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ACTING MASTERY: THE MODERN DIMENSION

MAESTRIA DE ATUAÇÃO: A DIMENSÃO MODERNA

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary dimensions of acting are analyzed in the article. The problem of teaching acting has always been relevant. The complexity of the subject lies in the fact that it is at the intersection of dramatic and choreographic art. There is a lot in common between them, and in many ways, ballet theater draws on the experience of drama theater. However, certain aspects show the fundamental difference between ballet theater and drama. That is why teaching the discipline "Theory and Practice of Acting" imposes specific requirements on educators: it is essential to know and understand the purpose and specifics of the laws of directing and dramaturgy of the drama theater. Moreover, it is equally important to know and understand the specifics of directing and dramaturgy of the ballet theater. In our opinion, an acting teacher should be a director, playwright, choreographer, and performer with practical stage experience at the same time. Acting skills in ballet theater, folk and pop dance, contemporary choreography, children's play dance, etc. are of fundamental importance. Creating images, the ability to convey feelings, thoughts, states, interaction with partners, and emotional communication with the audience - dance cannot exist without all of this. After all, dance, like art in general, is one of the means of communication between people, a way of interacting with the world. It allows one to manifest and express oneself, thoughts about reality, and one's place in it, both in the dance itself and during the training of professional dancers.

Keywords: Acting, image creation, teaching methods, choreography, theater arts, classical dance.

RESUMO

Dimensões contemporâneas da atuação são analisadas no artigo. O problema de ensinar atuação sempre foi relevante. A complexidade do assunto reside no fato de estar na intersecção da arte

dramática e coreográfica. Há muito em comum entre eles e, de muitas maneiras, o balé teatral se baseia na experiência do teatro dramático. No entanto, certos aspectos mostram a diferença fundamental entre o teatro balé e o drama. É por isso que o ensino da disciplina “Teoria e Prática da Atuação” impõe requisitos específicos aos educadores: é fundamental conhecer e compreender a finalidade e as especificidades das leis de direção e dramaturgia do teatro dramático. Além disso, é igualmente importante conhecer e entender as especificidades da direção e da dramaturgia do balé teatral. Em nossa opinião, um professor de atuação deve ser diretor, dramaturgo, coreógrafo e performer com experiência prática de palco ao mesmo tempo. As habilidades de atuação em balé teatral, dança folclórica e pop, coreografia contemporânea, dança infantil, etc. são de fundamental importância. A criação de imagens, a capacidade de transmitir sentimentos, pensamentos, estados, interação com parceiros e comunicação emocional com o público - a dança não pode existir sem tudo isso. Afinal, a dança, como a arte em geral, é um dos meios de comunicação entre as pessoas, uma forma de interagir com o mundo. Permite manifestar e expressar pensamentos sobre a realidade e o seu lugar nela, tanto na própria dança como durante a formação de bailarinos profissionais.

Palavras-chave: Atuação, criação de imagem, métodos de ensino, coreografia, artes cênicas, dança clássica.

1. Introduction

Modern life places special demands on the professional literacy and competence of specialists in all fields of artistic activity. Mastering the professional skills of an actor involves fostering a general culture of the individual, developing special creative abilities, and deep theoretical and practical training.

Nowadays, there is a need for a systematic, comprehensive approach to the formation of professional acting skills of future leisure professionals in the process of mastering the disciplines that form professional competencies and to their formation as independent, successful creative individuals. The pedagogical process of teaching acting requires a clear sequence. Each stage of this process determines the level of mastery of stage action, of increasing complexity.

The primary task of a pedagogue is to help students identify and realize their natural abilities for the benefit of themselves and the world around them. Therefore, it is essential to create a system of educational influences that would stimulate the process of training and education of a successful personality and its creative self-realization. Success is possible when a student successfully develops his or her abilities. This allows you to set realistic goals and achieve them. A person succeeds in the activities for which he or she has natural abilities, which is the basis for the

development of abilities and self-realization. Thus, students often try to achieve high results in the disciplines they can master and are most interested in.

Students should realize that acting is a daily creative work on themselves, which requires perseverance, and a willingness to constantly expand their knowledge and improve their skills. The guidelines will help students navigate the path to mastering the actor's skill, prevent mistakes and improve their abilities.

A professor needs to create comfortable conditions for students to learn, in which each of them will feel successful and intellectually capable. This encourages students to be proactive, creative, and active in all types of learning activities. Moreover, it implies not obtaining, but acquiring knowledge, skills, and competencies by the student himself through creating and constructing them, which significantly increases the effectiveness of learning.

The paper raises the problem of the lack of methods for teaching acting in the stage profession and choreography at the level of higher education. As a result, only the personal practical experience, reflection, analysis, and accumulated knowledge of a pedagogue who wants to teach this subject can form the basis on which the material for teaching this subject is formed.

2. Theoretical background

Theater art is a special way of reflecting life phenomena and reactions to events. On the one hand, using historical stories, epics, fairy tales, legends and myths, classical and contemporary literature, and poetry, and on the other hand, through symbols, metaphors, signs, principles, and techniques of their specific language, theater artists communicate with the world. Drama theater and ballet theater have their system of communication between the creators of the performance and the audience. In his book, choreographer and teacher I. G. Osaulov notes: "The beauty of classical ballet lies in the unity of purpose and means, form and content: to separate them from each other means to destroy the overall

structure, to deprive something wholly of its essence." He also states: "The structure of the language of classical dance is in classical ballet both a form and a carrier of content; by destroying the form, classical ballet loses its essence and deviates from principles and laws" (Osaulov, 2013).

Compared to ballet theater, this choreographic system is quite young, and it is too early to speak about it unequivocally. Contemporary dance theater is at the stage of formation and development. It has its own goals and objectives, its purpose and specificity, so the laws that apply in ballet theater are applied here in a certain context, to a limited extent, and often for other purposes. Folk dance has long had a system of coordinates: how to realize an image, how to express emotion, and how to convey an idea and theme to the audience. The same can be said about pop dance and children's play dance (Hrotovskiy, 2013), (Horevalov, 2014), (Vovkun, 2015), (Briukhovetska, 2004, 2010, 2011), (Fokine, 2016), etc.

Currently, there is little educational literature on acting in choreography. Valuable information about the initial process of teaching acting to future professional ballet dancers can be found in the book by E. V. Petrova "Acting" (Petrova, 2006). The acting manual by I. V. Makedonska and Ye. V. Petrova also reveals the specifics of the acting art of future ballet dancers within the framework of a musical sketch (Petrova, 2006).

Valuable information is also contained in studies about the internal technique of a ballet dancer (Uralska, 2010), (Tarasov, 2011), (Stanislavskiy, 2009, 2010), (Sollertynskiy, 2012), (Slonimskiy, 2011), (Pohrebniak, 2011), etc.

The secrets of the skill and nuances of the actor's plastique are explored in many works (Matushenko, 2020), (Oleksenko, 1983), (Obertynska, 2002), (Meccepep, 2007).

In every textbook and manual on the art of choreography, choreographers in most cases analyze the topics of acting and the physical expression of dancers. Therefore, each new publication on acting and plastic expression seems to make a significant contribution to the common cause of developing the acting skills of ballet and modern dance dancers (Nemyrovych-Danchenko, 2009), (Makarov, 2010),

(Louen, 2005), (Kuzhelnyi, 2012), (Kokorin, 2005), (Zvierieva, 2008), (Zakhava, 2008), (Zaitsev, 2016), etc.

3. **Aim**

The article aims to study the peculiarities of acting skills in the modern dimension of the educational process.

4. **Methods**

The following general scientific methods were used in the work on the material: descriptive, continuous sampling, contextual and component analysis.

5. **Results and discussion**

The relevance of a manual on acting in choreography is obvious in several ways. Firstly, ballet theater is alive and well today, so it needs new productions from young choreographers. They would reveal the problems of our time, choreographic images and characters, and address ethical and philosophical issues.

Second, the active development of contemporary dance theater requires a rethinking of what has already been created. It is crucial to find and realize a new figurative system, new staging techniques, and principles for working on acting skills within the framework of contemporary choreography. It is important to comprehend what laws of ballet theater acting can be applied in contemporary dance theater and in what context. There is also a need to rethink new potential ways of developing contemporary dance.

Thirdly, there is a growing general trend toward the synthesis of different types of art within one performance. Ballet, opera, musical, operetta, pop art, circus, show performances, and others require qualified professional choreographers who

can create expressive physical and choreographic images and characters and set acting tasks for performers.

The manual should have a practical orientation. Without practical experience, it is impossible to exist correctly and truthfully within a given choreographic image or role. Through practice, the dancer comprehends the essence of the techniques and principles of acting. The manual should present the theoretical aspect of the discipline "Theory and Practice of Acting". In addition, questions and practical tasks should be proposed that will help to further reveal and consolidate the material covered.

In general, such manuals are aimed at expanding the conceptual apparatus, consolidating and analyzing the practical activities of past masters, and developing one's understanding and view of the art of dance, in particular, acting in choreography.

Acting in choreography programs at different universities may have its differences and specifics. In some institutions, acting is studied in the senior year. The first year is often devoted to getting to know the main categories of dramatic art, which include:

- stage attention,
- memory,
- stage faith and freedom,
- attitude to events and evaluation of facts,
- attitude towards the partner,
- attitude to the proposed circumstances and characters.

Special attention is paid to working with musical material. The first year of study is devoted to mastering dynamic logical action and plastic expressiveness in the proposed circumstances of a musical etude.

In the second year, the main work is on physical expression and musicality. The everyday existence is replaced by a plastique and choreographic one. At this stage, it is important not to lose the naturalness and freedom of living the role internally. Students learn to work on a role using examples and models of world

ballet theater. Under the guidance of the teacher, they try to find themselves within the framework of a given pattern, or role, find their attitude to the image, and circumstances, and find justification for the actions and deeds of their character. In the second semester of the second year, each student is assigned a repertoire for the final exam. In the third year of graduation, students demonstrate their acting skills, plastic expressiveness, and musicality using examples of world ballet theater and contemporary dance.

Some time is also devoted to working on plastic expressiveness and musicality and studying heritage. An important section is the staging of students' own musical and dance sketches. First, using examples and samples of the past presented and analyzed by the teacher, students learn to work with musical drama, the dramatic structure of the development of action, learn to identify conflict, the main event, idea, and theme, build a through action, etc. Then, after working on and discussing the preliminary plan of the future etude with the educator, they begin the staging process and bring the etude to the stage level of performance, which is shown at the exam. One of the key qualities of any creative person is imaginative thinking. This term means being able to see images in one's mind, as well as being able to turn them into reality, i.e. imagining what they can be and believing in it. In general, "vision" is the ability of a person to live inside himself or herself certain images, pictures of the world, and life events that have occurred and are remembered. Thanks to his or her emotional memory, a person can accumulate life experiences and return to them as needed. The ability to think associatively, the ability to stick to one's associations, is an important property of any creative personality. Associativity occurs when a single impulse, music, a natural phenomenon, an object, or an event in life, affects a person and a whole chain of associations arises in him or her based on his or her personal experience and memory.

Working in pairs with a partner is a special section of acting training. In sketch work, it is important to see, perceive, and feel your partner. The main goal of this work is to trust your partner and to be able to open up to another person.

Exercises such as "mirror" and "shadow" are aimed at improvised interaction between partners. An important aspect is the energy of the partners. In this case, the task of the partners is not only to react at the level of energy, which usually shows little outwardly but also to react bodily, using body plasticity and choreography. The exercises "rays", "puppeteer", and "sculptor" are used for training, the main task of which is to follow, listen and understand the partner without taking independent initiative.

Working with the subject is also important. One of the professional qualities of an actor is the ability to be a child. The concept of play is key in the world of a child. An actor needs to maintain an open mind and immersion in the world of play, fantasy, and imagination in their adult years. For a creative person in general, it is necessary to maintain openness and impartiality in their worldview. This applies to any branch of art (fine arts, musical theater, drama), as well as any type of creative activity, both performing and staged. There are certain exercises to train a return to childhood direct perception, such as dance-play with an object. The focus is on the surface, shape, material, temperature, texture, and weight of any chosen object. The point is to be in the moment and follow true inner desires and impulses.

The exercise starts with everyday existence and then moves on to dancing with the object to music. It is essential to remember that the object is a partner, and everything that happens depends on the interaction of both partners, the person, and the object. The exercise contains elements of dance improvisation.

Special attention is paid to the concept of "physical expressiveness". Body plasticity is the ability to distribute muscle energy appropriately across the muscles, providing an exact measure for each movement and position of the body in space. This is the basic law of plasticity, which is necessary for the development of theatrical skills.

At the initial stage, they work on expressive static and then move on to dynamics. In the "sculpture" exercise, the teacher or students come up with a theme on which a sculpture will be created later - that is, a static expressive pose. At the beginning of the work, the exercise is performed without music, using life stories

that are more familiar to students, such as "Fishing", "Ice Rink", "Outdoor Picnic", and "New Year".

Later, as the material is mastered, one should use appropriate music and offer more emotionally charged topics, such as "Jealousy," "Loss of a loved one," "Expectation," etc.

Body expression is essential, reflecting the internal state and feelings of the dancer. The dancer must convey his or her thoughts and ideas as accurately as possible through every part of the physical body. In this process, all muscles should be involved, as they are a means of expressing internal emotional processes.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, ballet theater has always valued and demanded a "dancing actor". This was the name given to a ballet dancer who, besides perfect dance technique, could show his plastic expressiveness and acting skills. And thus he raised the art of choreography to artistic and aesthetic heights. And, of course, the expressive gesture plays an important role here. The same gesture can have many variants. It's all in the details: sometimes a small, seemingly unimportant nuance can change the non-recognizability of the image itself and the subtext put in by the author. The teacher must convey to the students that each of their works – a sketch, a role, a performance, etc. – is a manifestation of their personality and inner self. Therefore, the attitude to such work should be conscious and responsible.

To develop the primary skills of staging and using the techniques of drama, we use sketches of organic silence. In the art of choreography, there are no words; instead, there is choreographic language and imagery. The nature of choreography is to express not the event itself, but rather the reaction to it, that is, not "the what" but "the how."

Students need to come up with circumstances in which personal qualities, character, emotional state, and the inner world will be revealed. Through sketches, situations and conflicts are constructed, external and internal decisions are made, music is selected together with the concertmaster, and then the sketch is improved to the stage level.

The concept of dance improvisation occupies a prominent place in contemporary acting. It is the process of conveying plastic expressions of inner content in poses. For an actor to express his or her innermost thoughts, they must learn to find a unique form that fully reflects their idea. It is essential that the main goal of modern dance improvisation is not to repeat patterned combinations but to find your language and the ability to speak it. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to learn plastic stamps, develop muscle experience, improve body skills, and learn to switch to a new "coordinate system".

Some exercises are aimed at developing such skills: the teacher plays music (or a concertmaster plays), and students listen and then say what images they have while listening. The second time they improvise to this music in space.

6. Conclusion

We believe that acting cannot be taught. One can give an aspiring actor a base, a foundation, and knowledge. At the initial stage of acting training, the teacher needs to identify natural acting skills, develop them and teach the student how and when to use them. For this purpose, there is a methodology for teaching this subject. However, the very process of truthfully living the moments of one's character's life, the process of immersion in the character, is a quality of talent, a natural gift. An actor's giftedness should be understood as innate properties (the actor's personality, special individual character traits, ability to think imaginatively, stage charm, external data) and qualities necessary for successful mastery of the profession (attention, observation, speed, dexterity, flexibility, reaction, coordination, rhythmicity, sculpture, endurance). It is extremely important that the actor can embody all of these qualities in his psychophysical apparatus when creating an artistic image.

Thus, the professional qualities of an actor are a combination of many natural data and developed skills, i.e., acquired in the course of work. In the case of a ballet dancer, this also includes specific physical attributes, without which it is impossible

to become a professional dancer. This also includes a school of classical dance and the entire range of special disciplines studied at a ballet school. It also requires natural talents such as musicality, plasticity, stage presence, body proportions, energy, and good health. The profession of an artist is very complex and specific, so you need to study for eight years to get a secondary specialized education. A lot must coincide in adult professional life for a young artist to find himself, his place, his repertoire, and be happy in his profession. And the highest bar for a ballet dancer, in our opinion, is to become an actor-dancer whose work combines high professional skill and multifaceted dramatic talent.

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