

# Българско музикознание

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**БЪЛГАРСКА АКАДЕМИЯ НА НАУКИТЕ**  
**Институт за изкуствознание**

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## **OPERA AT THE FOOT OF THE HILLS**

**Plovdiv's Opera – at the Age of Fifty**

*Rosalia Bix*

(Summary)

Jubilee sign: something from the contemporary concept for synthesis in the arts on the musical stage. Such was the Plovdiv Opera at the time of the Change. "The Magic Flute" in the context of the 70s gave another dimension to the achievements: it calmed down the passion to be always new, to be able to do everything, to know everything. The conductor was Dobrin Petkov.

The Antique Theatre should not be turned into a universal stage for popular opera masterpieces. It is a sin. Let us hear the message of the Hills: Be different.

## **BALLET EDUCATION IN BULGARIA BETWEEN THE ARTIST'S INTUITION AND THE ESTABLISHED PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM**

*Anelia Yaneva*

(Summary)

The paper traces the way of the professional ballet education in this country. At first in the private ballet schools of Pesho Radoev, Anastas Petrov, Zhivko Biserov, Feo Mustakova the experience of each instructor (at the same time practicing ballet actor) was decisive for the choice of the teaching system. Later after the official opening of the State Ballet School in 1951, the Russian Pedagogical System of Agripina Vaganova was adopted. In 1956 a second department was opened and the school was re-named State Choreographic School with two departments "Classical Dances" and "Bulgarian Dances". At first the pedagogues in the newly opened school were actors with long experience without special pedagogical education. The relations with similar dance schools in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Budapest, Bucharest, Dresden developed in several stages – specialization of pedagogues and graduates, which later became education in Ballet Stage Production and Ballet Pedagogy – mainly in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. While in Bulgaria there is no specialized higher education in Ballet Pedagogy and Ballet Stage Production, the State Choreographic School is the only place in the country, which not only educates ballet performers, but also creates aesthetics and models of behaviour, sets the trends in the development of our future ballet pedagogues, choreographers, ballet experts. In the 90s higher education in Ballet Pedagogy and Ballet Stage Production started in this country and gradually our contacts with Russia became less intensive. Nowadays all teachers have higher pedagogical education received

intensive. Nowadays all teachers have higher pedagogical education received in music academies in Plovdiv and Sofia or in the academies in Russia. The dance education in this country follows its own ways of development, whereas with the years the need for opening a third department "Modern Dance" that will prepare performers for musicals and modern dance formations is being increasingly felt.

**ASSEN RUSKOV – EMBLEM OF THE COMIC  
ON OUR OPERETTA STAGE**  
**(A Sketch to the Creative Profile of the Actor)**  
*Rumyana Karakostova*  
(Summary)

Assen Ruskov is one of those amazingly large-scale, unique with their inherent talent and achieved professional perfection phenomena in Bulgarian Theatre (a legend even in his lifetime), for which it is getting increasingly difficult to find a key to interpreting and rationalizing the created by and inherited from him on the stage. A genre antipode to our other operetta legend – the lyricist and soubrette Mimi Balkanska, in the period between the two world wars, Ruskov was (not by chance) our most popular comedy actor, universally acknowledged by the public and the critique as "the king of laughter", "the master of the grotesque and stage makeup". He was called "the great Ruskov" and "the Krustio Sarafov of the operetta stage", "an actor with a hundred faces", "a great creator of types" and "a comedian with Chaplin-like constructive imagination" – due to the great number of unforgettable types in operettas, musical comedies, farces, vaudevilles and even dramas, re-created by him on the stages of almost all private operetta theatre in the capital (later on the stage of the National Operetta and the State Musical Theatre). His name has been and still is synonym of spontaneous comedy magic, bubbling over from his organic actor's behaviour – specific articulating, intoning, gesturing, miming, plastic movements; of bursting laughter as a result of his witty parodies and topical improvisations; of his inimitable face mask and perfect costume, in which each detail is pedantically fixed – in support of the entire dazzling and unique scenic image, created by Ruskov. His actor's technique is universal and all-inclusive, open to any hybrid forms of the comic. Therefore the comedy special line of the actor is so large scale: Ruskov was a bouffe opera (parody) comedian, and a cascade (eccentric) comedian, and a character (type)

comedian, and a tragic comedian. In his 250 comic characters – created during his almost 40-year-long ascending stage career, he combined with intelligence and masterly ease the paradoxical with the realistic, the caricature with the grotesque, the parody with the cascade. But in the contemporary research approach to the artistic genius of Assen Ruskov, it is obligatory to mention some newly found historical documents from his personal archive as well as some more precise criteria and assessments of the professional theatre critique of the time, which throw a new and different light upon the familiar facts of his artistic and personal biography.

## **THE TOWN CHORAL CULTURE UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF THE 1940s AS A PREREQUISITE FOR THE RISE OF MUSICAL THEATRES IN BULGARIA. TRENDS**

*Miglena Tsenova*

(Summary)

In the process of studying the way along which the musical stage art entered Bulgaria, the town choral tradition and the military brass bands came to mind first.

The development of the town choral culture before the establishment of the musical theatres in Bulgaria can be considered in three periods:

- from the 1840s to the end of the 1890s
- from the 1890s to the end of World War One
- to the end of World War Two.

The studies of the stage music in the activities of a great number of choral groups show some more general tendencies. The development of the Choral-stage practice in the country proceeded from the performance of concert fragments to the performance of entire works in a stage variant. Increasingly the performed fragments and whole works prepared the choir singers and made them fit for participation in musical theatres, reaching a climax in the period between the two world wars. The inclusion of whole musical-stage titles in the repertory of the secular and church choirs as well as the establishment of a number of short-term theatrical institutions were so typical for the cultural and historical development of the separate towns that they show the urgent spiritual needs of Bulgarians to enjoy this art on the one hand, and to "make" it or perform it themselves on the other hand. The spiritual necessity to gather in communities such as singing and musical societies and choirs partly accounts for the presence of such a great number of choirs on the comparatively small territory of Bulgaria. The same spiritual necessity found its expression in the "community" of the opera spectacle.

**„WENN ICH ES HÄTTE SAGEN KÖNNEN, HÄTTE ICH  
ES NICHT GETANZT.“  
ÜBER DIE NONVERBALE KOMMUNIKATION,  
DIE NATIONALE KULTUR UND DAS TANZTHEATER VON  
VUZKRESIA VIHAROVA**

*Gergana Panova*  
(Zusammenfassung)

Die Autorin kommentiert das avantgardistische Theater einer bulgarischen Regisseurin, die den Ideen der Architektur und darüber hinaus der deutschen Ausdruckstanztheorie vom Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts folgt. Das empirische Beispiel eines nicht gelungenen bulgarisch-australischen Projekts dient ihr als Diskussionsbasis über Kultur, Identität und Kommunikation. Bei der Thematisierung der Kultur sieht die Autorin das Nationale als eine der Beschreibungen im kulturellen Komplex und verbindet freie und aufgezwungene Möglichkeiten der Wahl einer Ethnizität mit Varianten des Verstehens des Fremden. Im Bereich der Kommunikation unterscheidet sie zwischen Verstehen und Verständigen, Ausdruck und Darstellung und offenbart die Vorteile des Körperlichen für die Toleranz und die Authentizität. Dabei setzt sich die Autorin mit der Nonverbalität aus der Perspektive der Identitätstheorien, des dialogischen Prinzips und der Lehre des Zeichens und der drei phänomenologischen Kategorien von Charles Sanders Peirce auseinander. Am Ende der Ausführungen wird aus der Position eines Zuschauers der internationale Aspekt und der Wunsch geäußert, eine Kombination zwischen den Körperstrategien und – weisheiten der traditionellen Gesellschaft und der Philosophie der zeitgenössischen „Gesellschaft der Individuen“ durch das angesprochene Theater zu erwerben. Hierdurch vergibt man die Opferung der Schönheit im Theater für die Provokation zur Schaffung neuer Bedeutungen.

**DANCE-THEATRE, DANCING THEATRE AND DRAM-BALLET  
(Observations and Comparisons Between the Dance-Attacks  
of "Arabesque" and the Dancing Theatre of Neshka Robeva)**

*Anelia Yaneva*  
(Summary)

Analyzing "the Dance Attacks" of the ballet "Arabesque" and the dance spectacles of Neshka Robeva the article follows the differences in the interaction of dance, speech, music and video-projections in the Bulgarian dancing theatre in the past few years.

In the dram-ballet speech and music completely overlap as means of expression. In the dancing theatre speech (frequently this is the vocal) and movement develop in parallel information streams. In the dance-theatre the dance and speech have different, often polar information direction – it is a conversation in different languages or different messages between speech and the body expression.

In the dram-ballet and the dancing theatre there is a definite plot. In the dance-theatre there are separate scenes, which do not build up a plot.

The dance-theatre and the dancing theatre are oriented towards the expressionism of the modern dance, whereas the dram-ballet develops on the basis of the classical dance. In the three of them, however, the gesture and the pantomime are of decisive significance.

The dance-theatre and the dancing theatre lie in the opposition negative-positive. The dance-theatre has become a way to express or more exactly to shout out the amassed negative energy – loneliness, despair, misunderstanding. At the same time in the dancing theatre the Bulgarian folk dance and the collective dance creation accumulate positive energy and convey it to the public. Up to now the dance-theatre in Bulgaria has no convincing realization on Bulgarian themes, whereas in different periods of development of ballet art the dancing theatre and the dram-ballet performed stage works after Bulgarian myths and legends. This makes the dance-theatre imposed upon the Bulgarian way and view of life to some extent, although some attempts are being made to turn it into something Bulgarian – mostly in the productions of Vazkresia Viharova and Antonia Dokeva.

## **IF THERE IS AN ACHIEVEMENT AND THE PRICE IS TOO HIGE**

**(An Interview with Neshka Robeva)**

*Rumyana Karakostova*

(Summary)

Neshka Robeva unexpectedly appeared as a producer on the stage of Bulgarian show business (as far as it really re-charges itself with new forms and realizes itself in the contemporary slippery delineations of our national pop culture) and even with her first non-standard spectacle "Two Worlds" she caused a peculiar shock in the already existing ideas of popular stage dancing art and in the value system of specialists and public. "Two Worlds" is unique both as an ideological conception and as a genre formula of contemporary national dancing theatre. Having a plot connected with ancient mythological legends and pagan cult beliefs, the spectacle throws a bridge to the present - with the topical problems of the inevitable devaluation of the national spiritual values and of the ethnic self-consciousness in the epoch of total globalization. The original stage combination of stylized dances on folklore (all-Balkan) song-instrumental basis with the theatrical grace of calisthenics is a surprising Bulgarian contribution to the aesthetics of modern European dancing theatre.

*Rumyana Karakostova has talked to Neshka Robeva*



## **THE DANCE IN THE MUSICAL. ORIGINAL CHOREOGRAPHIC DECISIONS AND THEIR VERSIONS ON THE BULGARIAN STAGE**

**(From the Staging Diary)**

*Zhelka Tabakova*

(Summary)

The article examines in brief the historical forms that have prepared the birth of the musical and the place of the dance in them. The connections between the dance, music and the libretto are well known as well as the way in which the different dance stylistics is used in the musical. The dances in the musicals: "My Fair Lady", "Hello Dolly", "A Fiddler of the Roof", "Joseph and his Fantastic Gaily-Coloured Garment" and "Jesus Christ Superstar" are described in detail because this gives the possibility for a more complete assessment to what extent the musical is connected with the remaining components. The analyzed titles have been staged in this country and throw light on the fact how much the musical influences our attitude to the genre and whether the Bulgarian musical theatre has changed in consequence of that.

In our country in musical productions the ballet and the choir still have different functions – the first dance, and the latter only sing. The great discovery of the genre involves the merging of the two groups (ballet and choir) and eliminating the differentiation between them. Our music theatres and the educational institutes preparing specialists for them, however, with surprising persistence refuse to accept this fact and do not undertake radical innovations for the proper education of the actors.

## **APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONLIZING THE BALLET ART IN PLOVDIV**

**(A Documental Chronicle from the National Revival to the End  
of the Second World War)**

*Penka Taneva-Yaneva*

(Summary)

The article traces separate stages in the popularization of the art of dancing in Plovdiv.

The first stage is considerably longer as it presupposes a slow and gradual adoption of the European dances and their inclusion in various forms of social and home entertainments. It lasted from the start of the National Revival to the mid-twenties of the XX c.

The second stage comprises the period from the beginning of the XX century to the middle of the 20s when dances turned from a way of entertainment at dancing parties, school celebrations and balls into a stage art – included in children's operetta and opera performances. The dance found its place in the newly established opera group – of Alexander Kraev, of Angel Bukoreshtliev and other stage events.

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The third stage started in the 20s and continued until the end of World War Two. Guest-performances of famous Bulgarian and foreign actors were of decisive importance for increasing the interest in ballet art. But although the Plovdiv public first got acquainted with the opera art through the guest performances of foreign opera groups, in the case of ballet it was just the opposite – the concerts of Bulgarian artists (educated mainly in Vienna and Berlin) imposed the idea of professional ballet art in Plovdiv and after that the Russian guest performers.

Thus the public opinion and interest in ballet art in Plovdiv was formed, which provoked the organizing at the newly opened Plovdiv Opera of a ballet group consisting of 18 people with Anna Vorobiova as a choreographer and Anastasia Voinikova as a pedagogue.

## VOCAL PEDAGOGY IN VARNA

*Nelly Bozhova*

(Summary)

The paper about the vocal pedagogues having worked in Varna traces the *emergence and development of the subject 'singing' from the Liberation until today*. The musicians, who have contributed to this development, are presented personally; the attempts to found a musical school in Varna where the subject 'singing' is to have professional understanding and preparation; the vocal pedagogues who worked in the State Music School established in 1944 later named after Dobri Hristov; the pedagogues from the operetta set up in 1947 and the opera singers working privately as vocal pedagogues are all mentioned. All who depending on their possibilities contributed to this development in the years they worked.

A great number of them are already deceased and the traces of their deeds are disappearing. Varna National Opera and the Music School (now – Secondary School of Arts) have no archives that could be used as a point of reference in respect to facts – names, dates, events. Therefore the studies are based on private archives preserved by their inheritors, on personal conversations with the remaining living pedagogues.

## WIEVIEL “ÖKONOMIE” VERTRÄGT DAS MUSIKTHEATER?

*Rumen Neykov*

(Zusammenfassung)

Nach dem Kongress, gewidmet dem Genre Operette in der Volksoper, und dem über die Kinderoper in der Staatsoper sucht die Europäische Musiktheater-Akademie /EMA/ mit Sitz in Wien weiter nach Themen, die mit der Gegenwart und der Zukunft der Oper, der Operette und dem Musical verbunden sind. Eine dreitägige Konferenz im altertümlichen Schloss des Städtchens Thurnau in der Nähe von Bayreuth und im Prinzregententheater in München, versammelte Persönlichkeiten von London bis nach Ekarinenburg, die ihr Leben mit der Musik und dem Theater verbunden haben. DER AUGENBLICK IST ECHT DRAMATISCH...