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Ekphrasis of a Musical Work in Conrad Drzewiecki's Choreographies

Summary

The most outstanding twentieth-century Polish choreographer, Conrad Drzewiecki left an abundant choreographic legacy, but his artistic output has never been studied or described.

The subject of the present dissertation is choreographies of non-ballet, mainly contemporary music, realized by Conrad Drzewiecki in the Polish Dance Theatre in the years 1973–1987. The present author has based his research on choreographies registered on film, television tape and videotape (working materials) as well as scores of the choreographed compositions.

Drzewiecki's choreographies seem to feature a certain relation between musical structures and movement created by the choreographer. The present author has recognized that the end of the 20th century brought the humanities a tool to study the relation between music and dance. The dissertation advances a thesis that Drzewiecki's choreographies realized in the Polish Dance Theatre are choreographic ekphrases of musical, literary and artistic works. The present author has concentrated on associating musical structures with choreographic structures. He has adapted the concept of *musical ekphrasis* formulated by Siglind Bruhn in the late 1990s to his research needs.

Chapter 1 titled "The Concept of Choreographic Ekphrasis" presents how ekphrasis functions in studies of literature, arts and film, where it is most commonly applied. It also defines Siglind Bruhn's concept of *musical ekphrasis*

as well as the music-dance relation by indicating intertextuality of the phenomenon.

Chapter 2 titled “Ballet and Dance in the Genre Aspect” describes the history of two genres: ballet and *dance theatre* in a historical, genological and geographical perspective. It also specifies problems related to the definition of the *dance theatre* genre. The conclusion outlines Drzewiecki’s understanding of these two concepts on the basis of his choreographies and statements registered on film.

Chapter 3 titled “Conrad Drzewiecki’s Choreographies Realized in the Polish Dance Theatre in the Years 1973–1987” reviews Drzewiecki’s choreographies in a chronological order and lists rare attempts to typologize his works. It also contains the present author’s own typology.

Chapter 4 titled “Categories of Choreographic Ekphrasis in Conrad Drzewiecki’s Output” verifies the assumed thesis that Drzewiecki’s choreographies realized in a certain time perspective constitute ekphrases of musical works. It demonstrates that the first signal of ekphrasis is the fact that the choreographer refers to the title of the composition in the title of his choreography. It also classifies selected choreographies to relevant categories according to Syglind Bruhn’s classification of ekphrasis.

Association, the first category of ekphrasis, is analysed in Béla Bartók’s *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* and *Divertimento*, and Franz Schubert’s *Quintet in C Major*. As the ballets were not filmed, the present author has resorted to the then press reviews.

Three choreographies: Mieczysław Karłowicz’s *Odwieczne Pieśni*, Tomaso Albinoni’s *Adagio in G Minor for Strings and Organ* and Wojciech Kilar’s *Krzesany* are described as examples of a musical work transposition, i. e. translating musical structures into choreographic structures. It is demonstrated that the choreographer translates motifs, rhythms, vertical and horizontal structures into the language of choreography.

Most choreographies tend to fall into the category of interpretation: the choreographer usually interprets only certain elements of a musical work, e. g. character of a dance (Maurice Ravel's *Pavane for a Dead Princess*), dramaturgy and expression of a musical work (Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's *Ad Matrem Psalm*), tone colour and register (Henryk Wieniawski's *Legenda*), macroform and texture (Eugeniusz Knapik's *Wodnica*), dynamics (Piotr Perkowski's *Dziwożony*), musical genre (Józef Skrzek's *Ostatnia niedziela*). Interpretation mainly concerns the emotional and symbolic aspects of a musical work.

An example of the other two categories of ekphrasis: supplementation of a musical work and game (play) is Stanisław Moniuszko's *Przypowieść sarmacka do Uwertury "Bajka"*.

The performed analyses have allowed the present author to conclude that the assumed thesis of Drzewiecki's choreographies being ekphrases of musical works or their elements is true.

Ekphrasis is likely to become a universal tool to study relations between music and dance, choreography and literature as well as choreography and visual arts.