music (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950), p. 480
[29] W. A. Propert, The Russian Ballet in Western Europe 1909-1920 (New York: Benjamin Blom Inc., 1972), p. 120
[30] Fusillo, p. 192

demi-caractére style of the work created a new subgenre in ballet choreography. In tone, interpretation and rhythm, the dances Massine created for *Le Tricorne* were quite Spanish, but the steps were undeniably Massine's.

The collaborative result was acclaimed as one of the greatest masterpieces in the entire history of ballet.[31] As a ballet incorporating the Spanish dance, *Le Tricorne* harmoniously fused the elements of music, dance, *décor* and plot. Massine wrote in his autobiography:

> *Le Tricorne* had begun as an attempt to synthesize Spanish folk dances with classical techniques, but in the process of evolution, it emerged as a choreographic interpretation of the Spanish temperament and way of life.[32]

The ballet was not actualized until after the Ballets Russes had left Spain and moved to London where *Le Tricorne* was premiered on April 30th, 1919 at the Alhambra Theatre. *Le Tricorne* was an overwhelming success and has continued to be one of the most outstanding works produced through the Diaghilev collaborations.

The Spanish influence on Massine was profound, and through the creation of *Le Tricorne* Massine developed a movement style, which he used throughout his career. His intensive study of Spanish dance provided him with an extended movement vocabulary from which to draw

[31] Migel, p. v
[32] Massine, p. 118

up, and depart from, in creating and defining his own movement vocabulary.

Some of the distinctly 'Massine' movements seen in many of his ballets, can be traced back to this Spanish period in Massine's career. In particular, the carriage of the upper back used in Spanish dance. With its high arch, it is a position that Massine has stylized. Massine added a curve through the torso and ending with the feet together in a parallel position, often on the toes, with the arms swept up and over the head, hands together, completing the full body arch. He used this position several times in characterizations in his ballets. Versions of this position can be seen in The Waiters in *Gaité Parisienne*, and in the Hussar in *Le Beau Danube*.

The Spanish style arms, from the elbows high in a "Z-like" position crossed in front of the body was another favorite position of Massine's. In the traditional *zapateado* footwork in *flamenco* dance, this is the position that the arms move through as they slowly, elegantly rise upward, elbows leading, in front of the body until they reach the high curve as the arms extend over the head, while the feet punctuate the percussive heel rhythms. The overhead position of the arms, bent at the elbow, slightly crossed at the wrist or hands together is another notable influence that Massine used.

Keenly rhythmical in his choreography, Massine used intricate and very quick footwork in many of his ballets. The speed and clarity of 'Massine footwork' is yet another element of his movement style which can be traced back to his Spanish dance training in the *zapateado* footwork. Additionally, Massine adopted the

Spanish style trousers as costume and rehearsal dress for himself throughout his career. After *Le Tricorne*, Massine used a modified version of the Spanish trousers for his costume in nearly all of the choreography he created including for his role as The Cobbler in the film *The Red Shoes*, and his in ballets, *Le Beau Danube* and *Gaité Parisienne*.

Massine never forgot his Spanish training. His love of the Spanish dance, with all of its passion, was reflected in the success of *Le Tricorne*. The Spanish movement style was also a powerful source of inspiration for Massine. He revisited Spanish themes throughout his career, most notably in *Capriccio Espagnol* created 20 years after *Le Tricorne*.

Each of the Spanish collaborators, Falla, Picasso, and Garcia contributed to the artistic education and growth one of the most important choreographers of the twentieth century, Leonide Massine. Massine's ballet, *Le Tricorne*, epitomizes the very finest Spanish artistic involvement in ballet as a complete art form, and is a tribute to the great artists of Spain who created it. The Russian-Spanish collaboration on *Le Tricorne* remains as one of the greatest examples of artistic collaboration in the early twentieth century.

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Interviews and Conversations

Interview recorded on tape. Marian Horosko interviewing Leonide Massine, 1969, in the Dance Collection of the Library of Performing Arts, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

"Massine Dances in his 'Tricorne'", news clipping from the files of the Dance Collection at Lincoln Center, October 10, 1942, New York (no credit to reviewer or to particular newspaper)

Conversations between Leonide Massine and Lisa Fusillo, 1976-77

Slides shown during presentation

Parade
Picasso's color study for Chinese Conjuror
Picasso's pen & ink sketch for Chinese Conjuror costume
photo of Massine's original costume and poster of Chung Ling Soo in Chinese costume
Picasso's pen & ink sketch for Manager on Horseback
photo of French Manager costume

Le Tricorne
Portrait of Massine in *Le Tricorne* (by Gordon Anthony)
Picasso's sketch of curtain - oil on canvas
Picasso's sketch of backdrop – oil on canvas
Picasso's costumes – color and pen & ink
    Picador and Lady
    Toreador and Mule Driver carrying flour sack
    Madman and Lady
Picasso's sketch of set
Picasso's watercolor of set
Picasso's costumes – unfinished sketches with color
    Gentleman and Lady
    An Argonese and Man with Crutches
    Mule Driver and Lady

Picasso's set design – watercolor
poster for 1919-1920 Ballets Russes season in Paris (with Gentleman & Lady costume designs)
photo of Massine as The Miller
photo of Massine & Picasso in Pompeii, 1917
photo of Massine and Falla at the Alhambra in Granada, c. 1917
Diaghilev with Vladimir Polunin (scene painter) and Picasso at Polunin's studio in
    Covent Garden, London, 1919
photo of Massine and Margot Fonteyn in *Le Tricorne*, 1947
photo of Massine performing a jump as The Miller
photo of Massine performing another jump as The Miller

Dance connections between Spain and the Austrian Habsburgs.

Gabor Kovacs

During the 16th and 17th century, the frequent intermarriages between the Austrian and Spanish line of the House of Habsburg established a strong and exciting cultural connection between these two leading nations of Europe. Between 1548 and 1690 not less than eight weddings were celebrated between Austria and Spain. As almost always the ladies moved to their husbands' residencies, the courts of the royal Austro-Spanish couples could be found in several European cities. The fact that the Austrian Habsburg Kings were usually Holy Roman Emperors as well expands the research field into their lives and activities. Among other kinds of art, dance played an important role in the life of the present and future Kings and Queens. Spanish royal dancing masters, serving their King and Queen, wandered from one place to the other. Although we do not have detailed information about the dancing life of these courts and the dancing masters, several references help to cast a glance on dance activities of this period.

The aim of this paper is to show a few moments of Austro-Spanish dance connections in the 16th and 17th century. Tracing the histories and events of the royal families as well as the footsteps of the Spanish dancing masters in Europe, we can learn that the dance cultures of the two Habsburg Courts are not equally well

documented. Furthermore, the connections are not as self-evident as they seem to be at a first glance.
The intermarriages between the two Habsburg lines are the following:

1548	María (daughter of Carlos I) – Maximilian (later Max. II. King of Hungary and Bohemia)
1570	Felipe II – Anna of Austria (daughter of Maximilian II)
1599	Felipe III – Margaret of Austria (cousin of Rudolf II, sister of Ferdinand, later F. II)
1599	Isabella (step-sister of Felipe III) – Archduke Albert (brother of Rudolf II)
1629	María of Austria (sister of Felipe IV) – Ferdinand King of Hungary and Bohemia (later F III)
1649	Felipe IV – Mariana (daughter of Ferdinand III)
1666	Margarita Teresa (sister of Carlos II) – Leopold I
1690	Carlos II – Mariana of Neuburg (sister-in-law of Leopold I)

From the list of these marriages, I would like to select three, from dance's point of view, more or less well-documented ones.

1. Isabella Clara Eugenia and Archduke Albert

The ceremony at the visit of Isabella of Spain and Archduke Albert in Milan is described by Cesare Negri[1]. Pamela Jones in her 1986[2] article describes and analyses the torch dances described by Negri. As Milan was Spanish territory at that time, it is not surprising, that the couple visited this city as well. Pamela Jones reminds us that the aim of the whole journey was to demonstrate the strong connection between the two Habsburg lines. The title of one of Negri's dances, *Austria Felice*, also refers to this.

Negri mentions three choreographies as parts of the ceremony. Two torch dances, *Austria felice*, and a *"ballo fatto da sei cavalieri"* surrounds the *Brando di Cales*.

Negri's choreographies are typical examples of the theatrical dances of the age. All of them can be easily reconstructed through knowledge of contemporary documents of dancing masters such as Negri, himself, Fabrizio Caroso, Prospero Lutij and Livio Lupi.

That the event took place in Italy and the ceremony was choreographed by an Italian dancing master suggests that Italian dance style was presented. The question of the Spanish connection, however, arises. Negri was perfectly aware of the Spanish features of dancing of his age. Therefore, it seems to be worth to examine if he provides any Spanish elements in his choreographies to honour the Habsburg couple in a place ruled by the King of Spain.

[1] Negri, Cesare. *Le Gratie d'Amore*. Milan, 1602 p269-276
[2] Jones, Pamela. Spectacle in Milan: Cesare Negri's torch dances. *Early Music*. 1986 May, p182-196

What exactly are these features?

We can receive information from two main groups of sources.

- The Spanish dancing books of the period.
- The dances, which bear Spanish features in the Italian sources.

In the case of this study, we can use the latter more effectively. Namely, the relevant Spanish sources of early dance[3] had been published later, in the 17th and 18th centuries. According to my theory stated in former treatises[4], the Spanish features of the Italian dances are the following:

- The lack of *continenze* after the *Riverenza* at the beginning.
-The significant role of the *mutanze* (solo sections) in the choreography.
- The unaltered (usually triple) time and musical character during the whole dance.
- The lack of proportional sections (*sciolta* etc.).
- Specific steps or movements, ie. *seguiti battuti al canario*

[3] Esquivel, Minguet, Ferriol
[4] Kovacs, Gabor. *The Codetta: An indication of Spanish influence in the late Renaissance Italian Dances?* (Thesis for the Diploma of Licentiate in Early Dance. The Guldhall School of Music and Drama) London, 1993
Kovacs, Gabor. *Reneszánsz táncok.*[Dances of the Renaissance] Budapest, 1997, 2002 p207-220

- Strophic structure in music and dance, usually with refrains (see the *cascardas, canarios*).
- Spared musical material (*canarios, spagnoletta, pavaniglia*)

Of these features, we can find very few in Negri's dances. The lack of *continence* may be explained by the fact that the choreographies are theatrical. The music is in duple time which is not at all a Spanish feature. Although there are no proportional sections in the two torch dances, their music and steps do not show any Spanish connections. The *Brando di Cales* is a typical Italian *ballo* with a *gagliarda* section. It is true, however, that there are no *continenze*.

So, Negri does not help us too much as for the style of dancing. He merely provides a glance onto an important moment of the Austro-Spanish connection. Nevertheless, it is advisable to pay attention to the Italian Master, because his influence on Spanish culture is proved by the fact that his book contains several dances dedicated to prominent Spanish personalities and that a Catalan translation of the whole book has survived.[5] The importance of the fact that Negri was kept in mind in Spain will be seen below.

2. María of Austria – Ferdinand King of Hungary and Bohemia (later Ferdinand III)

Although the royal couple lived in Vienna, Philip IV, King of Spain, took care that his sister would keep a connection to Spanish culture. As part of this, in 1630, he appointed Manuel de Frías as dancing master of the

[5] Negri, Cesare. *Arte para aprender a dancar.* Madrid, 1630

Queen of Hungary for 8 years[6]. Frías followed the Queen to Vienna and served her more than six years. After this period, he got seriously ill and went back to Spain. Unfortunately, we do not know too much about his activity as a dancing master. Esses mentions[7] that, in 1633, he was to arrange a choreography for a royal feast. He, however, got ill during the work. The same happened in 1635 when he had to teach dances to the Spanish and German ladies-in-waiting of the queen. As, allegedly, he did not know the language he had to demonstrate the dances several times which resulted in him getting ill again. On his return to Spain, he presented a petition to Philip IV in which he asked him to be allowed to keep the position as dancing master of the Queen. This started a long procedure that ended with the result that, in 1637, he was again employed, jointly with Luis Fernandez de Escalante, as dancing master of the Queen. (The situation is complicated by the fact that Escalante was occupied since 1629 succeeding his uncle Alonso Fernandez de Escalante.) From 1939 on Frías shared his post with Antonio de Almenda.[8]

We do not know anything about the exact activities of Spanish dancing masters in Vienna. We do, however, know which style of dance they represented. Of this, we receive much information from Juan Esquivel Navarro's book[9]. On the frontispiece of his book, Navarro names

[6] Maurice Esses: *Dance and instrumental* diferencias *in Spain during the 17th and early 18th centuries.* Vol. I. Pendragon, New York, 1992, p489, 497
[7] Ibid. p498
[8] Ibid. p491
[9] Navarro, Juan Esquivel *Discursos sobre el arte del dancado.* Sevilla, 1641.

himself as the pupil of Antonio de Almenda whom he considered the most respected dancing master of his age. He also mentions Marcos Fernandez and Louis Fernandez Escalante, Fernandez's son[10]. By the time of Navarro's publication, Louis Fernandez was twenty years old. Navarro apparently describes the manner of dancing he inherited from his predecessors so we can trace back the basic evolutionary line of Spanish dancing of the period of Manuel Frías as well. In Navarro's book, we find a surprisingly close connection with the Italian books published one generation earlier. Among others Navarro mentions the same steps (*cabriolas, floretas, saltos, cruzado*) and the same dances (*pavana* [with *mudanzas,* thus apparently the *pavaniglia* or *Spanish pavane*] *gallarda, villano, canario*) we find in the works of Negri, Caroso and other authors of the turn of the century. Thus, this part of their activity can be reconstructed more or less reliably. So, the roots of this practice can be found in Negri's Italy as mentioned above. This Italo-Spanish way of dancing might match well with the custom and taste of the Italian-loving court of Ferdinand III. It is remarkable that amongst the numerous musicians of the Emperor's court, we find mainly Italian and German names, whereas Spanish ones hardly if ever occur. The import of Italian musicians began already during the reign of Ferdinand II. Ferdinand III and his successor Leopold I also kept to this custom. In such circumstances, it is not clear what the actual role of the Spanish dancing masters might have been.

It is worth to mention as well that during this period the Spanish cultural influence reached France. Louis XIII's

[10] fol 46r

marriage with Anne d'Autriche created the conditions for many Spanish musicians to spend some time at the French Court and *vice versa*: the French cultural innovations did not bypass Spain. Dance was not an exception. On the one hand, the names of prominent baroque dances gradually appear in Spanish dance books. However, Esquivel's *Chaconna* and *Folia* cannot be considered the same as the dances notated after 1700. On the other hand, the French dance names are getting more frequent in the works of Viennese composers. A good example of this process is the activity of Johann Jacob Froberger, to whom the ordinary sequence of the later baroque suite (allemande-courante-sarabande-gigue) is attributed.

3. Margarita Teresa – Leopold I

In 1681, we find Juan de Brida hold the post of the Queen's dancing master in Vienna. From 1683 onwards Sebastian Molina was employed until, in 1687, Augustin Caballero applied successfully.

Unfortunately, no record about their work survived. Besides their regular task of developing the dancing skill of the Queen in order to be able to cope with courtly ceremonies, they took part in the stage productions which contained aristocratic dancing as well. Such occasions were popular in all parts of Europe. We have several documents about the *máscaras* in the royal court of Spain[11]. Following the French fashion, these performances were held under very expensive and lavish circumstances. They occasionally contained masqued

[11] Esses, p354-418

dances, mock fighting or even equestrian ballet sections. However, there no absolute certainty that the above mentioned dancing masters took part at these occasions. Their names are not mentioned as choreographers of stage productions. During the reign of Leopold I, the number of ballets performed at the court was considerable. We know that the court ballet composers at the Imperial court were Johann Heinrich and Andreas Anton Schmelzer whose activities and works are well known by the musicians. Even the Emperor himself took part in the process of composition![12] Among the choreographers, however we do not find the dancing masters of the Queen. Lorenzo Bianchi mentions two Spanish dancers[13], Santo and Domenico Ventura as resident choreographers at the court. As their names appear several times, both as dancers and composers, it is possible that the stage performances belonged to their responsibilities. As the composers and musicians of these works were mainly Italian, it is not likely that any Spanish peculiarity or connection can be found in them. Although no choreography survived from this period, it is very probable that the dancing style tended to be more the general French style than the Spanish one. The continuous and strong avocation of French style in all the fields of noble dancing is also proved by the books of the Spanish dancing masters (Jaque, Minguet, Ferriol) of the Baroque era. It is, however remarkable that all of them felt the necessity to devote a considerable part of their books to the much older Italian-based descriptions as well!

[12] Lorenzo Bianconi: *Music in the seventeenth century*. Cambridge University Press, 1987 p230
[13] Ibid.

The recent state of the research of the Spanish-Austrian connections indicates more questions than answers. Although there are "contact persons" like Antonio de Almenda and his colleagues, it is not easy to find outstanding common features of the two cultural territories. While both, Austria and Spain, preserved their rather different cultural heritage, Spain seemed to sympathise with the French customs and Austria preferred the Italian ones. These facts tend to show that their cultural connections were not as strong as we would like them to be. Is it possible, that the first sentence of this paper is nothing more than a mere hypothesis? Now the researcher (remembering Murphy's words) must put one of the most embarrassing questions: don't we require the facts to prove our hypothesis?

Considerations regarding the application of Rhetoric and the Theory of the Passions onto 17th & 18th Century Dance & Music compositions

Ricardo Barros

Prologue

Thanks to the work of some researchers, scholars, archivists, performers and indeed publishing companies, researchers and performers alike have managed to gather a substantial amount of information through documents, treatises, performing manuals and other sources, which have furnished them with resources to accomplish a plausible 'historically informed' performance in music (i.e.: a style of performance that ultimately recreates the original sonority idealised by composers, by means of adopting performing techniques pertinent to the period the piece was composed, making use of accurately copied instruments and even by choosing a suitable surrounding or venue).

Equally in the early dance revival, the restoring process of pure movement is based on the study of treatises, dance manuals, iconographic evidence, letters and many other documents that help to recreate as accurately as possible a plausible historically informed performance.

More precisely, the dance panorama in 17th century France was of great importance, given the fact that the monarch, Louis XIV, was not only the great sponsor and promoter of the arts in general, but he particularly cherished dancing. He not only took part in stage

productions as a dancer, but also boosted the status of dancing by organising grand balls at the court and noticeably more intimate events in his private quarters in Versailles. His "Jour-d'appartements", as these were called, consisted of *soirées* which happened as frequently as three times a week, where selected guests could indulge their senses with music, food, card and table games, poetry and dancing. Courtiers grabbed the sought-after opportunity to get closer to the king so as to obtain political or social favours. Being invited to attend one of the '*Appartements*', or even better, to perform in such an event, meant much more than just attending a party. In particular, in regard to dancing, being invited to perform at the '*Appartements*' was considered the first step towards reaching the stage and taking part in one of the numerous productions commissioned by the King.

Dancing was part of the education of a nobleman alongside horse riding and fencing. Versailles catered for its courtiers by providing several dancing-masters who supervised the daily training for noblemen and for the royalty. Louis' passion for dancing was such that he commissioned a system of choreographic notation to his principal dancing-master, Pierre Beauchamps, around 1674.[1] This system was finally published in 1700 by Raoul-Auger Feuillet and was immediately widespread in most courts in Europe, being translated into several languages including English.[2]

The commissioning of a system notation was actually preceded by the establishment of the Académie Royale de Danse, founded in 1661, and the Académie Royale de Musique (established in 1669). Before the launch of both Académies, dance and music were in fact regulated

by the same governing body, the Confrarie de St Julien, from which music and dancing masters obtained the titles which enabled them to teach as *maîtres*.

"The Marriage of Music & Dance"
According to historical documentation one can verify that music and dance shared the same principles of performance and composition. For instance, Guillaume DuManoir, established violinist and member of the 25 *Violons du Roi* who also holds the title of Dancing Master (i.e.: entrusted by the *Confrarie de St Julien* to teach dancing), writes that Music and Dance are in fact "one same body"[3] and possessing "equality in spirit and capacity"[4], to list just a few among several examples. He also compares the Dance-Music entity to painting and sculpture by cunningly stating that in the same manner these last two do not exist without a media or material (in this case the canvas and the marble), dance necessarily depends on music in order to exist.[5]

Guillaume Colletet declares in the foreword for the *Ballet de l'Harmonie* by Horace Morel, for which he wrote the *livret*, that "dancing is a vivid image of our actions and an artificial expression of our most secret thoughts" and that the soul has the power to cause the body to unify the harmony of nature to the harmony of music by means of the movements of dancing and that it therefore "creates unity between the Body and Soul, and between the Soul and Music."[6] This is one of the many citations that directly relate the performance of music and dance to the utmost expression of feelings, or more particularly to the expression of Passions, according to the Descartian theory.

Rhetoric

During the 17th century, France experienced a major influence from Greek Mythology and Ancient History, immersed in a frenzy which would bring gods, heroes and epic events to reflect the latest episodes at the court, to celebrate a social event or a victory in the battle fields, raising the status of mortal noblemen to mighty and immortal gods and heroes. This grandeur was celebrated in painting, sculpture, acting, poetry, music and dance in a display of the Nation's wealth and majestic grandiosity.

The masterworks from Greek philosophers were not only a novelty, but commonly referred to and ultimately were incorporated into the educational syllabus. A courtier would, therefore, be expected to be well versed in Classical history, philosophy and in rhetoric (also known as *L'Art de bien Parler*). In other words, one should know how to elaborate and present a convincing and engaging speech. According to Jeanette Bicknell, "most school boys would have a thorough grounding in Latin by the age fifteen" having learned rhetoric, grammar and logic as the so-called "trivium", or the first cycle of arts subjects.[7]

Authors such as Jean Dusin (1608)[8], François Cassandre (1654)[9], Jacques DuRoure (1662)[10] and Bernard Lamy (1672)[11] published treatises which relate to the writings of Aristotle, whose works were also extensively reprinted during the 17th and 18th centuries and proved to be an essential source for public orators, politicians, lawyers, judges, writers, actors, composers, musicians, choreographers and dancers. Rhetoric, in fact, provided the frame onto which any form of expression consisting of an orderly 'speech' (which can

also be applied to music and dance) should be accommodated. In order to convince the audience, an 'orator' should follow certain rules when exhibiting his ideas.

According to Bernard Lamy a speech should consist of at least 3 parts: Proposition, Intrigue and Denouement. These could be further subdivided in 4 or 5 parts: Exordium and Narration (consisting of the Introduction), Confirmation and Confutation (consisting of the Intrigue) and, finally, the Conclusion (Denouement). The orator should also be able to skilfully choose which rhetoric figures to employ and most importantly, to gradate the intensity of emotion used in such figures as to raise or counteract certain passions in the audience. At the end of his speech, he should have managed to convince the audience of his statement and successfully banished any contrary argumentation.

One should note at this point that conventions vary slightly from author to author. For instance, in his much later publication *Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, Johann Mattheson further breaks the speech into 6 parts[12]. Nevertheless, the main framework remains the same: presentation and explanation of an argument, refusal of adverse arguments and reinstatement of the initial argument. The author reminds us that the listener should be able to clearly apprehend the meaning of the figures and the function of every sub-division in the speech, even without the use of words.

In order to convince an audience, the orator should skilfully appeal to their emotions. These emotions were treated as 'Passions' during the 17th and 18th century and

non-surprisingly relate to the very same Greek theory of *pathos*. The orator must dose type and intensity of the Passions he wants to stir in his audience, as to reach a climax in favour of his statement.

On an initial and rather straightforward approach, one can immediately apply the principles of a concise and yet elaborated speech framed by the rules of rhetoric onto sung *récits*, airs and indeed onto dance movements related to a sung passage (i.e.: when the original song further produces purely instrumental versions, examples of which can be often found in 17th century French *Tragédies*, *Comédies*, *Ballets* and *Opéras*) in the first instance and, consequently, onto purely instrumental dance movements without any apparent co-related textual version. The juxtaposition of textual analysis to the musical and chorological elements does reiterate the very basis of oratory and 'poetic action' by conforming to the strict frame set by rhetoric. A practical analysis demonstrates that the musical and chorological aspects of a composition do follow the crescendo and diminuendo of tension as prescribed by the laws of rhetoric and are simply predisposed by the text. In a particular case, the subdivisions may have the following specific functions:

1 ***Exordium*** – a short introduction where the orator addresses his audience, a particular person or a character;
2 ***Narration*** – following the initial address the orator slightly increases the tension in his speech (by means of making use of specific figures or emotionally stressing words) and briefly states the matter to be discussed;

3 ***Confirmation*** of the proposed matter by presenting proof in order to make his statement convincingly acceptable;
4 ***Confutation*** – at this point the orator reaches the climax of his declamation. He makes use of dramatic figures of speech and appeals to the listener's emotional vulnerabilities in order to ban every single argument one may raise against his initial statement.
5 ***Conclusion*** – the orator drastically diminishes the emotional charge in his speech and reinstates his original proposition.

The variation in tension caused by rhetoric figures directly applied to the text is translated into the musical lexicon by dramatic harmonic changes, extension of the register used, expressive figures such as *port-de-voix*, *pincées*, *coulements*, specific intervals, strategically placed rests, interrupted cadences and many other resources, which comply to the rules set out by the text and, therefore, abide by the rhetoric precepts. Likewise, this tension is conveyed in the chorological vocabulary through the use of specific steps, which correspond to their musical and textual equivalents. For instance, in order to express grief, the choreographer may use a majestic yet confiding and expressive *temps-de-courante*; whereas, to reinforce an idea or to demonstrate persistence, he may use a series of consecutive *chassées*. The choreographer may still appeal to pantomimic expression by applying categorical arm gestures onto steps.

There are a few citations of the parallels between rhetoric and music during the 17th and 18th centuries. As early as 1636, Marin Mersenne states that

> Airs in a way ought to imitate orations, in order to have members, parts and periods, and make use of all manner of figures and harmonic passages, as the orator does, so that the art of composing airs and writing counterpoint will not be second to rhetoric.[13]

It is reassuringly sensible to relate the application of textual analysis ruled by rhetoric to De Pure's remarks regarding sung *récits*. He entrusts the poet with the responsibility to make the subject of each *récit* clearly understandable through the correct choice and placement of words as to clarify the senses. De Pure points out that a word, a demy-verse or a line should make perfect sense in connection to the *Entrées*, the steps and the postures (gesture attitudes).[14]

De Pure clarifies the point that some authors make by referring to dance as an 'exercise' subject to music. He states:

> Whether the original word is explained either literally or figuratively, it should signify a visible and sensible action. Therefore the *Ballet* is necessarily seemed as a 'demonstration' for it not only consists of an external and evident action, but it also ultimately expresses, paints and shows before the eyes all the issues represented in the dance.[15]

The author makes clear that the choreographic work can represent the words (and indeed the Passions therein contained) both in literal (strictly representing the meaning of the word) and figurative (as an interpretation of the overall Passion or a reference to it) ways.

Passions

According to René Descartes[16] the 'Passions' (or emotions) could be stirred up by certain external elements that would incite specific 'Animal Spirits' to run inside one's body ("it appears that all such Passions may also be excited by objects which stimulate the senses and that these objects are their principal and most common causes. From this it follows that, in order to discover all the Passions, it suffices to consider all the effects of these objects."), causing therefore, reactions such as trembling, crying, blushing and many other 'symptoms' of the numerous listed Passions of which the causes and effects are minutely detailed. Lucie Desjardins[17] notes that the theory of the Passions exposes the dichotomy between inner and the outer-self, the visible and the invisible, the body and the soul, the private and the public realm; and with such an approach one can not avoid but to recall the ideals expressed earlier in 1632 by Colletet[18] which agree with the intent of unifying the exterior images and actions to interior feelings – or in a rather poetic view, to unify the Harmony of Nature to the Harmony of Soul. The Passions, by definition, are expressed by exterior reactions originating in the Soul, and are perceived by the recipient (or addressed person) as an exterior incitation. Therefore, one should cautiously know how to codify and to interpret these emulations. This hypothesis was by consequence widely spread and the typology of

Passions became a common theory of faculty psychology as well as of traditional rhetoric. It was also translated into the musical & choreographic lexicon, by means of elements that are logically placed together in accordance to rhetorical speech.

Although Descartes overtly dismissed rhetoric as verified in his philosophical writings, Jeffrey Woodbury[19] points out that Lamy's *oeuvre* lies in its combination of Cartesian rationalism and Augustinian religious thought, in an attempt to unite reason and faith, theory and practice. Lamy, in an appendix[20] to his revised and expanded third edition of *L'Art de Parler*, extensively addresses the issue regarding the proper use of rhetoric in order to move the audiences' Passions.

Numerous authors provide evidence of the ideology in vogue during the 17th & 18th centuries that theatrical dance composition should be moulded by similar rules of those applied to oratory and, furthermore, that by skilfully using the 'figures' of speech (in this case translated into choreographic and musical figures), one should be able to fully understand what the dancers intend to express without the use of words and most importantly that the dancers should be able to incite certain Passions in the audiences.

At the peak of the artistic production under Louis XIV's auspices, Père Menéstrier states that:

> the *Ballet* expresses the movements ... (through which) one expresses the Nature of things & the disposition of the soul. ... This imitation is made through the movements of

> the body, which are the interpreters of the Passions and of the interior sentiments.[21]

Michel de Pure draws our attention to the fact that

> This representation (the *Ballet*) has many similarities with the 'Dramatic Poetry', as they are both equally pleasing; they represent the past by means of their artifices and by addressing the Soul ... and by either the beauty or the ugliness of it one can instigate both love and hatred in the spectators.[22]

De Pure consistently gives us invaluable in-depth information on the application of rhetoric onto dance composition by explicitly stating that the *Ballet* has the same divisions as oratory. When addressing the 'essence of the Ballet' in chapter XI, he defines it as "a mute representation, where the gestures and movements mean what cannot be expressed by words."[23] And continues stating that the feet and the hands (or rather the steps and gestures) speak for themselves and are able to decipher and develop all the 'mysteries' contained in its design. He also warns his readers of the expressive qualities of dancing by stating that:

> Ballet steps do not simply consist of subtle feet movements or various 'agitations' of the body. They consist of a combination of both and furthermore comprise everything that a well skilled and trained body can give in gestures or actions in order to express anything without the use of words ... but the

> most important and principal rule is to keep the steps expressive and that the face, shoulders, arms and hands make comprehensible what the dancer can not say.[24]

John Weaver equally shows the importance of Passions in the performance of dance also referring that the interpreter (the dancer) should use his positions, gestures, movements and attitudes in order to project a skilful representation of his character.[25]

Even if all the theoretical evidence provided so far failed to convince anyone of the real significance of such expressive devices in theatrical dancing during the 17th and 18th centuries, one cannot disregard the astonishing *Description d'une Sarabande dansée*[26] by Père François Pomey, which amazes his readers with a rich report linking certain movements and attitudes to specific Passions. His testimony also gives us an indication that certain Passions were conveyed through the help of particular rhythmic patterns in dance and music.

One can only conclude from the aforementioned valuable evidence that both dance and music shared some compositional principles, which relate to the declamation of a 'speech without words' with the use of rhetoric as a frame to shape its course and where dance and music interact in order to reinforce the oratory speech. In the same manner, an orator would carefully choose what rhetoric figures to apply and what intensity of emotion to use in each section of his speech in order to stir the audiences emotions (or 'Passions'), composers and choreographers alike employed specific

musical & chorological figures, which relate to each other and have specific functions in the discourse.

Contemporaneous insights

Despite the vast amount of evidence provided by primary sources, very few researchers and scholars in the later part of the 20th century and early 21st century have turned their attention to the application of rhetoric, oratory and the 'Theory of the Passions' onto 17th and 18th century dance & music compositions. As far as one can ascertain, scholars such as Patricia Ranum[27] tend to provide an analytical approach concerning text rhythm and accentuation in relation to musical figures and the overall phrasing of a given piece. Betty Bang Mather and Dean Karns[28] venture further afield by comparing choreographic phrasing with the textural music characteristics in the *Passacaille de Persée* in accordance to the parameters established by oratory and its subdivisions as prescribed by Lamy. Judith Schwartz[29] adopts a similar approach to Mather in categorically subdividing the *Chaconne d'Amadis* into distinct oratory sections; and so does Régine Astier[30], when analysing the *Chaconne pour Femme* ('*de Phaeton*'). Although not clearly stating so, the aforementioned scholars seem to share the belief that the expression of passions in dancing is restrictedly applied to the so called 'Spanish Sarabande' (as richly described by Pomey) and in dance forms, which they assumedly relate to it, namely the *Chaconne* and the *Passacaille*. None of these scholars provide a minute analysis of dance steps in relation to music figures, constraining their visualisation to a rather overall view of a given work. The intrinsic relation between step sequences and music figures has, unfortunately, not

been explored. This gap will only be definitively and efficiently covered by means of a deep and well-informed research through systematically comparing, cataloguing and cross-referencing choreographic and musical sequences framed by the oratory subdivisions and relating to the expression of Passions; therefore breaking new grounds in the performance practice of early dance and music with an original and unprecedented scholarly approach.

Notes:

[1] Ken Pierce. Dance notation systems in late 17th-century France. *Early Music*, 1998, 26 (2), 287-99.
[2] Raoul-Auger Feuillet. *Chorégraphie ou l'Art décrire la Danse*. Paris, 1700, reprint Broude Brothers (New York, 1968).
[3] Du Manoir, Guillaume, *La Marriage de la Musique avec la Danse*. Paris, 1664, p.59, reprint Arnaldo Forni Editore, Bologna, 1985.
[4] *Ibid.*, p.74.
[5] *"it is simply not enough to have the desire to dance and to express ideas through steps and patterns and even to have the legs and feet and a good disposition to perform this Art; but overall it is necessary to have a 'basis' for this exercise; in other words one needs harmony, melody, rules, bars, movements, cadence and one shall say that the composition of a tune precedes the composition of the steps. They must be inseparable, otherwise it would be impossible to teach or to learn any dance; and this exercise* (the dance) *would be a body*

without a Soul, an excitement without attractiveness, posture without any orderliness." – *Ibid.*, p.11-12.
[6] Morel, Horace. *Ballet de l'Harmonie*. Paris, 1632, preface.
[7] Bicknell, Jeanette. Descartes's Rhetoric: Roads, Foundations, and Difficulties in the Method. *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 2003, 36 (1), p.25.
[8] Dusin, Jean. *Les trois livres de la rhétorique d'Aristote traduits du Grec en Français par Jean Dusin*. Paris, 1608.
[9] Cassandre, François. *La rhétorique d'Aristote*. Paris, 1654.
[10] DuRoure, Jacques. *La rhétorique française*. Paris, 1662.
[11] Lamy, Bernard. *De l'Art de Parler avec un Discours dans lequel on donne une idée de l'Art de Persuader*. Paris, 1678; and *Nouvelles Refléxions sur l'Art Poétique*. Paris, 1668.
[12] Harriss, Ernest Charles, *Johann Mattheson's Der vollkommene Capellmeister: a revised translation with critical commentary*, UMI Research Press (Michigan, 1981).
[13] Mersenne, Marin. *Harmonie Universelle, contenant la théorie et la pratique de la musique*. Paris, 1636, p.365.
[14] De Pure, Michel. *Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux*. Paris, 1668, p.268, reprint Éditions Minkoff (Geneve, 1972).
[15] *Ibid.*, p.282.
[16] Descartes, René. *Les Passions de l'âme*. Paris, 1649. In: Cottingham, John (translator) *The Philosophical Writtings of Descartes,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, p.325-404.

[17] Desjardins, Lucie. Dévoiler l'intime: la savante éloquence des passions au XVIIe siècle, in *Abstracts from the 65e Congrès de l'Acfas – Association Francophone pour le Savoir*, ed. Manon Brunet. Quebec, 1997, p.86-113.

[18] Morel, Horace. *Ballet de l'Harmonie* (Paris, 1632), preface

[19] Woodbury, Jeffrey. *Bernard Lamy's Rhetoric and Perspective: Towards an Interdisciplinary Theory of Interpretation*, PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1995.

[20] Lamy, Bernard. *De l'art de parler avec un discurs dans lequel on donne une idée de l'Art de Persuader.* Paris, 1678, p.241-291.

[21] Ménestrier, Claude-François. *Des ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du theatre.* Paris, 1682, p.41, reprint Éditions Minkoff (Geneve, 1972).

[22] De Pure, *Idée des spectacles*, p.211.

[23] *Ibid.*, p.210.

[24] *Ibid.*, p.248-49.

[25] *"Stage-dancing was at first design'd for Imitation; to explain Things conceiv'd in the Mind, by the Gestures and Motions of the Body, and plainly and intelligibly representing Actions, Manners and Passions; so that the Spectator might perfectly understand the Performer by these his Motions, tho' he say not a Word. Thus far the Excellency of the Art appears; but its Beauties consist in the regulated Motion of all Parts, by forming the Body, Head, Arms and Feet, into such Positions, Gestures and Movements, as represent the aforesaid Passions, Manners and Actions ... And without the help of an Interpreter, a Spectator shall at Distance ... be capable*

of understanding the Subject of the Story represented, and able to distinguish the several Passions, Manners or Actions; as of Love, Anger, and the like."- Weaver, John. *An essay towards the history of dancing.* London, 1712. In: Ralph, Richard. *The Life and Works of John Weaver.* Dance Books, London, 1985, p.160-161.

[26] *"At first he danced with a totally charming grace, with a serious and circumspect air, with an equal and slow rhythm ... Then, standing taller and more assertively, and raising his arms to half-height and keeping them partly extended, he performed the most beautiful steps ... Sometimes he would glide imperceptibly, with no apparent movement of his feet and legs, and seemed to slide rather than step. Sometimes ... he would remain suspended, immobile, and half leaning to the side with one foot in the air; and then, compensating for the rhythmic unit that had gone by, with another more precipitous unit he would almost fly, so rapid was his motion ... Now and then he would let a whole rhythmic unit go by, moving no more than a statue and then, setting off like an arrow, he would be at the other end of the room ... But all this was nothing compared to what was observed when this gallant began to express the emotions of his soul through the motions of his body and reveal them in his face, eyes, steps and all his actions. Sometimes he would cast languid and Passionate glances through a slow and languid rhythmic unit; and then, as though weary of being obliging, he would avert his eyes, as if he wished to hide his Passion; and with a more precipitous motion, would snatch away the gift he had tendered. Now and again he would express anger and spite with an impetuous and turbulent rhythmic unit;*

and then, evoking a sweeter passion by more moderate motions, he would sigh, swoon, let his eyes wander languidly; and certain sinuous movements of the arms and body, nonchalant, disjointed and passionate, made him appear so admirable and so charming that throughout this enchanting dance he won as many hearts as he attracted spectators" - Pomey, François. 'Description d'une Sarabande dansée', *Le dictionaire royal augmenté*. Lyon, 1671, p.22.

[27] Ranum, Patricia. Audible rhetoric and mute rhetoric: the 17th century French sarabande. *Early Music*, 1986, 14 (1), 22-39; and Y a t-il une rhetorique des airs de danse Français? In: *Die Sprache der Zeichen und Bilder: Rhetorik und nonverbale Kommunikation in der fruhen Neuzeit*. Marburg, 1990, p.238-254.

[28] Mather, Betty Bang and Dean Karns. *Dance rhythms of the French Baroque: A handbook for performance*. Bloomington, 1987, p.119-125.

[29] Schwartz, Judith. The passacaille in Lully's Armide: phrase structure in the choreography and the music. *Early Music*, 1998, 26 (2), p.300-320.

[30] Astier, Régine. The influence of Greek rhetoric on the composition and interpretation of baroque stage dances. In: Stradou, Dorra (editor) *Papers from the 5th International Conference on Dance Research: Dance and Ancient Greece*, New York, 1991, p.199-212.