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THE BALLET RUSSE 1909-1914

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG,
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DRAMATIC ART.

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PAGES 1-111

DEDICATED TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER

VICTOR AND PAULINE ROUMANOFF

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation on the work of the scenographers for the Ballet Russe traces the development and innovative designs of the Russian artists working with Diaghilev during the 1909 to 1914 Paris Seasons.

The work will seek to expand upon the following aspects in regard to the development of the Ballet Russe.

The role of the early Russian Art Movements,[1] as well as Mir Iskusstva[2] in the formation of the Ballet Russe's scenographic concepts.

An historical-analytical study of the development of scenographic principles from the first opera presented by Diaghilev in Paris during 1908[3] to the final ballet presentations of 1914.[4]

Comparison will be made between the 'painterly'[5] and the 'plastic'[6] schools of stage designers, showing how their combined ideals led to a renaissance of stage design by 1914.

Owing to the very nature of the presented works, especially those that formed a unified-aesthetic decorative-expressive Gesamtkunstwerk, symbolic statement, four separate disciplines have been taken into consideration:

Choreography, Music, The Fine Arts, Scenography.

In order to elucidate this interdisciplinary format a Glossary is included at the end of the work expanding on areas that have not been discussed within the text.

The innovative changes in the area of scenography are the only aspects handled in depth in this dissertation. The role of the musical compositions and their applicability to the visual stage picture format as part of the formation of the complete unified presentation have not been discussed

in detail. Some of the musical scores were more innovative than the presented scenography as seen in the ballet Le Sacre du Printemps (1913). However, when existing musical scores were adapted for specific works, as seen in the ballets Schéhérazade (1910), Carnaval (1910), L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912) and Le Coq d'Or (1914), a certain unity could be found in that the musical themes and those presented in the choreographic and scenographic context were of a similar ambience and mood.

On reading the available material on the de[illegible]rs for the Ballet Russe there were many contradictions. Whilst the Benois, who were always in competition with one another, often wrongly assumed responsibility in their letters and manuscripts for various designs. An attempt has been made to verify and correct such misrepresentations.

The authorities on the areas covered in this dissertation, Grigg, C., Clarke, M., Rivers, T. T., Gray, C., and Benois, A. (amongst many others), claim that the designers for the Ballet Russe were not influenced by the works of contemporary European artistic movements.[1] This is gross misconception and this work sets out to delineate the influences of European artistic genres and styles on the design works of the Russian artists. The early works of these artists reflect a knowledge of the Japonaisil, Art Nouveau, the Nabis, the Impressionists and the Fauves. These aspects have been discussed in the text. This is especially pertinent as all the artists working during the 1909-1914 Ballet Russe seasons were involved with the publication Mir Iskusstva. This magazine published articles on contemporary Russian and avant-garde European trends in the field of Fine Arts. Therefore, European influence was exerted on the Russian artists' work and this is discernible in their scenography for the Ballet Russe.

Furthermore, incorrect information often occurs regarding illustrative material. For instance, Beaumont includes

sketch illustrations for Le Sacre du Printemps, Prince Igor, Les Papillons and The Firebird, which were, in fact, executed at a later date. Therefore their validity and accuracy is doubtful, and have either been invalidated in the context of this work or have been included with appropriate comment as to their authenticity.[1] In many illustrated works the dating of a particular design varies. The author has attempted to justify the inclusion of such designs in their correct historical context.[2] These conclusions are arrived at from a comparison of the works and their stylistic similarity with other designs executed during the same period.

Most of the monochrome plates in the Ballet Russe and theatre design texts tend to be over-indulgent in prose style as well as deficient in information. Therefore, an attempt has been made to use only the relevant quotations and to expose the actual connotations of these documents. Because of translations there is a variety of spellings of the different Russian 'proper' names due to the use of the Cyrillic alphabet. Therefore, a consistent way of spelling these names has been chosen as derived from the most common usage in the English language.

Finally, regarding the later ballets presented by the Ballet Russe, there is very little pictorial evidence remaining. When this occurs it has been noted in text and subsequent evaluations have been modified according to the information (both pictorial and critical) which remains.

The scenographers for the Ballet Russe did reform the concept of scenic design, not only for ballet presentations but in all areas of scenography. This aspect has more often than not been overlooked by writers on the subject. The general concensus of opinion is that the designs were merely wonderful decorations. This

dissertation sets out to disprove this attitude, illustrating that these designers formulated a viable aesthetic for scenography that was not just decorative, but a decorative-expressive manifestation which relied on the theories of symbolic and metaphoric representations. These representations were executed in a painted technique which altered the audience's perceptions of the stage picture format, underpinning its deliberate artificiality of environment, thus promoting audience involvement; an involvement advocated by all major reformers of scenographic concepts. In this movement their general aims and reformation were allied to those of the 'plastic' school of designers, namely, Adolphe Appia and Edward Gordon Craig. Both the 'painterly' school, epitomised by those artists working for the Ballet Russe, and the 'plastic' school were involved with innovative work during the same period (approximately 1900-1914). Therefore, where possible, comparisons in development have been made between the 'painterly' and the 'plastic' schools which led to a "renaissance in the stage design picture format by 1914".[2]

ABSTRACT : FOOTNOTES

p.xxiv : 1 Those between 1870-1906.

2 The group formed by artists, writers and musicians in Russia during 1895-1905 to liberate the Arts, as well as to introduce contemporary ideas and ideals to the Russian public.

3 " Opera Boris Godunov.

4 " Ballet Le Lac d'Or.

5 The scenographers who relied on the painted picture format, framed by the proscenium arch.

6 The scenographers Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia who believed that the stage should be a sculptured unit, thus relating the actor to his environment.

p.xxv : 1 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 64.
Gray, C. The Russian Experiment in Art, pages 40-41:

Zola's book L'Oeuvre, published in Russian 1918, was, according to Benois, "the first source of impressionist ideas in Russia".

Clarke, M. and Crisp, C. Design for Ballet, page 115:
Diaghilev remained resolutely nationalist in his taste for Stage Design. ... he might employ Jean Cocteau as an artistic antenna to keep him in touch with the latest events of the Parisian avant-garde; however, Diaghilev made no attempt to use painters or their ideas of the Post-Impressionist and Fauve Schools' formula.

Rice, T. T. A Concise History of Russian Art, page 347.
"... artists need exciting colours, and because of this they are often described as Impressionists, or being influenced by these artists, yet they were not at all interested in the theories of the French painters ..."

p.xxvi : 1 Beaumont, C. Five Centuries of Ballet Design :
page 125 - Le Sacre du Printemps.
page 111 - The Firebird.
page 109 - Les Papillons.
page 106 - Prince Igor.

p.xxvii, 1 In text the terms plastic and painterly will be used as describing these scenographic styles and, therefore, inverted commas will not be used.

2 Lieven, P. Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 23.

INTRODUCTION

The Ballet Russe first appeared in Paris in 1909[1] and sustained "a popular, social, and theatrical success ever since".[2] From its formation it had an impact on the theatrical and decorative arts.[3] Its position as a formative influence on public taste[4] in the arts remained virtually unchallenged until 1928 when the Swedish impressario Rolf de Maré founded the Ballet Suédois.[5]

The activities of Russian artists as stage designers[6] during the immediate pre-war years have not, as yet, received as full attention as their western European colleagues at work during the post-war period, but even in the available literature, a lively theatrical interest is revealed. Thus, further investigation of the contributions made by the scenographers for the Ballet Russe seasons of 1909 to 1914 is warranted.

The post-First World War designs for the Ballet Russe have been extensively examined in the literature, and the contributions of major figures such as Picasso, Miró and Braque assessed - their designs generally being considered to be more exciting in concept than those produced before 1914.

It is the contention here that although the contribution of artists, such as Picasso and Braque, are considerable and even overshadow earlier development, the historical importance of the earlier period of designers for the Ballet Russe should not be ignored. Through an examination of their designs and aesthetic[7] motivation it can be shown that they created an innovative framework for scenographic development, and that without this framework the second phase of Ballet Russe design concepts (1915-1929) would possibly not have taken place. The thesis is that the designers for the 1909 to 1914

Ballet Russe seasons not only founded a new aesthetic for scenography, but also formulated new concepts for stage design in general.

Historians have not adequately examined the contributions of the earlier designers, and there is a tendency for the designs of the early Ballet Russe scenography to be regarded as being, at best, "merely decorative".[1] It is the intention here to show, through an historical-analytical methodology, that the designers of the Ballet Russe seasons (1909-1914) formulated the following:

1. A new concept in designing for ballet in particular, and the other theatrical genres in general,[2] as is especially evident if the designs by Bakst, Roerich and Goncharova are compared to the stage and costume designs of <u>any</u> ballet prior to 1909.[3]

2. That the Ballet Russe designs were not merely decorative, but contained expressive[4] elements in their scenographic content, contrary to the views of contemporary historians of ballet scenography.[5]

3. That the scenographic format of the ballets shows the influence of the Wagnerian principle of <u>Gesamt-kunstwerk</u> (that is, a complete unity of all aspects of the work - décor, costumes, music, props, scenario and choreography).[6] This aspect is particularly relevant and important in the discussion of the 1909-1914 seasons as no ballet production (except one designed by Bakst in 1907)[7] and few commercial opera and dramatic presentations had achieved a fully realised <u>Gesamtkunstwerk</u> ideal prior to the 1909 Ballet Russe season.[8]

4. That the designs were strongly influenced by 'symbolist' theories as applied to stage design.[9] The radical developments in art in general and scenography in particular in the early years of the twentieth century have for a long time overshadowed

their relationship to 'Symbolism'. Only recently has this relationship begun to be examined.[1] The Russian artists working for the Ballet Russe during the 1909 to 1914 period, "were all Symbolist in impulse, creating lavishly painted Symbolist décors for their ballets".[2]

That through the combination of the Gesamtkunstwerk theories, Symbolist ideals (Aucler's definition being accepted) as well as the concept of correspondences[3] and the contemporary theories of scenography as formulated by the plastic[4] school of designers; a scenography emerged which was innovative, vibrant, decorative-expressive, and theatrical.[5] It will be shown that the Ballet Russe productions (1909-1914) were amongst the first major aesthetic movements in the contemporary commercial theatre arts which subsequently influenced scenographic development.

The Ballet Russe scenographers can be termed painterly in their technical approach to designs for the stage. The term painterly here referring to any designs in which the format of the stage is structured by painted canvas surfaces. This differs from the scenography of the plastic school of designers who tended to utilize the stage format as a sculptured form and used various constructed levels and three-dimensional set pieces. Thus the term painterly (commonly used in literature on scenography) could be applied to any stage design in the history of theatre that used cut-out, painted, flown canvas drops, legs and borders.[6] The leading American stage designer, Santo Loquasto, for example, claims:

> I express some envy for the painterly tradition of stage design because it offers opportunities for more personal expression (i.e. control) ... Because the tradition of stage design was painterly for centuries there was always so much from your (the designer's) hand on stage. The translation from design to physical setting was not just an enlargement; it was very much a personal expression. In

> dance, that can still exist for an artist - such as Bakst having done Schéhérazade; Benois Petrushka, and Picasso Parade. Where the theatre can accommodate an artist working, then, of course, you go to see that person's personal expression. Designers translate, we really do.[1]

The designers for the Ballet Russe did translate their works onto the larger format of the stage, and more importantly, as Loquasto intimates, achieved this working in personal styles and expressing their individuality. Their painterly excursions in scenography were more than simply an enlargement of easel works to the dimensions of the stage. They were also striving for an integrated design format which incorporated the painted set with the costume designs in order to formulate a unified pictorial statement.

In examining the development of the painterly school of stage designers it can be ascertained that their contribution was most prominent in the field of contemporary ballet décor. This was the result of a re-examination of the very nature of ballet presentation. In ballet the stage floor area should be as uncluttered as possible, thereby leaving space for dancing. Ballet décor usually consists of back-cloths, legs and borders. These elements, together with the costume designs, were the primary areas for decoration. This decoration was, and is, usually executed through the technique of painting or, in the case of costumes, through the use of appliqued or printed motifs.[2] Designers worked within the constraints of the traditional ballet format, but created a new harmonic resolution of the components which make up a ballet production. Before 1909 ballet design was generally presented in a format that was an "inconstant ballet design stage picture".[3] The progression from inconstancy in design principles to a "functional-aesthetic unit" (discussed in Appendix One)[4] as brought about by the designers for the Ballet Russe during their 1909-1914 seasons in Paris, will be argued to be the major contribution of these designers. Their methods of achieving such a unity differ, but are comparable to those used by the plastic school of scenographers.

The synthesis of their concepts led to a 'renaissance of stage design by 1918'.[1]

This 'renaissance' of scenographic principles is important as it contained aspects of presenting a designed production in which all the elements were visually unified. Unity was the prime requirement so far as aesthetics can be applied to stage design. Without a unity of concept that involved costumes, décor and properties, the visual and emotive impact of the stage picture would be negated. Added to this the stage area had to fulfil its function whilst the performer could neither be hindered nor submerged by the décor, costumes or properties. Without exception scenography, a term which presupposes a unified concept, must and had to be primarily visual. Accepting the Aristotelian principle which states that action is the very heart of drama: not action in the crude sense of the word but in the sense that performance means responsiveness, change and movement, whose dynamic conception as ranging from a quiet, steady flow to abrupt, radical evolution. For example, in nature a tree trembles and sways; it is a dynamic organism. A setting, therefore, cannot be perceived naturalistically, because these details of nature cannot be slavishly imitated; thus, all settings contain the element of theatricality.[2]

Theatricality is an aesthetic style in its own right as are Realism, Romanticism and Absurdism which are also considered as aesthetic genres. Theatricality is, however, so integral a part of all theatre that each of these styles is usually presented in combination with the other. It is, therefore, included in this dissertation as one of the basic theatrical assumptions.

Theatricality implies exaggeration:

> ... however, it is considered an essential factor in all theatre productions, and is defined under the ideal of exaggeration or magnification under control.[3]

This can at times be overworked, and as such received negative comment or connotation. Using the word magnification would

[illegible] such reactions. The scenography must be emphasized, [illegible] as project its content. Therefore theatre is, or [illegible] larger than life if it is to succeed in stimulat- [illegible] must be interpreted and expressed in a [illegible] Thus, scenographic theatricality could [illegible]

> [illegible] conscious and deliberate intention on the part of the scenographer to recognize the uniqueness of the theatre and its imposed disciplines as an art form. (That is the "physical" theatre.)

[illegible] art form would or could embrace many variant [illegible] found both in theatre and the Fine Arts categories - [illegible] Expressionism, Constructivism and Realism. [illegible] would, however, be magnified in intention and [illegible] making an added impact on the audience. This [illegible] in an environment that encompasses not only the [illegible] message, but also projects an image [illegible] magnification of the proposed environment, as [illegible] artistic genres implied.

[illegible] of the Ballet Russe use theatricality and [illegible] which are as close as any terms can come to [illegible] the fundamental scenographic effects they wished [illegible] This meant that they avoided both total illusion- [illegible] and alienation. Instead they prompted the audience's [illegible] This was achieved mainly through their [illegible] of 'symbolist' principles in their scenographic [illegible] They avoided extremes, preferring to reinforce [illegible] the theatre's traditionally evocative and [illegible] metaphoric power with as much leeway as possible [illegible] specific mode that would seem most relevant for a [illegible] production. What remained constant was their convic- [illegible] that the setting should not overshadow the action nor [illegible] a summary illustration of it. It was as if the [illegible] should announce the scenario of the drama in one [illegible] image. This image would provide a unified [illegible] statement which included performers, costumes [illegible] properties; an image that would not overshadow the

drama but rather combine and reinforce it, thus creating the perfect Gesamtkunstwerk. The Gesamtkunstwerk idea was the prime objective of the Ballet Russe, so that the settings and costumes should evolve, co-operate and be in harmony with the choreography, scenario and music. Scenography was not totally a background nor even a container but in itself a dramatic component that became integrated with every other expressive element of the production, thus forming an expressive-decorative statement.

In the hands of the designers before 1909 many of the scenic elements were extraneous and subversive and would call attention to themselves. [1] Indeed, it sometimes happened that even the designers for the Ballet Russe, especially Benois and Bakst, were unable to achieve complete success in integrating the stage picture format. [2] However, in the majority of their productions they had the imagination and command of their medium to be able not only to add scenography to the other elements, but to fuse it with them and thus form a total artistic, dramatic and, above all, theatrical entity. This vision was very much akin to those formulated by the pioneer school of stage designers, Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966) and Adolphe Appia (1862-1928), who were working at the same time towards a unity of scenography, direction and libretto. These ideals were combined with the Ballet Russe scenographers' ideas to formulate a complete stage presentation - a stage picture which, because of its unity, functionality, and decorative-expressive elements, presented a work that could be termed the epitome of Gesamtkunstwerk. [3]

Added to this aesthetic theatrical unit, the more successful designs were always imbued with inherent emotive forces (Lee's and Buber's "empathy", Langer's "feeling" or Meyerhold's "imagination"). [4]

In the following chapters it will be shown how these diverse elements were integrated in the Ballet Russe productions of 1909 to 1914. It will also be shown how the Ballet Russe

formulated a new aesthetic in scenography, compared with the existing formulas in this field, by combining various elements such as symbolism, correspondences, the Gesamtkunstwerk theory, as well as the ethnic Russian cultures and modes of pictorial representation.[1]

The scenography of the early designers for the Ballet Russe did formulate a new aesthetic for commercial stage design. It was through the efforts of these designers that later scenographic endeavours could be brought to fruition. Without the earlier works by the Ballet Russe scenographers, the designs by Picasso, Miró, Braque and others may not have occurred.

INTRODUCTION : FOOTNOTES

p.1:1 Diaghilev had brought the opera Boris Godunov to Paris in 1908. However, this could not be equated with the Ballet Russes, which mainly presented ballet performances.

2 McQuillan, M: The Painter in Ballet, page 18.

3 Battersby, M. Phaidon Encyclopedia of Decorative Art 1890-1940, page 116.

4 As will be discussed within the body of the dissertation.

5 McQuillan, M: Op. cit., page 18.

6 Scenography is a term which has been applied to stage design. The term scenography denotes the unity of all the design elements, that is, scenery, costumes and lighting. It implies a unified design concept whereas the terms décor and stage design refer only to the design scenery, without cognizance being taken of the total effect being created.

7 The definition as used in this dissertation is formulated in Appendix One.

p.2:1 In the writings of Buckle, R. (Nijinsky and Diaghilev), McQuillan, M. (The Painter in Ballet), Clarke, C. and Crisp, M. (Design for Ballet).

2 Such as opera, plays and musicals.

3 As illustrated and discussed in Chapter One, pages 11-12.

4 Elements such as colour, shape, form and motif employed in form as expressive statement.

5 Abstract, page xxiv.

6 Discussed in detail in Chapter One, pages 12-13, 22-23, 43.

7 La Fée des Poupées. Discussed and expounded in Chapter Two, pages 30-31.

8 Discussed fully in Chapter One, pages 11-21. Appia and Craig had theoretically approached a Gesamtkunstwerk in some of their works.

9 McQuillan, M. The Painter in Ballet, page 23. Symbolism in scenography is discussed in Chapter One, pages 23-25.

p.3:1 Ibid.

2 Lucie-Smith, E. The Symbolists' Art, pages 147, 148.

3 Discussed in detail in Chapter One, pages 23-25.

4 To be defined in this Chapter, and discussed in detail in Chapter One, pages 29-31.

p.3:5 Theatricality is defined in this Chapter.

6 All terminology of a theatrical and balletic nature is contained in the glossary.

p.4:1 Aronson, Arnold. Contemporary American Designers : Santo Loquasto. Theatre Design and Technology, Fall 1981, pages 24-27.

2 As will be noted in all the discussion on ballet designs in this thesis.

3 Crisp, C. and Clarke, M. Design for Ballet, page 107.

4 Appendix One discusses and attempts to formulate a working definition for the use of "function" and "aesthetics" as applied to this dissertation.

p.5:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 23.

2 Burian, J. The Scenography of Josef Svoboda, page 8. Adapting Svoboda's primary, aesthetic argument concerning scenography as opposed to stage design or décor.

3 Wright, E. Understanding Today's Theatre, page 8. Prentice-Hall, America 1972.

p.6:1 "Imagination", "Theatre" and "Feeling" are included in the discussion of aesthetics in Appendix One.

p.7:1 Discussed fully in Chapter One.

2 Examples being- Bakst's Le Dieu Bleu and Thamar; Benois' Giselle (1910) and Le Pavillon d'Armide (1909).

3 Discussed in Chapters One, Three, Four, Five and Six.

4 See Appendix One for a discussion on these aspects as related to the use of "aesthetic" in this dissertation. It was these elements that led to A decorative expressive statement on the Ballet Russe scenographic endeavour.

p.8:1 Discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER ONE: BALLET, OPERA AND THEATRE PRODUCTION AND SCENOGRAPHY DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Prior to commencing the discussions of the Ballet Russe scenography and the stylistic qualities of ballet, opera and theatre in general before 1909, it is necessary to consider two divergent aspects to a dissertation of this nature: that of seeming too arbitrarily and artificially restricted in scope for the general problems of theatricality,[1] and that of seeming too forcibly tangential to the problem and relationship of contemporary art movements to scenography. A simplistic discussion of an aspect of the relationships between art and theatre may lead to partiality and a distorted view. A broader survey, however, may lead to diffuseness. Therefore, the major thrust of this dissertation will be the study of stage design, the development of a new mode of scenography as brought about by the designers for the Ballet Russe, and a brief consideration of the influence that contemporary European and Russian art had on the designers for the Ballet Russe.

The European ballet companies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries supplied an official structure within which an internal development took place. Certain themes were imposed by the bureaucratic managements of the theatres, certain designs were accepted or rejected, and certain designers were enlisted or passed over.

The packaging of this topic within the parameters defined by the contingency of commercial theatrical enterprises tempts the hazard of dislocation from the general theatrical aesthetic genres;[2] therefore a brief historical overview of other theatrical forms will be studied.

In scenographic history during the periods of approximately 1880 to 1910 only the Russian theatre seems to supply an

instance of unbroken continuity of interactions between scenography and theatrical presentation. This occurred in all aspects of theatre production (set painting, design, acting and script or libretto writing), between artists and the theatre, from the late 1880's into the 1920's. Ties between forceful painters and the theatre had existed in Russia since Savva Mamontov's Private Opera productions at his Abramtsevo theatre of the 1885's.[1]

The synthesis and variants of Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk contributed to the promotion of Russian theatrical enterprises combining the work of practitioners of talent from several arts. It should be stressed that the focus of this dissertation will be to illustrate how the Wagnerian concept of Gesamtkunstwerk was utilized by the designers for the Ballet Russe in formulating a functional-Aesthetic statement in scenography. This is readily documented, for example, Mamontov displayed his knowledge of Gesamtkunstwerk in a letter to his cousin, Stanislavsky, in April 1887 when he stated that:

> I would wish to present my opera productions as a unified concept - in a similar manner to which Wagner formulated his productions or his theories should also be of interest to you.[2]

Diaghilev,[3] when presenting his productions for the Ballet Russe, echoed these sentiments:

> I am not a professional impressario, my specialité is to make painters, musicians, poets and dancers work together: from this union a unified work of art will emerge.[4]

These concepts, as expressed by Diaghilev, have a direct parallel with Richard Wagner's (1813-1883) theories of Gesamtkunstwerk. Wagner's theories of Gesamtkunstwerk were formulated and stated in a series of articles in The Art-work of the Future (published in 1849) and Opera and Drama (articles I and II, 1850-1851).

The ideal was to create

> ... an artistic synthesis by embracing music, poetry, mime, architecture and 'landscape painting'. It implies the union of all the elements that compose spectacle and presumes their perfect harmony.[1]

Wagner formulated his theories of Gesamtkunstwerk as a possible solution to the type of productions presented on stages throughout Europe at that time (ca. 1849-1883). In the area of opera presentations the Gesamtkunstwerk ideal which incorporated the unifying of melody, libretto and action was partly successful. However, the entire concept did not immediately influence scenography. The cause of this was the use of stage craftsmen who were trained in the illusionist or so-called Italian theatre design traditions.

This design tradition dominated commercial and state theatrical presentations throughout Europe. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the stage designers for opera, ballet and the theatre were directed towards the reconstruction of 'appropriate scenery'[2] within this framework. A typical designer, working in European and Russian state theatres,[3] would have

> ... copied styles and filled the stage with ornamental detail. What did it matter if they suffocated the drama? He focused on the anecdote and its literal translation ... his work was not an act of creation but reproduction, and more often than not, consisted of arbitrarily arranged objects.[4]

Most state employed designers, during the nineteenth century, worked within the framework of an illusionist perspective which had, since the Renaissance, been as important to the development of theatre as it had been to painting. The ideal was to convince the spectator that the universe of the stage was 'real'. To achieve this, traditional methods of structuring space were used. These had been adapted to meet the requirements of the stage and had been progressively 'perfected'. The most prolific European designers, Amable, Chaperon and Brückner, were masters of perspective and

trompe l'oeil. Their designs, based as they were on academic traditions, were applied to enormous surfaces of canvas that were cut out and set up in the cubic stage space, as illustrated in M. Brückner's Italian design tradition gouache sketch for Wagner's 1894 production of Lohengrin (Figure 1). It shows the use of painted perspective on canvas cloths and flats, trompe l'oeil, decorative excesses and the accumulation of archaeological and pseudo-historically inspired details, as well as virtuosity in the rendering of appearances. It is an almost perfect example of all the faults and failings of late nineteenth century scenography. In this design, for example, the real volumes, such as the rostra and couch on the right, the constructed niche on the left and the performers, would underscore the falseness of the painted values on the canvas flats and drops. These elements would be

> ... painted on flat canvas drops or flats, giving the illusion of perspective depth, without creating the architectural structures in three dimensions.[1]

The presence of the performer in this production would make the monumental painted scenery look incongruous and vice versa. According to contemporary reports by directors, such as Meyerhold, these contradictions

> ... were only masked by the dim lighting but not totally concealed by even the cleverest technical manipulations.[2]

In Brückner's design for Lohengrin it is evident that there is an awareness of

> ... the importance of the proscenium arch, which framed the stage in such a way that it was seen by the spectator as a picture, an open window through which he imagined a world extending beyond the limits of the stage.[3]

Thus the central archway with its view into a further space, and the windows on the right, with their backing of a landscape, implied an extended space which, in reality, existed

on painted drops.

This design, in its presented form at least, has much in common with the paintings of Gustave Moreau (1826-98), especially in its execution of elaborate fantasies of exotic scenes. Bruckner's design, with its similarities to the works of Moreau, was a cluttered presentation, and seems to echo Degas' criticism of the excessive detail in Moreau's paintings. "He taught that the Gods wore watch chains".[1]

Given these conditions, scenic unity was impossible. Plastic harmony could not exist between the actor moving in three dimensions, and 'reality' represented on flat surfaces. Far from being an artist participating in a common undertaking, the professional set designer of that time was an artisan and manufacturer.

> It is not surprising that the majority of spectators and critics were, for the most part, satisfied with the situation which catered to their taste for history and exoticism (as Diaghilev would do, but on a more aesthetic and functional basis, which may have been one of the reasons for his phenomenal success). What the bourgeois public wanted from theatre was the pleasure of escape and they found it in the false images of reality. No room was left for the imagination. Passivity was the rule and academicism, although growing old, had not yet lost its seductive power.[2]

In productions, of which Lohengrin is an example, the proscenium arch was used as a frame for the stage picture. Later scenographers used the proscenium arch in this manner, but, as with the designs for the Ballet Russe, it would take the form of uniting a pictorial image, not as in the Bruckner design, of framing a stage presentation of an accumulation of bric-a-brac in a pseudo-historical setting.

It is necessary at this juncture to discuss the conventions of the proscenium arch. In the realist theatre tradition it was considered as an "invisible fourth wall, that is transparent for the public and opaque for the actor".[3]

In opera presentation, the proscenium arch acted as a frame for the action and setting on the stage - there was no allusion to the 'fourth wall' concept as found in realist theatre. The singers would project their characterisation and vocal presentation beyond this area. This was due to the necessity of firstly following the conductor in the orchestra pit, and secondly projecting their voices at an audience. The convention of the 'fourth wall' concept differed in ballet presentations. Both the stance and movement of ballet are geared towards the frontality of the proscenium arch stage. The proscenium arch sets the plane against which the parallel planes and diagonals of the choreographic structures. The floor serves as the working base across which the movements are made, and from which the body elevates. The floor plane is the condition of horizontality and rootedness, shared with ordinary human experience, which ballet strives to transcend in order to evoke a surmounting of the human condition into "... the freedom of swimming and soaring lightness". [1]

The artificial proscenium plane acts as a transparent screen through which these images are projected at the audience. This use of the proscenium plane is not to be confused with the 'fourth wall' of the realist theatre. The 'fourth wall' in realist theatre productions, is conceived more like a two-way mirror through which the audience can see, like a voyeur. Ballet's proscenium plane is an integral part of the makeup of the visual component of ballet, as it acts as a framing device for the action.

Ballet décor during the same period paralleled the other scenic arts. It was inconstant in its aesthetic and, sometimes, functional aspects, owing to the lack of formal unity in the set and costume designs. There were a number of reasons for this lack of unity.

As with the other scenographic arts, the inconstancy of ballet design is a consequence of the manner in which

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As with the other scenographic arts, the inconstancy of ballet design is a consequence of the manner in which

[illegible] were mounted. At times the working area for [illegible] was solely functional in that the dancers could [illegible] the provided décor. It must be [illegible] through the designers of the Ballet [illegible] costumes became functional as well as [illegible]. Before the advent of these designers, [illegible] exceptions, this did not always [illegible] engraving of Act II from Swan Lake, (Figure [illegible]) which was executed for publicity purposes when the [illegible] premiered at the Bolshoi Theatre on the 20th [illegible] 1877,[2] the lack of functionality of the setting [illegible] illustrated. In this engraving the floor space is [illegible]presented as consisting of different levels. It was [illegible]isrupted by three-dimensional rocks and foliage forms, [illegible]hich would have restricted the functionality of the set [illegible] it would have hampered the dancers' flow of movement. [illegible]nother element evident in this illustration, which would [illegible] the functionality of the setting, was the inclusion [illegible] tree to the left of the stage picture, causing rather [illegible] masking problems. Although this illustration is an [illegible] of the scene and may include a few illustrative [illegible] which might not have occurred in the actual set [illegible] would be surmised that it would generally adhere to the [illegible] design concepts.

[illegible] may possibly appear aesthetic in the engraving, [illegible] such a set would cause severe masking problems from [illegible] viewpoint of the audience (due to the tree form on [illegible] right). Presumably the ruined castle, lake, moun-[illegible] and fluttering swan would only exist as painted forms [illegible] the back-cloth and legs. These motifs in a stage format [illegible] prove to be visually static and could have detracted [illegible] the general impact of the staged concept. It must be [illegible]membered that scenography is an ephemeral art; the time [illegible] of a performance is of a short duration. Therefore, [illegible] elements within the décor - such as the painted [illegible] in a frozen moment of time - would, over this time

span, prove incongruous and distracting.[1]

Another element that led to an inconstancy of design was the scale employed in the décor. This is illustrated in the workshop scene from Coppélia (Figure 3), showing the original model for the Paris production of Act II, designed by Daran, at the Palais Garnier in 1875. The floor space of this model appears to be warped due to construction or ageing. The dancing area is functional, providing space for the activities required in this scene. It purported to represent a scenic view of a small Bavarian interior.[2] The scene, however, is represented on the scale of a castle hall. In its use of perspective, trompe l'oeil, and abundance of detail it is comparable in style to Bruckner's sketch of the Lohengrin setting (Figure 1). The scale required, which would be functional for both the choreography and dancing was in conflict with that of the scenario; this type of conflict was not unusual in ballet presentations of this period.

It was this type of design that led Prince Peter Lieven (who was a close friend and collaborator of the Ballet Russe) to state in 1936 that ballet scenery prior to 1900 was

> ... pompous in style, with little sense of colour or design. For example, the representation of an inn would cover the whole stage as if it were a hall in a palace. More attention was paid to producing the illusion of reality than the artistic purpose of the décor, and great pains were taken with perspective, the aim being to make the stage look as deep as possible. It was sumptuous, but merely functional.[3]

Décor, as can be seen in these illustrations, was at times, merely functional and illusionary. The aesthetics of the scenery were, however, nearly always submerged. This came about because of the conflicts arising between the functionality and the realism required of the settings. For example, in the second act of Coppélia, (Figure 3),

the functional aspect demanded a large floor space as a dancing area for Swanhilda, her friends, the clock-work toys, Coppelius and Franz, whereas the scenario, and usually the Act I set showing the exterior of the Act II set demand a small interior scene. This led to a further conflict between the realism of detail and its reconstruction on a totally unconvincing scale, thus leading to an aesthetic breakdown between what was purportedly a realistic décor presented on an unnaturalistic scale. The ideal of presenting an intimate, scaled-down scene was not successfully realised until Benois designed Petrushka (1911) for the Ballet Russes, enclosing the stage with a false proscenium arch, and moving the cell scenes forward, masking their tops with the front curtain.[1]

A further aspect which led to a lack of unity in scenographic concepts at the turn of the century was that there was no one person in charge of the entire design concept. Thus the aesthetic unity of the stage picture was often marred because of the fact that each of the designed presentation were relegated to different craftsmen. One craftsman might control the scenic devices, another the painting of back-cloths, a cabinet-maker would build the costumes, a property-maker the free-standing set pieces and properties. These craftsmen would seldom amalgamate their ideas, which led to a presentation that lacked a unity of concept and style.

As Clement Crisp comments on ballet setting prior to 1900:

> The settings were a debasing of the [historical] authenticity of the décor sought by earlier choreographers. Some settings were lacking in imagination and were to prove stultifying in the extreme. The tradition of representation of designs were created according to a formula in the workshops of an opera house rather than involving exceptional decorators in their own right. This was to bring ballet design to a low ebb.[2]

Stylistic unity was also shattered through the introduction of discrepancies in the use of historical source material

Eclecticism had been practised in stage design since the Bibienas combined gothic arches with classical buildings (for example Guiseppe Galli Bibiena's Aula Sepolcrale design ca. 1750). This tradition was continued, as is illustrate the combining of classical and gothic elements in the structure of the Swan Lake Act II (1877) set (Figure 2).

Furthermore, the costumes were also anachronistic. The ballerina was always dressed in the conventional short, projecting tutu. In effect the tyranny of the tutu, first worn by Taglioni in La Sylphide in 1832, defeated the efforts of designers at the Paris Opera to dress the ballerina in historical costume. It was Diaghilev who effected a change through the exotic costume designs of Léon Bakst (1866-1924).

> ... who brought to Europe a riot of oriental colour which first dazzled and then delighted audiences in London and Paris. Every department of theatre design was to be influenced by his treatment of costume.[1]

Before Diaghilev's ballets could effect a change, the costumes, especially the tutu, were generally decorated with rigaree borders. This was the formula, with one possible exception being the ballet Cinderella (1901). As Peter William states:

> The choreography was by Emil Graeb: both it and the designing appear to have been rather revolutionary in that the dresses were long and flowing, instead of the conventional tutu; this also dictated a more realistic form of movement.[2]

Generally, however, costumes would consist of the tutu with appliqued decorations which followed a set pattern, as seen in the costume worn by the prima ballerina of the Imperial Theatre, Mathilde Kschessinskaya, as she appeared in the ballet La Fille du Pharaon in 1899 (Figure 4). She was dressed in the conventional short projecting tutu which was decorated with appliqued Egyptian motifs. No other hint was given that this was a dress from Ancient Egypt. This

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tradition changed in the productions of the Ballet Russe, as noticeable in the ballet Cléopâtre (1909), where an attempt was made at authenticating a style of garment that could have belonged to Egyptian antiquity, as seen in the photograph of Ida Rubinstein in her Cléopâtre costume (Figure 5). The male costumes of the period were often designed for comfort and propriety rather than period accuracy. The typical type of costume used is illustrated in the photograph of Nicholas Legat in Raymonda (1898) showing the premier danseur noble as he appeared in conventional ballet dress with slashed doublet and hose, based on the troubadour style, (Figure 6). The scenario of this ballet is set in the medieval period. A troubadour costume is at odds with the story line, the historical context, as well as the costumes worn by lesser characters in the ballet. As Michael Fokine, Diaghilev's choreographer, recorded

> ... the tasteless and anachronistic forms were found in all ballet costuming. Everything - the costumes of the ballerina, the appeal to the audience, the continuous interruptions of the action - led me to conclude that the ballet lacked its most essential element: presentation to the spectator of an artistically created image ... When I danced a classical part I portrayed a leading dancer - outside the confines of place and time, with marcelled hair, pink cheeks and ballet tights. Sometimes in the very same role, I appear as a knight crusader (Raymonda) in historically correct costume; because there was no dancing in the scene but as soon as the time for dance approached, everything lost its meaning for I had to change into my dance costume. On the same stage appeared ladies in long dresses with trains, side by side with dancers in pink tights and short skirts looking like open umbrellas.[1]

The element of having historically accurate costumes interspersed with the accepted ballet attire for dancing roles (the short tutu and conventional men's costume) further illustrated a disunity of concept within the stage picture format. This style of ballet design was to continue until the 1909 and 1910 Ballet Russe seasons, in which such ballets as Cléopâtra and Schehérazade were presented. In

these ballets costume and set were designed as a unified concept along with the scenario and choreography. The early costumes, both male and female, were variegated in colour and were seen against large cumbersome décors. Monochrome was sometimes used in set painting due to the difficulty the stage technicians encountered with their lighting. Whilst a monochrome set provides a contrast for richly coloured costumes, the use of this formula obviously disrupts visual harmony. Although electric light had been invented and used in the theatre since 1874, "the techniques required to light a setting without affecting the colours used in the painting of the set were not fully mastered until about 1904", [1] when the technical aspects of lighting effects were scientifically utilised.

Ballet scenography, during the late 1890's and early twentieth century, can be seen to have been approaching a crisis. This situation was due to the total lack of any aesthetic unity within the provided décor and costumes. A stultifying tradition lead to the presentation of incongruous, unimaginative, and unaesthetic presentations, lacking any kind of formal interactions. This is especially relevant if the plastic arts are compared with the above mentioned designs. None of these designers seemed aware of the advances made in the plastic arts. The plastic arts had already experienced change. There could be no relationship or parallel drawn between the paintings of Manet or Monet and the reproductions of Bruckner and Doran, between what has been termed 'living art' [2] and mere formula reproductions of reality or convention found in stage design.

Richard Wagner, in reaction to the Italian realist-illusionist traditions, formulated the concept of Gesamtkunstwerk. Wagner, however, was a typical example of an artist who was incapable of fully carrying out his theoretical propositions, and he remained a prisoner of the styles of representation of his time. Therefore, when examining early sets for Wagner's operas, such as Lohengrin, (Figure 1), it can be

noted that he was hampered in his ideal by the use of décor that was designed in the existing theatrical tradition.

The most important influence of the Gesamtkunstwerk ideas was realised by the 'symbolistes' working in the theatre. In referring to the spirit of 'symbolisme' in scenography, the term must be defined in its context, as well as according to how it will be applied to the area of stage design.

Symbolism was a loosely organised movement or attitude common to certain painters and sculptors, from ca. 1885, in close connection with The Symbolist Movement in French Poetry.[1] It was a reaction to the aims of Impressionism, and still more from the principles of Realism as formulated by Courbet:

> Painting is an essentially concrete art and can consist only of the representation of things both real and existing ... an abstract object does not belong to the domain of painting.[2]

In direct opposition to this statement of art, the poet Jean Moréas published The Symbolist Manifesto in Le Figaro of September 18, 1886,[3] in which he stated that the essential principle of art was "to clothe the idea in sensuous form".[4] Further to this observation, the aim of symbolism was to resolve a conflict between the material and spiritual world ('abstraction' being equated with materialism and 'sensuousness' with the spiritual aspect). As the symbolist poets regarded poetic language primarily as the symbolic expression of 'inner life', so they demanded of the painters that they should give visual expression to the mystical and the occult.[5] The basis of the symbolist position was formulated by the critic, Albert Aurier (an enthusiastic member of the group of Gauguin's supporters), in an article published in the Mercure de France (March 1891). Here he affirmed that

> ... the work of art must contain the following:

> 1) ideaed (idéiste) since its sole ideal will be the expression of the idea.
> 2) symbolist, since it will express this idea in forms.
> 3) synthetic, since it will present these forms, these signs, in a mode of comprehension that is general.
> 4) subjective, since the object it depicts will never be considered just as an object but as the sign of an idea perceived by the subject.
> 5) (as a consequence) decorative, for decorative painting proper is nothing else than a manifestation of an art which is at once subjective, synthetic, symbolist and ideaed.[1]

The use of the term symbolism, as applied to scenography in this dissertation, incorporates the points stipulated by Aurier.

Furthermore the term symbolist incorporates the idea of correspondences, based on Aurier's observations:

> There are correspondences between the spiritual world and the natural world; things which exist in the natural world through the spiritual world are termed 'representations', the existence of a harmony between the idea and the form.[2]

Parameters can thus be set for a discussion of symbolism and its applicability to scenography within Aurier's frame of reference. The importance of symbolism for the designers for the Ballet Russe has been noted by Lucie-Smith.

> --- the St. Petersburg Symbolists of the World of Art circle were to make their international reputations as designers for the stage, rather than easel painters. ... Their designs were by no means conformist in pedantry, they had a primeval grandeur which suited dancing, and this grandeur was evoked by symbolist means.[3]

Symbolism, as utilized in scenography can be traced to Paul Fort's Theatre d'Art during the period 1889-91

> --- the idea of an association of symbolist arts, with ideas of the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk was used by Paul Fort.[4]

It was in this context that the painter was called upon. Paul Fort (1872-1960) was one of the first to enlist the painter/artist's help, followed shortly thereafter by

Lugné-Poë (1869-1940), Meyerhold (1874-1940), Stanislavsky (1863-1938) and Reinhardt (1873-1943).[1] Fifteen years later, Diaghilev and the Ballet Russe successfully developed and popularized the use of painted décor executed by artists, as previously practised on the stages of avant-garde theatres during the 1890's.

> Both Fort and Lugné-Poë used painters such as Serusier, Bonnard, Ibels and Denis in France in designing for the theatre.[2]

Paul Fort's theatre, however, was a short-lived endeavour and symbolist ideas proceeded through different transformations in the work of other early twentieth century Western European stage artists.[3] Fort's energies, his vision of man, his theatrical forms, and the scenic devices he employed, were directed against previous theatrical styles, especially those of realism and existing illusionist vehicles. During this period of a short-lived manifestation of symbolism on stage, it is not surprising to note that those who professed this conception were attracted to the theory of correspondences between ideas, colours and moods, and that they even thought of presenting 'pictures' on the stage accompanied by music and perfumes. For example, at the end of 1891, Paul Fort presented a synthesis of the arts in his production of Solomon's Song of Songs, orchestrating simultaneously language, music, colour and fragrance. The setting was symbolic (consisting of flats painted in various subdued colours), and for each scene lights changed colour and new perfumes were introduced into the auditorium.[4]

In 1892 Lugné-Poë took over the Theatre d'Art and renamed it the Theatre de l'Oeuvre. For his productions he commissioned artists such as Bonnard, Denis, Vuillard, Munch, Serusier, Gauguin and Toulouse-Lautrec. In the early 1890's, Lugné-Poë utilised aspects of symbolism as the basis for his set and costume designs.[5] Unfortunately few graphic designs and no photographic records remain of

these works. Possibly his most controversial production was his presentation of Alfred Jarry's Ubu Roi (1896). The play, according to Bablet, may be considered innovative and controversial for its "deliberate incoherence both destroyed and extended the frontiers of Symbolism".[1] It denied the logic inherent in the traditional spectacle,[2] and mocked realist-illusionism. The theatre poked fun at the theatre in a single set, created by Bonnard and Serusier with the assistance of Vuillard, Toulouse-Lautrec and Ranson.

> On the left was a bed, at the foot, a chamber pot; on the right, a palm tree, a view of the sea, trees and a hill; in the rear of centre, a fireplace through which the hero and other characters trooped in and out.[3]

Among the few remaining illustrations of this production, there is a woodcut which shows the hero in costume, (Figure 7), and a lithograph which was published as a poster, (Figure 8). Both illustrations suggest the type of design used in the production - non illusionist, abstracted forms, costumes in part constructed from "padded" figures, and diverse elements incorporated into the theatrical framework. Ubu Roi with its dislocated language, inconsequential plot, and evocative décor by Vuillard, Toulouse-Lautrec and Ranson, when staged may, however, have looked different from these prints, (Figures 7 and 8). The abstract form of the costume (Figure 7), created through the use of a bandaged, padded framework, illustrates Bablet's comment on the destruction and furthering of Symbolism. The performer in this costume is no longer a recognisable human being but merely exists as a sign or symbol for the human condition.

Jarry's influence became increasingly important in the twentieth century, for example, in both theatre and scenography Ubu Roi anticipated the productions of Parade, The Bride and the Groom of the Eiffel Tower, Dada theatre productions and Surrealist plays.

In Russia the symbolist tradition was continued. Stanislavsky

turned to the painter for the designs of some of his productions - especially those by the symbolist playwright, Maeterlinck, whom he felt would not be served by realism on stage.[1] During 1907-8 Stanislavsky staged works about the destiny of man and the 'unreal' world. With the aid of the painter he created a universe on stage that combined a philosophical drama about the destiny of man, with metaphysical elements inherent in the subtext of the work. This is most evident in the quality of fantasy; the fluid, misty visions characterized by Egorov's 1908 set for Maeterlinck's The Blue Bird, (Figure 9). The aim of Stanislavsky and his designer Egorov, was the creation of an unreal, enchanted and metaphysical environment that would transcend reality; the stage pictures resembled an illustration from a folk tale, leaving the spectator with the impression of the naïvete of childhood.[2] The design, painted on gauzes, with its dotted lines and solid furniture (derived from Russian folk art),[3] furthered the aims of the director and designer, because the juxtaposing of the semi-transparent painted set, with solid furniture created a mystical atmosphere which the text demanded. The set, as seen in a photograph, (Figure 9), prefigures the works of the designers of the Ballet Russe in that it is a painted setting, executed in a painterly manner, and incorporating, especially in the furniture, elements of Russian folk art motifs.[4] The technique, however, is much looser and the images are less concrete than any of the designs executed for the 1909-1914 Ballet Russe seasons. When Stanislavsky employed Meyerhold as director for his experimental workshop, The Studio Theatre (an off hoot of the Moscow Arts Theatre), in 1905, Meyerhold wanted to produce sets and costumes that were symbolic representations.[5] No works were performed although some sketches of sets survive. His ideas, in their designed format, seemed to have relied heavily on the contribution of the painter in the theatre.[6] Most of the works that were to have been staged were those by the

symbolist playwright, Maeterlinck; for example, Death of Tintagles, where the stage picture, costumes and sets were meant to resemble Russian icons. Symbolism influenced designers and directors of the period in their rejection of theatrical naturalism, realism and illusionism, (also evident in opera and ballet designs of the period), as is exemplified by naturalism utilised by Antoine and the earlier Stanislavsky productions.

Naturalism in theatre presentations refers to the complete naturalism of setting and action on stage.[1]

For Antoine the topography of the scenery directly conditioned the movements of the actors. For Stanislavsky's designer, Simov (1858-1935), naturalistic sets shed light on the internal movement of the drama as it was realised by the actors in their relationships with the objects and places on stage,[2] so much so that he used to construct scenery such as rooms through which the performer had to move to get to the stage area. These rooms were never seen by the audience. For both Antoine and Stanislavsky, however, the scenic illusion grew out of an interaction between the actor and the set. In the course of the drama's concern with 'real' life, there was a temptation to substitute the object for its representation. Both Antoine and Stanislavsky were condemned (by traditionalist designers such as Bruckner) for preferring visible beams and real ceilings and windows to the painted canvasses of traditional décor. They, however, went to such extremes in their presentations that Bablet has commented:

> Was it necessary to authenticate the stage picture to the extreme of building the garret in The Wild Duck out of Norwegian pine or to have the roofs made of real straw in The Power of Darkness?[3]

Antoine and Stanislavsky might have been justified in trying to show man in his historical context, or the individual as part of society, and to make the unity of the spectacle the basis for its dramatic effectiveness. However, the highly [illegible] construction of the sets the designers imposed on

the viewer, eliminated the mental participation of an audience in the action of the play, his role becoming that of a passive observer of the drama.

The limits of their achievements and clear it was impossible to go further in the creation of scenic illusion without completely substituting reality for its image. Realism had attained the highest degree of illusionist perfection. The necessity arising from this situation was the creation of a new realism, that, far from denying theatricality, would use it to its own advantage. Future aesthetic revolutions led to the restriction of illusionistic structures and the imitation of appearance.

The symbolist movement in theatre was in opposition to the realist tradition in scenography. However, its manifestations were not restricted to painterly concepts. Adolphe Appia and Edward Gordon Craig were equally symbolist, but used different methods of scenographic expression.

Craig worked in England and later moved to Europe, whilst Appia worked mainly in the German theatre. Their ideas developed along similar lines and merged after they became aware of each other's strivings through a combined exhibition in Zurich during 1914.[1]

After this exhibition Craig and Appia were labelled the plastic school of stage designers. The plastic style of design was concerned with the stage as a sculptural entity. Appia and Craig believed that the actor was <u>massgebend</u>, or the unit of measurement on the stage. It may be deduced from their writings that this unit of measurement could be achieved only if the actor was related to his environment.[2] Appia felt that this could be brought about if the stage itself was a sculptural but simultaneously symbolic unit.[3] If this was achieved, he felt that the actor would relate perfectly to his sculptured environment.[4]

With the invention of electric light during the Industrial Revolution, stage lighting became an important element of

design, exploited by both Appia and Craig. They believed that the scenic painter had become redundant. The setting could now be 'painted' by different coloured gelatines or glass used in front of the light source. This approach differed from that which Diaghilev applied. He used the same scheme of lighting as advocated by the plastic school, but used it on painted cloths to change the mood of a scene. Diaghilev formulated lighting plots that could transform the painted scenes so that different times of day could be suggested. The performers were highlighted as important characters in the scene through the concentration of light on them.

Appia and Craig changed the quality of their settings by using different types of coloured and directional lighting, focusing attention through defused or spot lighting, or, particularly in the case of Craig, by changing the appearance of a scene merely by employing coloured lighting. Appia believed that different types of light could generate emotional responses in an audience. Flood-lighting (not necessarily coloured) provided only general illumination, which Appia felt did not evoke a specific emotional response.[2] Alternatively, direct or spot-lighting could be used to delineate and sculpt the performer more clearly in three-dimensions; thus through the use of chiarascuro lighting, the emotional connotation could be intensified.

Appia's contemporaries, in the commercial theatre, employed light to make their

> ... scenes as real as nature, but Appia thought of light as a fifth sense in the theatre. His sketches are suffused with a luminous energy which gas and Edison's new incandescent lamp could only approximate on the stage. He, however, anticipated the imaginative projection of light in space, using the ideal that mobile light and a plastic stage are essential to display fully the character and movements of the actor.[3]

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of a production, as stated in his article Music and the Mise en Scène (1899), parallels Paul Fort's ideas for his presentation of Solomon's Song of Songs (1891).[1] The formula Appia suggested for the lighting plots, therefore, appears to have many similarities to those utilised in symbolist theatre design, although he never mentioned his awareness of either Fort's or Lugné-Poë's endeavours. Appia and Craig also used light to create perspective (the brighter an actor is illuminated the more he will move forward on a visual plane), in conjunction with décors that hinted at an environment by using only the essential elements in the setting (for Appia and Craig an abstract sculptured format of levels, for Fort and Lugné-Poë a suggested painted background). This further indicates a diverse yet similar employment of symbolist ideals.

The development in lighting, coupled with the replacing of a specific, localised set with a symbolic equivalent, was of great importance to the designers of the Ballet Russe. Lucie-Smith has observed that

> ... in Baker's work, and particularly his sets and costumes for Schéhérazade, which actually helped prolong the life of the Symbolist style ... his vision of the harem was not only derived from the Salome theme as treated by Gustav Moreau, but seemed in its suggestion to refer ... the simplification of scans employed by earlier designs for the Art Theatres [Fort and Lugné-Poë][2] as well as the symbolic structures of Appia and Craig.[3]

Both the plastic school of designers as well as the painters, working for the Ballet Russe, executed their scenographic concepts in a symbolic manner, leaving it to the audience to imagine the locality of the play, by presenting them with a selected, simplified symbol rather than a factual setting.[4]

A model for Craig's design for Hamlet, (Figure 10), performed at the Moscow Arts Theatre in 1910 illustrates the ideals of the plastic school. In this model no particular locality is suggested. The setting is sculptural, and is

structured with vertical flats and levels. Scene changes were effected by the use of different coloured lights as well as directional lighting (as well as moving some of the flats or screens, as Craig termed them). The flats were left unpainted and the scene would be 'painted' by means of lighting. In this way Craig changed the mood and colour of each scene, using the same basic set. As seen in this model, shadows could be created through the use of strong directional light sources, thus heightening the drama. Although it is impossible to reconstruct the lighting-plot with any accuracy from contemporary sources, it is clear that colour functioned symbolically. For example, Babler describes the court scenes where Hamlet was dressed in black, the rest of the cast being "clothed in gold fabrics, illuminated with gold light to highlight their decadent nature".[1]

Settings were conceived in a similar manner by Appia, as is in evidence in his proposed set for Wagner's 1892 production of Die Walkure, (Figure 11), which may be compared with J. Hoffmann's sketch for the original production in 1876, (Figure 12), together with the actual 1876 set, (Figure 13). The sketch, (Figure 12), and the 1876 stage set are remarkably similar.[2] The plastic school of designers modelled their stages without resorting to the specifics of location, either historic or geographic, whereas Wagner demanded that his designers produce an illusionistic set, (Figure 12). Although Appia's sketch, (Figure 11), hints at rocky outcrops, the stage itself was to have been sculpted to form these abstracted rock and foliage formations. In the 1876 set, (Figure 12), the rocky outcrops were painted on flats. There were only two level changes at stage centre and stage left. In this set shaped flat canvasses in the form of trees were painted in a highly realistic idiom, enhanced by their being set against a painted backcloth with a forest and mountain scene. In contrast Appia's set shows a radical

simplification of means, whereas J. Hoffmann's purported to create an illusion of reality on stage.

Although both the plastic and the painterly schools initially formulated different conceptions of how to achieve an aesthetic unity in stage productions, by 1912 the Ballet Russe was influenced by certain elements employed by Appia and Craig. This occurred when Bakst designed the ballet L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912). In this production many of the theories of the plastic and painterly schools were amalgamated. One of the most important aspects was the conception of the performer which exemplified Appia's ideal of massgebend. Furthermore the Wagnerian ideal of Gesamtkunstwerk is manifest in the set, as "interpreted within the terms of Bakst's stated intentions".[1]

The complete synthesis of the concepts of the plastic and painterly schools of scenographers only took place after the First World War. The ideas inherent in Bakst's L'Après-midi d'un Faune set and costumes were developed by Picasso in his designs for Parade (1917), and culminated in Gabo and Pevsner's La Chasse (1927).[2]

Although this dissertation concentrates on the development that took place in the set and costume designs for the Ballet Russe. The contribution of the plastic school of stage designers must not be underestimated. Consideration of the influences of the plastic school of designers on the formation of a unified scenographic statement will be examined. The two fundamental forces which promoted the design concepts of the Ballet Russe, especially during the periods 1909-1914, were, however, those of Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk and symbolism.[3]

As Ballet demands a different type of stage setting and costumes to either theatre or opera, consideration of its forms are essential. Ballet is a special type of theatre demanding a specialized investigation of the human body in performance, its gestures, and the expressive potential of

dance. Langer, in a discussion of the aesthetics of dance, comments:

> Out of the forming, dissolving and reforming patterns created by the same set of limbs, as out of the movements which echo each other at equal or harmonious intervals, comes decoration in time, just as the spatial repetitions of motifs, or their symmetry, gives rise to decoration in space.[1]

The origins of ballet can be traced back to court operaballets and masques of the late sixteenth century. During that period ballet was part of an elaborate spectacle both for participation by and performance for the courtiers. It had begun at approximately the same time as the introduction of the proscenium arch stage.[2] Ballet in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries came to be professionalized and set apart from its audience.[3] The positions and movements developed out of formal courtly etiquette, stately dances, and rites, but it was not until the reception of the heel-less shoe in the eighteenth century, and the shortening and lightening of costume in the neo-classical and romantic periods,[4] that dancing attempt, and ballet as it is known to-day, came into being.

Apart from the historical curiosity of The Whims of Cupid (1786)[5] preserved by the Royal Danish Ballet, the earliest ballets still performed with vestiges of their original choreography intact are the great romantic works La Sylphide (1832), and Giselle (1841). These ballets stress the ethereality and seeming weightlessness of the ballerina through steps en pointe, an opened turned-out position, jumps, and, in later works, lifts by the partner. Even ballets of a more naturalist vein like Coppèlia (1870), which incorporated national dancing and worldly scenarios, indulged in fantasy and defied the body's natural posture and earth-bound condition. The formal vocabulary of balletic movement was designed towards anti-gravitational aspirations and extensions beyond the physical norm.

During the course of the nineteenth century, ballet developed into several related but variant styles in France, Italy, Denmark and Russia. Classical ballet as embodied in Swan Lake (1877), The Sleeping Beauty (1890), La Bayadère (1900), and Raymonda (1896), developed from a synthesis of elements, derived from the French and Italian styles. These were transformed in Russia during the late nineteenth century. There court patronage encouraged lavish, elaborate productions. Although this phase is referred to as the classical period in ballet, it corresponded to symbolism in the other arts. The avian imagery of Swan Lake, one of the foremost productions of this period, occupied a prominent position in symbolist iconography. Suggestiveness and ambiguity were the very essence of symbolist poetry, as is evident in the poetry of Stéphen Mallarmé.[1] In addition to the parallel to Mallarmé's symbolist theories in the scenario of Swan Lake, the ballet used certain aspects of his theory of correspondences, derived, as they were, from the works of Baudelaire.[2] Aurier's conceptions and ideals also provide a useful base for the analysis of symbolist content.[3] Swan Lake, for example, contrasts the virginal, pure ideal of womenhood embodied in the Swan Queen, Odette - a "sister of Maurice Denis' immaculate maidens"[4] with her counterpart, the seductive Salome-like temptress Odile - similar to Moreau's Salome, Klimt's seductresses, and Munch's vampires.[5] Neither Odette nor Odile were conceived of as real women, but as evocative incarnations of Prince Siegfried's fantasies and desires. The expression of an ideal, or suggestive embodiment of an idea through an animal or plant image was common among symbolist painters and poets. A continuation of symbolist ideas was found in Anna Pavlova's choreography which capitalised upon ballet's evocative potential. These ballets, performed as solo items, were concerned with the metamorphosis of the dancer into an animal or plant form, to be seen, for example, in The Dying Swan (1904), California Poppy (1909), and Dragonfly (1912).

Ballet of this period was known as classical ballet, epitomising the ideals and formulas of the accepted traditions in dance. The label classical, as previously stated, corresponds with symbolism and romanticism in painting, and in essence utilised both symbolist and romantic ideology. For instance Swan Lake, besides its symbolist avian imagery, was usually set in a gothic setting, with the lake scenes often incorporating a ruined building, (Figure 2). Giselle, (Figure 15), in the second Act is set in a haunted forest, complete with gravestones. The Nutcracker has as its central theme a dream which transcends reality (for example, the toy nutcracker is transformed into a prince).

During the early twentieth century there were sporadic movements which directly opposed the classical ballet traditions. These came about because of what has been termed 'the decline of ballet in the West'.[1] 'The decline of ballet' mainly occurred in Paris and was marked by the male dancer being all but banished from the stage, his part being taken by ballerinas en travesti.[2] This caused a departure from the norm in classical ballet. Until the pas de deux and male solos were no longer performed, and ballets relied on mime and group dancing, as is in evidence in Coppélia (1870) and Sylvia (1876). One of the major contributions of Ballet Russe (1909-1914) was the reinstatement of the prominence of the male dancer.

Besides the Ballet Russe there were individual dancers who opposed the existant formulas of ballet. These were Isadora Duncan (1878-1927) and Loïe Fuller (1862-1928). Neither dancer had a classical training, but both, in their dance performances, embodied certain ideas that not only paralleled the symbolist traditions, but were to later influence the Ballet Russe choreographers and designers.[3] Their influence on the contemporary ballet of the 1890's and early twentieth century was slight, as perhaps their productions, because of their relationship with a cabaret type of performance, had little appeal for choreographers working within

the classical tradition.

Loïe Fuller was an American dancer who utilized various effects that were similar to those used by Paul Fort in his symbolist productions. For example, her Serpentine Dance (1890) was based on the effect of flowing trains of silk, coloured by different lights.[1] She had left a description of this dance in a letter:

> My robe was so long that I was continually stepping upon it, and mechanically I held it up with both hands and raised my arms aloft, all this while I continued to flit around the stage like a winged spirit.
>
> There was a sudden exclamation from the house: "It's a butterfly! A butterfly!" I turned on my steps, running from one end of the stage to the other, and the lighting changed, followed by an exclamation: "It's an orchid!"[2]

Therefore it can be gathered that there was not much dance, and the symbolism was implicit and not consciously formulated - her evocative movements were interpreted by the audience. In Loïe Fuller's following performances, however, she consciously introduced symbolism in her solo acts which had little to do with dance.[3] For instance, for the Paris World Fair in 1900, a special theatre was built for her where she could experiment with new lighting effects, new transparent cloth, and a glass floor. These experiments closely paralleled Paul Fort's Solosan's Song of Songs and led Donald Oenslager to claim that "Loïe Fuller was worshipped by the symbolists, especially those in theatre such as Paul Fort".[4] The following account in the London Sketch appeared after the opening performance by Fuller in her new theatre.

> The play of colour was so wonderful as to leave objections mute. Light came from every side. La Loïe danced upon glass, from which the vivid splendour of the headlights was reflected, while from the wings, stage and orchestra, wonderful luminous streams seemed to flow towards her. With the rhythm of the music the colours changed, the hues of the rainbow came from all sides, and ranged themselves upon ever moving drapery.[5]

Judging from this description of the dance, it was no wonder that Fuller was 'worshipped by the symbolists'.[1]

It was the phenomenon of "pleasing light"[2] as Isadora Duncan described Fuller's act, that linked her so directly with symbolism in the theatre. Isadora Duncan was also an American dancer, who, after a few ballet classes which she considered "an intolerable restraint",[3] started to develop her own style. This lacked any systematic basis and was inspired by purely subjective emotional vision. She utilized a revival of the Greek dance of antiquity,[4] and her decision to abandon tights and taste instead to loosely falling tunics, may have correlated with her idea of Greek dance. The use of flowing garments, and a liberation from dance movement, was to influence the Ballet Russe choreographer, Fokine.[5] Both Isadora Duncan and Fokine in their choreography hinted at an ancient Greece inhabited by dancers who purported to be nymphs, gods and goddesses. Metamorphic transformations of the dancers into a plant or animal form was another common feature of their work.

Although the presentations of both Fuller and Isadora Duncan were unique, they were ignored by the mainstream of classical ballet. Similarly Paul Fort's and Lugné Poë's symbolist endeavours, which were experimental in impulse, and would later exert an influence on the Ballet Russe designers and choreographers, were likewise ignored. Despite the innovations presented by Fuller and Duncan in the field of dance the decline of ballet (which was mainly confined to Paris) continued. In Russia the classical ballet tradition also remained unchanged, and the productions were, as was seen with *Swan Lake*, reliant on symbolist traditions. Classical ballet in Russia crystalized a format which alternated acts of worldly splendour with visionary scenes utilizing the *corps de ballet* as a host of wraiths, dryads or naiads. It generally included an act of *divertissements* designed to astound the audience with a succession of feats of technical brilliance executed by the principals and soloists. Thus,

[illegible] tales and myths were most suitable for providing courtly [illegible] contents. The formal arrangement of the *pas de [illegible]*, which [illegible] the years, became crystalized [illegible] *adagio* [illegible] for the ballerina and [illegible] the male dancer was not [illegible] to insignificant roles. Whatever the scenes, [illegible] the moment, a cardinal rule was that the dancing had [illegible] all signs of physical effort. It had to become [illegible] other than sheer physical exertion by the human [illegible]. This style was consolidated at the end of the [illegible] century.

[illegible] its visual materialization of music through [illegible] ballet reflected the symbolist ideal of artistic *correspondences*, as did Wagner's operatic music-dramas. [illegible] were confined, however, to *correspondence* between [illegible] scenario, and not setting or costuming, which, [illegible] Wagner's operas, were firmly rooted in the illusionist [illegible].

[illegible] Diaghilev and his circle of friends, principally the [illegible] Benois and Bakst and the choreographer Fokine, who [illegible] the art of the Russian Imperial Ballet and fulfilled [illegible] possibilities as a union of arts (*Gesamtkunst-werk*), [illegible] returned it to Paris in a re-invigorated form.

[illegible] and especially influenced by Isadora Duncan's[3] innovations [illegible] the dance format, and as early as 1904, he submitted [illegible] the ballet *Daphnis and Chloë*, which revealed "his philosophy for the first time ... stressing the need for [illegible] ballet as a meaningful dramatic enterprise, and for [illegible] the major elements of dance, music and painting".[4] It can clearly be noted that his ideal was that of a unity of the arts in a production - the ideal of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. His views of ballet as a totally unified production may be noted in his letter to *The London Times* in 1914, in which he outlined five major principles which should govern the choreography and production of ballet:

1. It was necessary to create for each dance new forms of movement, suitable to the subject matter, period, or country of the ballet, and appropriate to the music, rather than to use ready-made movements straight from the classical tradition.

2. The dramatic action of the ballet should be continuously developed by means of movement, rather than being sections of pantomime to relate the story alternating with dance numbers that had no dramatic or narrative significance.

3. The traditional gesture-language or pantomime, which often was unintelligible to the audience and even sometimes to the dancers, should be abandoned; instead, in its place, the entire body of the dancer should be used to communicate ideas and feelings.

4. Similarly, the entire group of dancers should be used to develop the theme of the ballet and should be part of the plot, rather than having the corps de ballet provide decorative interludes that had no significance.

5. Ballet should reflect an active and equal co-operation of all the arts involved in it; music, scenery, dancing, costuming all were crucial to a unified creative effort. Specifically, music should no longer be a series of separate and unrelated numbers, but should be a unified composition dramatically integrated with the plot.[1]

It can be seen from these five points that Fokine, one of the leading choreographers for the Ballet Russe, like Diaghilev, was dedicated to promoting and changing the format of classical ballet, producing a work which would embody the principles of Gesamtkunstwerk, as well as revolutionizing the traditional ballet format. This is especially evident in the last point of his letter. Fokine's iggology is particularly noticeable in his early masterpiece Les Sylphides (1907) which seems to show a return to romanticism, and may be seen to be a symbolist production - an evocation of a poet's visionary imagination of a glade inhabited by Sylphs. This was the first ballet to dispense with story telling or a plot. It conveyed a mood through pure dancing to an arrangement of Chopin's works, set in a décor by Benois, which owed something, perhaps, to the symbolism of Böcklin.[2]

The Ballet Russe choreographers and scenographers formulated concepts closely associated with the ideals of the symbolists, and for this reason have been termed the second generation of symbolists in the theatre by McQuillan.[1] The reasons for this differentiating between the first and second generation symbolists in belief seems to be because of the differences in the quality of the danse presentations, especially noticeable in their scenographic format. The first generation symbolists in scenography, during the 1890's were noted for their abstracted, fluid settings. There is, however, no remaining visual evidence of their work, and only written documents and reviews of Paul Fort's work remain. With the exception of Ubu Roi,[2] the sole entries to Lugné-Poë's productions.[3] A rough, sketched example of symbolist scenography in Russia survives, for example, the set for Stanislavsky's production of Maeterlinck's The Blue Bird, Figure 9), designed by Egorov.[4]

Although there is a lack of clarity in discussion of the differences between the characteristics of first and second generation symbolists in the available literature, one can argue that the second generation scenographers applied symbolism in more concrete visual terms. Their scenographic endeavours were designed, and these designs remain, and can thus be studied. In contrast, the first generation symbolist designers relied on the effects of light falling on vaguely painted surfaces, evoking the atmosphere of a scene.[5] However, the diversity of technique in the actual execution of such scenes is to be noted. This may be gleaned from contemporary descriptions of the sets.[6]

Egorov, a first generation Russian symbolist, set designer for Maeterlinck's The Blue Bird, (Figure 9), similarly used free application of paint, and like the Parisiennes, worked on gauzes. The type of painting used was much freer and looser in technique (because it was painted on gauze drops) than any of the work executed by the designers for the

Ballet Russe. The designs for the Ballet Russe presentations were, as Lucie-Smith stated, symbolist,[1] but were concrete realisations of symbolism, which did not merely create atmosphere through light and colour. Martin Battersby has observed that:

> The Ballet Russe were able to propagate new concepts in theatrical designs to a greater extent than the small experimental theatres which were often little known outside a small circle of admirers and were financially handicapped ... accustomed to insipid and third-rate performances at the Paris Opéra the Ballet Russe overwhelmed audiences by the dazzling artistry of the dancers - both male and female - the originality of the staging and, above all, the masterly 'symbolist' designs.[2]

Most of the ballets mounted by the Ballet Russe between 1909 and 1914 could be defined as second generation symbolist productions because aspects of their scenographic concept moved away from the nineteenth century use of symbolism as epitomised in the productions of Paul Fort and Lugné-Poë, as well as the performances of the Loïe Fuller. The primary difference, as noted above, is the degree of concretisation of the images. The term symbolist, as used by Aurier, can be retained for both first and second generation symbolist scenographers, as it defines a conceptual orientation rather than a particular style. Just as symbolist painters in the 1890's show considerable variation in style, so this is encountered in symbolist set design. The first generation symbolist designers appeared to strive for a similar quality of design,[3] whereas the second generation, as epitomised by the designers for the Ballet Russe, relied on a more concrete, but equally symbolist representation. It will be shown that with these designers a certain stylistic similarity can be noted, especially when the designs for Schéhérazade, (Figure 65, 1910), by Bakst, Petrushka, (Figure 11[illegible], 1911), by Benois, and Prince Igor, (Figure 51, 1909), by Roerich, are compared.[4] In their designs a shift from the realist-illusionist and romantic elements as manifest in Swan Lake, (Figure 2), is obvious. Although the themes found in these

ballets find their precedent in productions of the nineteenth century (that is, in the story type of scenario), the mode of representing form is no longer in the realist-illusionist manner. A new unity of form and content emerges in the Ballet Russe productions; the settings and costumes were suitable and congruent with the music, choreography, and scenario of the ballet. Settings and costumes were symbolic, although based on historical and geographical source material. Such material was, however, transformed and elevated to the realms of symbolic decorative presentation.

The 1909-1914 Ballet Russe seasons answered both the problems of Gesamtkunstwerk and correspondences in some respects. If Gesamtkunstwerk is taken as a unifying of set design, costumes, scenario, music, choreography, functional aspects, and lighting, then most of the ballets of the 1909 to 1914 seasons exemplify this concept. However, the question raised is one of the unity of the productions as a whole - were they merely decorative, or were they simultaneously decorative and expressive? A proposed answer is that the scenographers for the Ballet Russe created not only designs which were revolutionary because of their unified style of presentation, but simultaneously they created designs that functioned as expressive decoration.

Ballet is atypical of most theatre. It is a performing art with theatre's occupation of space and time, and it is subject to its audience. However, it more actively manifests its space and time. Its space is not just a container for actors speaking dialogue and moving about, but is shaped and made present - revealed - by the gestures of the dancers; its time is not just the length of a performance or a soliloquy, but the time in which it takes a gesture to demarcate its space and to transform into another gesture. At its best it can have a displacing effect upon its audience, or an equivalent impact to a great work of visual art.

One becomes aware of one's own earthboundness,

> sedentary position, etc., while one emphatically feels the elation of the escape from those confines in the movement of the dancers.[1]

One can only assume that this emphatic response to ballet's illusion of extra-human capacities is generally experienced. It may account for the enthusiastic applause, lengthy by the standards of most performing arts, during and at the end of a performance. "The applause may become a kind of release for the physical energy built up and endured during the performance."[2] Ballet, in contrast to modern dance, goes beyond the apparent limitations of the body and the actual effort put into a movement, whereas modern dance stresses weight, inwardness and centripetal contractions for psychologically expressive effects.[1] This is one of the reasons why mediocre ballets appear so appalling. If ballet fails in its revelations, it reverts to ordinary strained bodies. Modern dance does not leave itself open to disaster in such an extreme way.

The human body is the material of ballet as it is of all dance. Though other dance forms have employed costumes and props as extensions of the body, ballet rarely has. For instance, the classical tutu was designed to reveal the body. Its stiff skirt, as with other additions to ballet costumes, is not an integral part of the choreography in the way, for instance, Loïe Fuller's and Isadora Duncan's veils and chiton were. The ballet dancer's body is a distortion of the natural physiological structure, but obviously is maintained within the capacity of its muscular and skeletal possibilities. It remains a human body, yet is not an ordinary body in that it has been moulded to project lines and trajectories outside itself in a highly artificial way.

Ballet shares terrain with visual art and yet it would be incorrect to classify it as a strictly visual art. It shares its individuality with music. Music gives ballet its dimension of time, and the movements - that which is seen - are wended to this musical time. For example, an enclosed and

self-referential sequence flows in relation to what has come before, what will come after, and the work as a whole. Otherwise ballet could be merely a series of pauses and intervals moving from one pose to another. Even a sustained pose such as an arabesque is not a fixed visual moment, but is held through a certain amount of time, just as a jeté moves through time. It is by virtue of time that ballet manifests its space, and it is with the movement of the dancer's body through time that space is made apparent. It is also through this movement in time and space that the principle of expressive decoration can be illustrated in the Ballet Russe productions of 1909-1914, within the framework of the Gesamtkunstwerk theory. This was due to the ideal of the correspondence between musical and balletic time as defined by movement. In the Ballet Russe productions lighting also functioned both decoratively and expressively, it being co-ordinated with changes in time sequence.[1]

Ballet reveals space to be an extension of and from the human body - the space through which it can stretch, the distance from it to another point. It explores the spatiality as well as the corporeality of the human body and experience, and it effects a continuity from and with the other. In ballet the body is seen to narrow outward from a hypothetical centre somewhere near the base of the spine. A diagram of the possible movements from a single spot would resemble an elaborate version of Renaissance drawings of Vitruvian man, adapted from a plane to a volume - the space in front of the body being more densely articulated than that behind.

With the introduction of contemporary music in the Ballet Russe productions, it will be shown how the choreography was affected.[2] This effect was registered in movement through time. Certain ballets prior to the advent of the Ballet Russe seasons had music written especially for them.[3] This composed music influenced the choreographic format, but still remained within the confines of the classical tradition.

The classical ballets, however, did not form a complete Gesamtkunstwerk as only the choreography and music formed a unity. The Ballet Russe, however, united the set, costume and scenario so that they formed a unity in the overall production. This was fully realised in Parade (1917), when costume and set dictated a specific movement pattern, thus the ideal of expressive deformation.[1]

Historically, ballet scenarios ignored the periods of realism or naturalism which the other arts underwent during the nineteenth century. The picture of an apparently almost unbroken transition from romantic ballet to symbolist/classical ballet may have arisen as a consequence of inadequate knowledge, for ballets which formulated a realist position may have existed. But if so, they have been lost through lack of performance. However, the dance movements of ballet do not lend themselves easily to the formulation of a realist choreography and scenario. Perhaps, however, Diaghilev's "chic" ballets such as Les Biches, of the 1920's verge closest to a kind of naturalism in their links with contemporary fashion and their absorption of non-balletic athleticism, but the attitude is far from the kind of naturalism manifested in nineteenth century theatre, art and literature. It could also be suspected that the fact that ballet did not achieve its maturity as an art form until the 1890's could be a factor in its lack of engagement with issues of realism. During the period prior to 1890, ballet was not solidly enough defined to react to realism as an antithetical proposition to its romantic phase.

The following chapter will examine the individual origins of the Ballet Russe, the background from which its aesthetic policies emerged, and the particular contexts which it offered the scenographers.

CHAPTER ONE : FOOTNOTES

p.11:1 Defined in the introduction, pages 5-6.

2 It must be stressed that the official theatres of the time were under state sponsorship.

3 For instance, the privately owned companies such as Theatre d'Art, Mamontov's Private Opera and Diaghilev's Ballet Russe.

p.12:1 An example being the production of Rimsky-Korsakov's The Snow Maiden discussed in Chapter Two, pages 64-65.

2 Braun, E. Meyerholt on Theatre, page 28.

3 Transcription from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin is not consistent. The Russian Дягилев has been spelled variously Diaghilev, Diaghilew, Diaghileff. In this dissertation the most frequent occurring contemporary spelling of Diaghilev has been used. The same problem applies to other Russian names, for which a similar procedure of maintaining a consistent, popularly accepted spelling has been used.

4 Gelatt, R. Nijinsky : The Film, page 12.

p.13:1 Wagner, R. Wagner on Music and Drama, pages 78-87, 224, 149, translated by H. Ashton Ellis, published Gollancz, 1977, London

2 Oenslager, D. Stage Design, page 111.

3 This would not include the designers working in the so-called 'art theatres' : those of Paul Fort, Antoine or even Meyerholt's Studio Theatre, whose innovations will be discussed on pages 24-27.

4 Bablet, D. Revolutions in the Stage Design of the XXth Century, page 11.

p.14:1 Ibid.

2 Braun, E. Meyerholt on Theatre, page 27.

3 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Design of the XXth Century, page 12.

p.15:1 Cavendish, M. Encyclopaedia of Western Art, page 339.

2 Bablet, D. Revolution in Stage Design of the XXth Century, page 14.

3 Ibid, page 18, citing Jean Julien.

p.16:1 McQuillan, M. Painters in the Ballet, page 48.

p.17:1 An example being the production of Strauss' Cinderella, discussed on page 20.

2 According to the 'old style' Russian calendar.

p.18:1 Original stage design can only be evaluated through the medium of illustrations, written reports and photographs. Because of its ephemeral nature, the ideal situation would be to experience the actual performance. Obviously this is not always possible. Thus, evidence must be based on illustrations and reviews of the relevant productions.

2 Oxford Dictionary of Ballet, page 131. According to the scenario.

3 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 67.

p.19:1 Discussed in detail on pages 21, 118.

2 Crisp, C. and Clarke, M. Design for Ballet, page 98.

p.20:1 The Oxford Companion to Theatre, page 118.

2 Williams, P. Dance and Dancers, January 1980 edition, page 22. Having written to Mr. Williams it has been discovered that there appears to be no remaining illustrations of this work. As quoted in Mr. Williams reply of 6 June 1980 " ... the work was not very popular; therefore, all illustrations/photographs (if any) have been lost".

p.21:1 Crisp, C. and Clarke, M. Design for Ballet, pages 106-7, citing Fokine.

p.22:1 Bentley, E. Theories of the Modern Stage, pages 49-55.

2 Bablet, D. Revolution in Stage Design of the XXth Century, page 14.

p.23:1 Jullian, P. The Symbolists, pages 14-16. It is because of this that the symbolists and symbolism are referred to in this dissertation without the use of capitalization.

2 Osborne, H. The Oxford Companion to Art, page 117. Courbet cited.

3 Lucie-Smith, E. Symbolist Art, page 54.

4 Ibid, page 58.

5 Ibid, page 4.

p.24:1 Osborne, H. The Oxford Companion to Art, page 1117. This could also be taken as a very early form of semiotic analysis.

p.24:2 Julian, P. The Symbolists, page 15.

3 Lucie-Smith. Symbolist Art, pages 147-148.

4 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Design of the XXth Century. page 23.

p.25:1 Bablet, D. Ibid, pages 24-29.

2 Goldwater, R. Symbolist Art and Theatre : Vuillard, Bonnard, Denis . Magazine of Art xxxix, viii (1946) pages 366-70.

3 Discussed in this chapter, pages 26-28.

4 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Design, pages 24, 180-183. In concept it was a form of 'total theatre' halfway between the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk and the ideas underlying Kandinsky's produced Sounds (The Green Sound, Black and White (1909) and The Violet Sound (1913)). In these productions Kandinsky accused the Wagnerian utopia of Gesamtkunstwerk of only uniting external means in a purely external fashion so that they come together without creating any unity. Kandinsky believed that the total work of art depended on an inner necessity and on the inner unity of its diverse elements.

5 Ibid, page 24-25.

p.26:1 Ibid, page 26.

2 Discussed on pages 13-21.

3 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Design, page 26.

p.27:1 Ibid

2 Ibid.

3 The use of Russian ethnic sources in scenography will be discussed in Chapter Two.

4 A major source for the designer of the Ballet Russe was the incorporation of Russian folk art motifs and will be discussed in detail in Chapters Three and Seven.

5 Bablet, D. Op. Cit., page 23.

6 Ibid.

p.28:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid, page 30.

3 Ibid.

p.29:1 Oenslager, D. Stage Design, page 186.

2 Craig, E. The Art of the Theatre (1905); Craig on Movement and Dance, pages 58-67. Appia, A. Opera and Drama (1899), The Art Work

p.29 (contd.)

2 of the Future (1921) and The Mise en Scène in Wagnerian Drama (1895).

3 Bentley, E. Theories of the Modern Stage, pages 34-35.

4 Ibid, pages 32-33. Appia considered that the actor would relate to the three dimensionality of the set - both being three dimensional and, therefore, relating and reacting to light sources in an identical manner.

p.30:1 Oenslager, D. Stage Design, page 186.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

p.31:1 As discussed on page 25.

2 Lecia-Smith, E. Symbolist Art, pages 147-148.

3 Noted in later Chapters dealing with the presentations by the Ballet Russe between 1909 and 1914. (It will, however, be noted that this was not always the case).

p.32:1 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Design, page 43.

2 This would reinforce the earlier statement concerning the engraving for the Swan Lake set (Figure 2), that is, there was no significant change between the illustrated intention and the set when constructed.

p.33:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 116. This ballet will be fully discussed on pages 244-251.

2 The La Chatte set, (Figure 14), was a Constructivist set made from mica, which utilised the ideas of the plastic school to their full extent. There were no specific allusions to locale, either historic or geographic. A setting was presented that was Constructivist and sculptural, the performers utilising the floor space in front of the construction for their dancing. Entrances were made from behind and between the structures. A further indication of Gabo and Pevsner's debt to the plastic school of stage designers was in the manner in which lighting could be utilised. In the La Chatte setting, (Figure 14), the use of lighting was probably very exciting as a result of the reflective and transparent quality of the mica forms. The individual constructions could change their appearances, becoming opaque, reflective or transparent, dependent on the direction of the light source.

1.33:3 Definitions as used in this dissertation are to be found on pages 23-24.

34:1 Langer, S. Feeling and Form, page 87.

1 The invention of the proscenium arch by Il Riccio in Sienna in 1650, contributed to this as it formed an obvious division between stage and auditorium.

2 A logical development to the proscenium arch, which was by this time a standard feature in all theatre buildings.

3 The terminology of 'romantic', 'neo-classical' and 'realist' periods applies to the history of dance, and does not necessarily parallel the Fine Arts movements' employment of the same terms. Thus they are not capitalized in this dissertation.

4 A 'curiosity' in that it is not a ballet as defined by 'classical ballet' but rather a court masque.

p.35:1 Lucie-Smith, E. Symbolist Art, page 15. A further correspondence between symbolist philosophy and ballet was Mallarmé's ideal of "deliberate ambiguity of role", and the feeling for the symbol as a catalyst (ibid, page 51).

2 Discussed on page 36 of this Chapter.

3 Discussed in the definition, derived from Aurier's writing, in this Chapter, pages 23-25.

4 McQuillan, M. The Painter in Ballet, page 62.

5 Ibid.

36:1 Clarke, M., Crisp, C. Design for Ballet, page 106.

2 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 98. It was a popular consideration that the male dancer's legs were unattractive, the females (who were usually mistresses of the Jockey club members) were of a more 'pleasing proportion!' The ballerina en travesti was dressed in tights, showing off her legs, and not attired in the conventional slashed troubadour trousers. This would later become a convention for the male dancer as well - as will be noted in the ballet L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912).

3 To be discussed in Chapters Three to Seven.

Duncan, A. Art Nouveau and Art Deco Lighting, page 31.

Ibid, page 30.

Ibid.

Denschlager, D. Stage Design, page 183.

p.37:5 London Sketch, 2 June 1900, page 8.

p.38:1 Oenslager, D. Stage Design, page 183.

2 Duncan, A. Art Nouveau and Art Deco Lighting, page 31. Linking in with the description of the differences between first and second generation symbolists, pages 31-33.

3 Duncan, I. My Life, page 46.

4 Ibid.

5 Discussed in Chapters Three to Seven.

6 Discussed in Chapters Three to Seven.

p.39:1 Clarke, M. and Crisp, C. The History of Dance, pages 153-163.

2 Discussed on pages 11-21.

3 Kraus, Richard, and Chapman, Sarah A. History of the Dance in Art and Education, page 151.

4 Ibid.

p.40:1 Ibid.

2 Les Sylphides will be discussed and analysed in Chapter Three.

p.41:1 McQuillan, M. The Painter in Ballet, page 8.

2 Discussed on pages 25-26.

3 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Designs, page 1.

4 Discussed on page 27.

5 An example of this type of design was Paul Fort's Solomon's Song of Songs; discussed on page 25.

6 Bablet, D. Revolutions in Stage Designs, pages 26-34.

p.42:1 Lucie-Smith. Symbolist Art, pages 147-148.

2 Barraclough, M. Phaidon Encyclopedia of Decorative Arts 1890-1940, page 118.

3 Discussed on pages 40-41.

4 Discussed in Chapters Three to Six.

p.44:1 McQuillan, M. Painters in the Ballet, page 50.

2 Ibid.

3 Kirstein, L. Movement and Metaphor, page 122.

p.45:1 Discussed in Chapters Three to Six.

2 Discussed in Chapters Three to Seven.

3 Examples being Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, The Nutcracker, Sylvia, Coppélia and Raymonda.

p.46:1 Discussed in the conclusion of this dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ROOTS OF THE BALLET RUSSE

The 1909-1914 Ballet Russe seasons projected ballet, as well as scenography, into the modern era. For two decades they acted as a fountainhead for ballet and dictated a particular approach to scenography.[1] The style developed by the Ballet Russe in stage design was closely involved with pictorial values.

The key figure in the Ballet Russe was Serge Diaghilev. The young Diaghilev had entertained hopes of becoming a composer. However, a private performance of his musical score for the fountain scene in the opera Boris Godunov was a fiasco.[2] After this disappointment he restricted his musical contribution to the encouragement and patronage of musicians of greater talent. While still in his late twenties he wrote expensively about art and established contact with artists. Yet he never produced a painting or a sculpture. His name is associated with some of the greatest balletic landmarks of the twentieth century. However, his physical appearance - large body and oversized head - precluded any possibility of his practising dance. Although he encouraged Russian pre- and post-Revolutionary artistic experiments,[3] influencing the course of several arts (for example, music, ballet, choreography and scenography) in Western Europe, and converted avant-garde interior and dress design into social fashion, he authored no new artistic theory. His writings are derivative and equivocal, and the artistic policy that he practised throughout his life remained, in its general outlines, the one formulated by the painter friends of his youth.

Diaghilev was born in 1872 in the Russian province of Novgorod and grew up in Perm. When he arrived in the capital

of St. Petersburg in 1890 to study law at the University he was regarded by his cousin Dima Filosofov's cosmopolitan friends as an unsophisticated country bumpkin.[4] Alexandre Benois (1870-1960), one of the circle of young St. Petersburg artists who were to become Diaghilev's instructors, friends and collaborators, wrote of the group's first impressions of Diaghilev:

> The most Russian of us all was perhaps Diaghilev, and it was just this 'Russian side' of Diaghilev that aroused our antagonism all the more because his characteristically Russian qualities were, from a universal point of view, the less acceptable. Moreover, his Russianism had for a long time a strong provincial flavour. It was not that he was less educated than we but he also often shocked us by his manners and a very disagreeable sans gêne that was at times most embarrassing. For a considerable period, too, he surprised and irritated us by his indifference to the plastic arts, to history and literature, in all things, in fact, that chiefly interested us.[1]

The group "introduced Diaghilev to new trends in the arts"[2] and as a result the mature Diaghilev kept abreast of current developments in the fine Arts, as well as studying their history. In addition to an acute mind, as well as eclectic tastes, he possessed a personality by turns

> ... bullying, charming and persuasive. His artistic sensibility was matched by an ability to judge people, to size up a situation, to intuit what his audience wanted and how far they could, or should, be pushed. Keeping in step with the creators of paintings, music and dance, he was in a position to manipulate the public and to create its taste.[3]

Diaghilev's schemes rivalled those of the great patrons from history but unlike his aristocratic or industrialist predecessors he had to beg or borrow money constantly to further his projects and was more frequently in debt than not. Diaghilev was as much a patron as an impressario.

The list of Diaghilev's activities as a patron and proselytiser from 1897 (the date of the first issue of Mir Iskusstva)

to his death in 1929 is awesome. He assembled eleven art exhibitions,[1] edited an art magazine, and published a theatrical yearbook. He organized two concerts of Russian music and one opera season in Paris. He founded, directed and administered the Ballet Russe, whose twenty-one year history encompasses over seventy-five ballets and operas, most of which were especially composed for his repertory. The projects which reached fruition were only part of even more ambitious ones, such as the 1905 and the 1923 plans to establish an Art Museum.

It is, however, with the Ballet Russe that Diaghilev made an indelible impression on the arts of the twentieth century. From 1909 to 1929 he commissioned painters whose works spanned the range of modern art: Bakst, Benois, Goncharova, Larionov, Balla, Derain, Picasso, Matisse, Braque, Gris, Miró, Ernst, Pevsner, Gabo, de Chirico and Rouault.[2] The composers whose music he used extend from Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov to Stravinsky and Prokofiev, from Montéclair to Debussy and Ravel to Satie and Milhaud, from Handel to Lambert, and from Bassini to Respighi.[3] His choreographers, Fokine, Nijinsky, Massine, Nijinska and Balanchine, dominated the history of early twentieth century ballet. His dancers, Pavlova, Nijinsky, Karsavina, Dolin, Markova, Rambert and de Valois, became legendary. The Ballet Russe conductors, Monteux, Ansermet and Beecham, stand among the great interpreters of orchestral music. Some of these artists created their greatest works totally independant of Diaghilev, some received their first recognition under his aegis; and some, perhaps, would not be known today had he not promoted them. Whatever his impact on the separate arts, Diaghilev played an indispensible role in the development of ballet theatre. Schéhérazade, Firebird, Petrushka, Parade, Le Tricorne, Les Biches and Apollo, still performed today, are the legacy of Diaghilev. While Anna Pavlova, who danced independently of Diaghilev after the first seasons of the Ballet Russe, did as much to reawaken interest in the art of ballet as dance

in the West, Diaghilev went further, introducing ballet as a Gesamtkunstwerk. In the most enduring of his productions a successful collaboration of design, musical composition, scenario and choreography is manifest. He has been quoted by Serge Lifar as claiming that:

> It occurred to me (ca 1908) to produce short ballets with an artistic background, which would provide a closer link than usual between the essential elements of ballet : music, story, painting and choreography.[1]

The concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk was the artistic policy by which Diaghilev governed the Ballet Russe.

The first period from 1897 to 1906 saw Diaghilev active in Russia, bringing Russian and Western art of the past and present to the attention of his countrymen. During the transitional years from 1906 to 1909 he introduced the Russian arts to Paris. The Ballet Russe, from 1909 until the 1917 Revolution, continued to present Russian culture to Western audiences. The Russian Revolution divorced Diaghilev from his homeland and effectively ended the period of the great impact of the Ballet Russe (as the Russian ballet) on the art of Western Europe. From then on the artists of Western Europe served, and were served by, its cause. After 1917 the history of the Ballet Russe scenography became assimilated into the development of that cosmopolitan cultural entity loosely termed the School of Paris.

The aesthetic principles which governed the Ballet Russe productions can be traced back to the periodical Mir Iskusstva (The World of Art), edited by Diaghilev, and written by his circle of friends (who later designed the Ballet Russe productions). Mir Iskusstva first appeared in October 1898. This journal was established by a group of young St. Petersburg artists and aesthetes who had called themselves the 'Neva Pickwickians'. These included the painters Benois, Bakst, Somov and Lanceray, the musician Nouvel, and the theatrists and literati Nurok and Filosofov

(Diaghilev's cousin). Diaghilev was introduced to the group by his cousin, but attended their regular meetings only occasionally. However, by 1898, when Mir Iskusstva was created, he was appointed editor-in-chief after intensive artistic self-education and proof of his administrative abilities.[1] Three trips abroad had matured his artistic taste to a level comparable to that of his companions. His itinerary included Germany (then the primary Western centre for young Russian artists), Italy which was always to attract Diaghilev, and France, whose artistic activities were largely ignored in Russia at that time.[2] Diaghilev's early taste revealed itself in his first serious art purchases made during his 1895 trip - Israels, Liebermann, Menzel, and Puvis de Chavannes.[3] He presented three exhibitions in St. Petersburg in 1897 and 1908: 'English and German Water-colourists', 'Scandinavian Painters', and 'Finnish and Russian Painters'. These exhibitions reflected an English, German and Scandinavian orientation rather than French.

Although the young Russian painters who were the core of Mir Iskusstva - Bakst, Benois, Korovin and Somov - had all spent time in Paris, none of them showed particular consciousness of the Impressionist or major Post-Impressionist artists.[4] They frequented Whistler's atelier, admired Puvis de Chavannes, as well as the more literary of the symbolist artists.[5] Diaghilev, along with most of the other artists associated with Mir Iskusstva, seem to have maintained hostility towards Impressionism.[6] In an early article in the magazine Diaghilev stated:

> I must say that the techniques of the Impressionists are incomprehensible to me. Wild and chaotic painting which reveal only chicanery and insufficient thought. It appears, (they) are meritorious because what looks like daubs are, by some trick, transformed into objects at a distance. But what we demand of technique, first and foremost, is that it shall remain in the background, as though it did not exist.[7]

Benois, in 1899, expressed a similar view when he wrote "for art the theories of the Impressionists do not have particular importance".[8]

Although works by Monet, Renoir, Sisley and Picasso were illustrated in Mir Iskusstva by 1901, they were overshadowed by the emphasis on Puvis de Chavannes, Beardsley, Mauve, Israels, Hans von Marées, Burne-Jones, Böcklin, Carrière, Liebermann, Moreau, Whistler, Macintosh and the art of the Vienna and Berlin Secessions. A comparison between Diaghilev's collection, and his later exhibitions has only to be made to see that his tastes were not as advanced as that of the Moscow collector Sergei Shchukin, who bought his first Monet in 1897, and by 1904 had acquired works by Fantin Latour, Manet, Sisley, Renoir, Degas, Van Gogh, Gauguin and numbers of canvases by Matisse and Picasso, the Nabis and Douanier Rousseau.[1] Ivan Morosov, the second great Russian collector of modern art acquired a collection of similar proportions.[2] Diaghilev only showed a pronounced interest in the contemporary French painters during the last years of the Mir Iskusstva publications (1903-1904). In the St. Petersburg period Diaghilev's most advanced artistic inclinations were towards Aubrey Beardsley. Diaghilev met Beardsley in Dieppe in 1897. The following year he wrote to the English critic, D. S. McColl, requesting an article on Beardsley for Mir Iskusstva. Arnold Haskell states that from this time onwards the English artists' influence on Russian graphic art was immense.[3]

C. Spencer refers to Bakst's letterhead design for Mir Iskusstva (Figure 16), as revealing Beardsley's influence. This influence is apparent in the use of line and elements such as the fawnlike creature holding the garland and the tapered tripod structures. Bakst's theatrical work was, however, far less Beardsleyesque than Soudeikine's designs for La Tragédie de Salomé for the Ballet Russe in 1914.[4]

The Mir Iskusstva artists were particularly concerned with the visual presentation of the magazine. This is especially noticeable in the earlier editions where the format of

graphic design, typography, illustrations, as well as text, were luxuriously layed out.[1] These elements were conceived as an integrated visual unit. There was as much focus on the visual presentations as on the literary content which not only included articles on varied subjects such as music, poetry and drama, but also views and reviews of art exhibitions.[2] The Mir Iskusstva's attention to the arts of design extended to architecture both recent and historical and to interior and furniture design, including the works of Charles Rennie Mackintosh as well as designs influenced by him. The applied arts and crafts illustrated in Mir Iskusstva extended from practical furniture designs to surface designs for a balalaika. Considerations of the dimensions and layout of the printed page were also of paramount importance. This gave the young Russian painters an early experience of working in applied arts within a prescribed format, and may well have prepared them for the more complex and demanding task of designing for the stage. Mir Iskusstva promoted craft design and took the British Arts and Crafts Movement as a model,[3] but, unlike the situation in Western Europe, a lively peasant handicraft tradition still continued in Russia. The Russian peasant crafts served two artistic generations as invigorating resources. While Gauguin found inspiration in Egyptian, Peruvian and Persian art, and Picasso in the art of African, the young Russians at the turn of the century were inspired by contemporary Russian primitivism.[4] Their encouragement of craft design and the renewed attention given to peasant crafts was fostered during the 1880's and 1890's in the arts and crafts colonies, Abramtseva and Talashkino, founded by a Moscow industrialist, Savva Mamontov, and an aristocrat, Princess Tenisheva, both of whom were patrons of Mir Iskusstva.[5]

The Westward looking Russian artists, especially those associated with Mir Iskusstva, almost bypassed Impressionism and its pictorial innovations. Although the Mir Iskusstva Russian landscape painters, such as K. Korovin (1861-1939)

"came close to the naturalism of Monet and Pissarro",[1] as can be seen in Paris at Night, Boulevard des Italiens, (Figure 17), painted in 1906. The composition of a high angle view looking down on a street scene and a use of broken brushstrokes shows the influence of Impressionism, but the colours in this work are darker than those normally found in Impressionist paintings. In Korovin's décors for The Firebird of 1910, (Figure 87), and Boris Godunov, (Figure 37), of 1908, colours tend to be brighter, thus showing a development in Korovin's pictorial style. It may, therefore, be surmised that Korovin as well as the other designers of the Ballet Russe seasons, saw the works of avant-garde French artists such as Bonnard, Vuillard and Matisse, and thus their, and especially Korovin's palette, underwent a transformation. The reason for this assumption is that Diaghilev and the designers for the Ballet Russe were from the time of their arrival in Paris in 1908, under the patronage of Misia Sert who

> ... played roles for Diaghilev : she was his offical hostess, inviting him and his designers to dinners where she displayed the finest of her artistic collections, usually portraits by artists such as Vuillard, Bonnard, Lautrec, Matisse and Picasso: but most importantly she was liaison officer between Diaghilev and these artists.[2]

Prior to their contact with Misia Sert, the painters of the Mir Iskusstva generation tended to use intense colours, "but colour remained weighty and did not carry associations with light".[3] When a Russian painter such as M. Vrubel (1866-1910), whose work was often reproduced in Mir Iskusstva, fragmented the painted surface, the broken patterns were the result of decorative design, not of detached brushstrokes as found in Impressionism. Colour as matter, and a decorative sense of surface only seemed to serve the painters in their later stage design.

The artist of the Impressionist generation most featured in Mir Iskusstva, Degas, was the least Impressionist in his

paintings. It is tempting to see some link between the frequency with which Degas was illustrated in Mir Iskusstva and Degas' interest in dance, and the later interest of the Mir Iskusstva painters in ballet.

Mir Iskusstva, in so far as it can be identified with a single philosophy, was inspired by the idea of an art which existed in its own right, and was not subservient to either political or social propagandist motives.

> Mir Iskusstva is above all earthly things, above the stars, there it reigns proud, secret and lonely as on a snowy peak.[1]

Thus Bakst described the emblem which he designed for the magazine, (Figure 18). Art was seen as a form of mystical experience, a means through which eternal beauty could be expressed and communicated, a new kind of religion.[2] "This theory as expounded by Bakst has certain parallels with the Nabis' Revue Blanche".[3] In Bakst's designed emblem the very nature of the blazing star above snowy peaks all enclosed in the symbolic triangular shape parallels the mystical tone which the magazine employed. This mysticism was akin to that of the Nabis' group and associated with Mir Iskusstva's interest in the symbolist movement, especially the symbolist ideas of the writers Blok and Balmont. Its literary sections promoted the symbolist poets (Blok and Balmont) and considerable space was devoted to the contemporary music of the "five" nationalist composers, Balakirev, Mussorgsky, Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin, along with the new works of the symbolist composer Scriabin, such as his symphonic tone poems (The Poem of Fire, and The Poem of Ecstacy).[4]

During 1904, in the last year of Mir Iskusstva, the contents of the five Diaghilev edited numbers of the magazine shows him in his role as patron of the visual arts.

> As a promoter of established and lesser known Russian painters - Number 3 was entirely devoted to Maria Yakuntchikova and Number 5 carried not only

[illegible] of Yuon, Yaremitch, Maliavin, Vrubel, [illegible] Pasternak, Korovin and Somov, but of [illegible]-Musatov and Kandinsky (who had written an account of an exhibition in Munich in Volume VII, [illegible] and 51.[1]

[illegible] found in Mir Iskusstva was not only to lead [illegible] these exhibitions in Russia and Paris, but [illegible] influencing his designers, in that they were [illegible] with contemporary French and Russian works, which [illegible] influence on their scenographic concepts.[2]

[illegible] of relevance was the interest the magazine [illegible] in the Arts and Crafts movements. It is of importance to note that the precursor of the movement, Mamontov's Abramtseva colony, became interested in the legends, stories and fairy-tales of Old Russia. This interest, coupled with the study of Russian classical literature, led to Mamontov's involvement in theatrical presentations of these works.[3] Fairy tales and legends were either acted out or set to music. At first, on Sunday evenings at the colony, there were communal readings of the Russian classics and folk tales.[4] These readings gradually developed into mimed pageants. From pageants they had grown by 1881 to full blown theatrical productions, which Mamontov staged in the winter in his Moscow house.[5] The scripts for these early amateur productions were usually written by Mamontov, and told some folk tale or historic episode.[6]

Prior to Mamontov, theatrical design was controlled by the [illegible]. The artists and craftsmen who were employed by the Imperial theatres, repeated well-established traditions. Production was on the most lavish scale imaginable, depending on huge labour forces of highly trained craftsmen, dressmakers and jewellers. They produced the most elaborate scenery, costumes and accessories.

Mamontov's achievement was to persuade his artist friends to design the scenery and costumes for his domestic theatricals.

What was previously considered a branch of the decorative arts now began to attract artists such as Victor Vasnetsov, Korovin, Golovin and Roerich, all members of the Abramtsevo artist colony.

With the use of an artist rather than the traditional artisan to paint sets, the idea of trying to make the 'craft' an 'art' had begun. This was to influence directly the works of the designers of the Ballet Russe. In Russia, before the advent of Mamontov's Private Opera designers, settings were 'crafted' and little or no consideration was given to the aesthetic appearance of the finished product. The backcloth had merely provided an illusionistic background to the performers.[1] In Mamontov's productions it became an integral part of the stage picture. With artists at work in the theatre, costumes and settings were designed as part of an integrated concept. This was achieved through a unity in colour and design elements. Décor was no longer at variance with the costume designs nor inconstant in its design and colour values. It became a unit, devised and supervised by one person. The opera and ballet productions began to be viewed as integrated concepts. A synthesis emerged - a true Gesamtkunstwerk. The great Russian director, Stanislavsky (a cousin of Mamontov), who often performed in these domestic productions in the early 1880's, attributed to them the birth of his 'realistic theatre'.[2]

In 1882 Mamontov commissioned Victor Vasnetsov to design scenery and costumes for the opera Little Snow White, and in 1885 for The Snow Maiden, both with music by Rimsky-Korsakov. The Abramtsevo colony's interest in the peasant art of Novgorod can be seen in the painting and art facts for the intended setting of The Snow Maiden (Snegurochka) by Vasnetsov, (Figure 19). The décor shows a representation of the Tsar's hall in Act III, which is based on the palaces of the Muscovy Empire. If this design is compared to the decorative stairway of the Terem Palace, (Figure 20), a similar type of overall ornamentation is evident.

especially in the use of the interweaving floral motifs on the columns.[1] These floral motifs were derived from Russian folk-art, as can clearly be seen if they are compared with the wood-carved detail of a window sill, (Figure 21). The simplified flower form is common in Russian ethnic art and artifacts.[2] In The Snow Maiden, the elaborately decorated wall, column and ceiling surfaces are ultimately derived from Russian peasant art with its depiction of demons, deer, fowl, flowers and beasts from the mythology of old Russia.

The effect of an illusionistic space is evident when examining the set. The room of the palace occupied the whole stage. The reconstructed balustrade of the balcony at the back is placed in front of a painted backdrop with a perspective view of a city. It is in the use of 'traditional' decorative elements that the work is innovative. These decorative designs on the wall surfaces create a strong and vital unity. The costumes were also based on those of the Russian peasants, (Figure 23), and incorporate similar decorative motifs, thus furthering visual unity, (cf. Figure 22 and Figure 23).

Mamontov brought this opera, The Snow Maiden, to St. Petersburg in 1885, where it "created a sensation".[3] It introduced an innovative concept which the St. Petersburg designers were soon to emulate, and was later to influence the designers of the Ballet Russe. Due to bankruptcy Mamontov had to withdraw his financial support from Mir Iskusstva, but his ideas continued to influence the work of scenographers, especially those associated with the Ballet Russe.

Paternalistic patronage of the type provided by Mamontov and Princess Tenisheva, lingered longer in Russia than in Western Europe. Social factors in Russia made this kind of patronage possible. The two colonies combined sponsorship of the landed nobility with the socialist idealism of some one like William Morris. Diaghilev's patronage was

administered in a similar style, though with more grandiose ambitions and fewer financial means.

The Russian arts and crafts movement was influenced by the Slavophiles[1] and Wanderers[2], which developed more strongly among Muscovite artists, and was accompanied by an art of rich surface incident, later to find its parallel in the Ballet Russe scenography. The Ballet Russe designers were greatly influenced by these aspects of Russian art, especially as found in the work of Mikhail Vrubel, (whose work often featured in Mir Iskusstva).

Mikhail Vrubel, born in Omsk, Siberia, has been regarded by Spencer as "one of Russia's most individualist artists, a tragic genius of Dostoievskian proportions, a forerunner in some respects to Van Gogh".[3] After working in St. Petersburg, Vrubel was introduced by his college friend, Serov, to the ideas of the Slavophile and Wanderers groups,[4] whose motifs he incorporated in his works, but not their ideals. These groups were under the patronage of the Moscow merchants, and in the early 1890's, Mamontov became Vrubel's patron.[5] Vrubel left Mamontov's patronage only once, when he was employed in the restoration of the twelfth century church of St. Cyril in Kiev.[6] This inspired him to make a deeper study of Byzantine art and led to a visit to Venice in 1895.[7] Byzantine mosaics and painting influenced his work throughout his life. In a letter to his sister during May 1890, Vrubel noted that

> ...the chief mistake of the contemporary artists who try to revive the Byzantine style, is their lack of appreciation for the Byzantine artists' use of drapery. They made of it a mere sheet, in which they revealed so much wit. Byzantine painting differs fundamentally from three-dimensional art. Its whole essence lies in the ornamental arrangement of form which emphasizes the flatness of the wall.[8]

It was an ornamental arrangement of form which Vrubel emphasized in his paintings, as well as creating rich

decorative surfaces which maintained the integrity of the picture surface. Vrubel painted in "brilliant peacock colour applied in a curious series of jagged planes".[1] This was not dissimilar to the Moscow School's use of colour. Vrubel's work has something in common with the decorative Byzantinism of Gustav Klimt, and the exotic mysticism of the French symbolists. The sexual ambiguity in Vrubel's imagery may also be compared with Beardsley's Salomé illustrations.

Dimitri Sarabynov states

> Fantasy and reality are mixed in Vrubel's work. The subject of some of his paintings and panels are overtly fantastic ... He would create legend in the way ancient peoples created it, turning humans into gods and gods into humans. But even when he chose reality as his subject, Vrubel still seemed capable of imbuing inert nature with thoughts and feelings, and of greatly accentuating human emotion.[2]

Vrubel constructed paintings by

> ...faceting figures or objects in planes. He sought to express the intrinsic value of spots of colour, and attempted to make colours in his canvases shine with light and sparkle like glass mosaics.[3]

In Vrubel's Resurrection, (Figure 25), certain individualistic qualities become apparent which both show his Byzantine and Moscow heritage, and illustrate the aspects which the designers for the Ballet Russe admired.[4] These are: a loose application of paint, not unique in the 1890's, given the developments in Impressionism. However, here the use of paint texture is different because the units of colour appear to be defined somewhat more independently, which suggests that Vrubel was influenced by his study of Byzantine mosaics. Vrubel certainly did not work with a systematic and regular unit. It is also this loose application of paint that influenced all the pre-war designers for the Ballet Russe.[5]

The subject matter, the use of gold, and the wing image can be traced to their Byzantine sources. This work is decidedly

symbolist,[1] and also shows Vrubel adapting a Pre-Raphaelite facial type. A sexually ambivalent quality may also be noted. The presentation of these figures in Vrubel's work is akin to the Pre-Raphaelite vision, and may have later influenced the asexual roles designed for Nijinsky, by Bakst, in such ballets as Le Spectre de la Rose.

Vrubel had a profound influence on the artists of the Ballet Russe, which is especially noticeable in the work of Léon Bakst. Francis B. Ranskall writes that Vrubel's

> ... iridescently shimmering ballerinas, demons and hashish-smoking self-portrait are lovely examples of decadent art, these were to influence Bakst throughout his career, especially in his design for Schéhérazade.[2]

A comparison between Vrubel's The Dance of Tamara, (Figure 26), a watercolour of 1896, and Bakst's 1910 décor design for Schéhérazade, (Figure 65), reveals the influence asserted by Vrubel and supports Ranskall's contention. Further support for the arguments that Vrubel influenced the Ballet Russe scenography is provided by C. Spencer.

> The underlying force which set different images in a Bakstian world was undoubtedly Vrubel who, as early as 1896, had designed an Egyptian costume (Figure 27) which influenced Bakst's designs for Cléopâtra, and in paintings like The Dance of Tamara (1890) conveyed a heady, mesmeric, decadent obsession with exotic detail, which could have inspired the Schéhérazade designs.[3]

The complex surface pattern Vrubel created through his use of the patterned carpet and fabrics is clearly discernible in The Dance of Tamara. This type of fabric patterning was also used by Bakst, noticeably in his Schéhérazade scenography, (Figure 65). In Vrubel's The Dance of Tamara differentiation of form is counteracted by patterning which flows across the surface. The painting exists as fragmented texture. Vrubel's utilization of small units of colour may have been inspired by the Byzantine mosaics

which he acknowledged as a source. However, a total transformation occurred. This was due to the use of a painted, textured surface which was not systematically broken up, as is found in mosaics. Russian peasant design motifs are also in evidence in the costumes of the figures in The Dance of Tamara. A similar usage of motifs can be found in Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade, (Figure 65), but here there is a far greater legibility of individual forms as is to be expected in a stage design which incorporates constructed elements. In Bakst's design, pattern is used more extensively, and bolder motifs are incorporated, particularly in the massive drape. However, as will be argued, one cannot ignore the possibility of an influence of the works of Matisse, given the intensity of colour in the décor for Schéhérazade. Since Bakst worked in Paris, and was often associated with the avant-garde through his contact with Misia Sert, this possibility cannot be discounted.[1] It will be shown that Bakst's motifs were drawn from Russian peasant folk-art, as well as Persian and Islamic counterparts.[2] Both Vrubel and Bakst used motifs from peasant art. Thus, whilst Vrubel's use of decorative patterning may have served as a stimulus for Bakst, the importance of other sources cannot be ignored.

A utilization of surface texture and brightly coloured pattern is also encountered in the work of other Muscovite artists, such as Maliavin, as evidenced in the 1906 painting The Red Whirl,[3] (Figure 28). A movement towards colour and pattern in contemporary Russian Art was not unique. It was to prove an important influence for the Ballet Russe designers such as Bakst, Roerich and Goncharova.

In contrast to the Muscovite school of artists, as epitomized by Vrubel, the artists of St. Petersburg followed a more cosmopolitan inclination. In 1906, in his preface to the catalogue of Russian Art at the Salon d'Automne, Alexandre Benois explained the two currents in Russian art of the day

> The art of Petersburg, which has four representatives: Constantin Somof, one of the most charming masters of modern art, Bakst, Dobuzinski, Larceray, and the author of these lines, represents an art, sometimes a little literary, which is fond of the investigation of sensations beloved by the epochs of great refinement, delights in the genial idling about the past, and devotes itself to the cult of the intimate, the precious and the rare. The art of Moscow which derives principally from the great decorator Vrubel, and which is above all represented by Golovine, Milliotti, Soudeikine and Paul Kousnetsov, and has more decorative more frankly painterly tendencies ...[1]

However, such a simplistic differentiation between the Moscow and St. Petersburg artists is suspect, for on studying the work of both schools, the distinction was not as rigid as Benois' statement leads one to believe. Both schools utilized a painterly surface texture as well as symbolist subject matter. Therefore the only real differences are that the St. Petersburg artists tended to a more neo-classical choice of subject for their symbolist works. This might be why Benois stated that their works followed the "cult of the intimate, the precious and the rare".[2]

The works of both schools were extensively illustrated in Mir Iskusstva.[3] Both schools, although perhaps differing slightly in the choice of subject matter, belonged fundamentally to a broadbased European symbolist movement.

The St. Petersburg artists, such as Benois, were, however, trying to break down the traditional academic methods of picture construction. Their chief stylistic characteristic was the reduction of the human figure to an ornamental-decorative shape. This shape emphasized the two-dimensional quality of the picture surface, and the eloquence of line divorced from colour and modelling. The St. Petersburg artists used shapes which moved in a plane parallel to that of the picture surface.[4] Through the use of costume they reduced the individual to a type, and the particular to a generalized form.[5] This aspect, the reduction of the figure to an ornamental-decorative shape, was one of the

prime concerns of the designers working for the Ballet Russe.[1]

The St. Petersburg trained artists, such as Victor Borissov-Mussatov (1870-1905), worked simultaneously in a style reflecting an influence of Russian national arts as well as in a more international symbolist mode. Mussatov appeared to be more interested in imbuing his works with light, and symbolised the elements air and water.[2]

After Vrubel, Borissov-Mussatov was the most significant painter who influenced the designers of the Ballet Russe.

In 1895 he left Russia for Paris and during the next four years worked in Gustave Moreau's studio.[3] Here he was at first influenced by Bastien-Lepage's work, but this early interest was soon succeeded by the work of Puvis de Chavannes.[4] It was under the influence of Puvis de Chavannes that Mussatov began working in an historical style.[5] His fascination with the past (i.e. the style of the 1830's) remained a constant characteristic in his mature work, but it is not a particular moment in history which he desired to evoke (unlike Benois, the St. Petersburg eighteenth century devotee) but "simply the past, the moment irretrievably lost".[6]

Mussatov's use of historical costume also differed profoundly from that of the St. Petersburg artists. It was not a conscious stylization in order to reduce the figures to silhouettes or marionettes, but a means of rendering the human figure more remote and mysterious.[7]

Although Mussatov stylized the costumes, these can still be identified as belonging to the 1830's. His particular interest of light falling on materials is evident in a work such as The Gobelin, (Figure 29). Sarabynov has observed that:

> This [use of light] diffused shape and outline in a shimmering haze in a manner not unlike the representations of Renoir and Monet.[8]

Mussatov's painting, especially his stylized treatment of figures in period costumes, was to influence the designers for the Ballet Russes. This is especially noticeable in the work of Bakst and Benois. They incorporated period dress rendered in a stylized manner.[1]

Mussatov's painting, The Reservoir, (Figure 30), creates a pantheistic atmosphere, a secret world enclosed and guarded by nature, typical of symbolist feeling.[2] An emphasis on what is 'veil' rather than on the 'explicit' is maintained. A high viewpoint not only creates a sense of immediacy, but a feeling of distance between the spectator and the world of the picture. The melancholy seated and standing figures are withdrawn in a cloud world. They are surrounded by shadows and the immaterial rhythm of water reflections and the soft blues and grey greens enhance the quality of melancholy. It is also significant that the use of stylized costumes which refer to a bygone age enhance a feeling of nostalgia. In this painting certain elements can be seen which show Mussatov's contact with the Parisian artists during his sojourn at Moreau's studio. The withdrawn figures are similar in attitude to those executed by both Bastien-Lepage and Purvis de Chavannes. The treatment of the stylized tree reflections, in their simplified rendering, are not unlike those painted by Denis.[3] However, Mussatov's palette is dissimilar to the palette of the Nabi, it being far more subdued in tone.

The same symbolist feeling, Parisian influence and palette can be observed in Mussatov's The Gobelin, (Figure 29).[4] Here again the seated figures are submerged in the general painterly quality of the work. As is obvious in this painting, Mussatov sought for the quiet beauty in nature. In his fictitious heroines sunk in silent self-contemplation. He seemed to feel the sad wonder of the beauty of the charmed world of his imagination, but still remains attached to real nature. He illustrates the faded beauty of an autumnal landscape.

His attention was also aroused by the complex tasks of pictorial composition (as is seen in both The Reservoir and The Gobelin). The artist arranged his paintings according to harmonic principles. He set has figures on the surface of the canvas to form a rhythmic whole. He painted in soft muted colours, stressing the importance of texture as well as the grain of the canvas, and used free, broad brush-strokes.

In 1898, after the death of Moreau, Mussatov went back to Russia.[1] He returned to his native Saratov and there he began to work in surroundings that lent themselves to the "melancholy dreaming which remained his constant mood until his death in 1905".[2]

By 1904, the works executed by Vrubel and Mussatov had brought about a change in attitudes to the painted surface in the artistic centres of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The new emphasis on the flatness of the canvas surface, which the St. Petersburg artists derived from the tradition of Vrubel, was likewise pursued by their Moscow contemporaries. In the Moscow artists' colony a breakdown of static closed form replaced by open dynamic forms came about. This can be seen in Maliavin's (1869-1939) The Red Whirl (Figure 28). Maliavin's work was exhibited by Diaghilev in his Paris exhibition,[3] and although the designers for the Ballet Russe never acknowledged Maliavin's influence on their works, it is important to note that there are many similarities in style between The Red Whirl and later Ballet Russe designs.[4] This canvas shows dancing peasants in long flowing garments, painted in vibrant colour, juxtaposing red, ochre and blue to form an intricately patterned surface, as seen in the central figure. Besides combining elements of Vrubel's surface patterning, Maliavin's The Red Whirl shows the influence of Mussatov's representation of the costumed female form, and textile designs from the ancient Muscovy empire as

studied at Abramtsevo. This work includes stylistic features that were later to be utilized by the designers for the Ballet Russe. These included flamboyant use of colour, intricate design motifs, the use of the open dynamic figurative forms, and a 'loose' paint application. Although no documentation can be found to support the contention that he was influenced by contemporary French painting, it may be noted that the general painterly quality of this work has its parallel in the work of Vaitat. The same looseness of brushstroke is apparent, as is the treatment of figure and ground, creating a unified, flat surface statement.[1] The Ballet Busse designers utilized most of these elements in their décors, costume sketches, and in their stage pictures.

At the same time, although they gave less attention to specifically nationalistic images, the St. Petersburg artists were even more eclectic in range. For example, Léon Bakst embraced classical and neo-classical art. The early designs reflect a contemporary Russian interest in the study of Classical Greece. Lectures on the subject were popular in St. Petersburg,[2] not surprisingly as The Academy was orientated towards neo-classicism. Certainly in the case of Bakst, they provided a stimulus which was to lead not only to a visit to Greece with his friend and co-designer, Serov, in 1904,[3] but to a series of classically inspired designs, for example, those of Narcisse (1911) (Figures 109, 110), L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912) (Figure 138), and Daphnis and Chloë (1912) (Figure 142). A typical example of Bakst's early work showing such influences is his 1906 painting Terror Antiquus (Figure 31). This is a confused study but demonstrates Bakst's academic interest in antiquity. In contrast to Maliavin, Bakst restricted his palette. There is a great deal of confusion of background detail which does little to convey any feeling of uniformity in composition between the Peplos Kore styled central figure and the "complex landscape

groaning beneath the terror of a cataclysm of nature",[1] the painting purported to illustrate the last days of [illegible]. Far from being simply a return to ancient Greece, Bakst's works have more to do with the classicizing element in symbolism, rather similarly expressed by the Austrian, Gustav Klimt, in, for example, his first Secession poster. Bakst's early designs for the décor of Hippolytus (1902-1903), (Figures 32 and 33), have, according to McQuillan, "a melting jewel quality recalling Gustave Moreau who also was fascinated by certain classical motifs".[3] Although McQuillan makes this comparison with the works of Moreau, Bakst's designs (Figures 32 and 33), when compared with Moreau's paintings, do not seem to support this contention. Bakst's illustrations, (Figure 33), show a study for mosaic elements used in the décor. Spencer states that they are based on "Archaic Greek motifs"[4] using chevron, block, circle and wave patterning. Although Spencer claims these design elements are Greek in origin, on careful examination they appear to have their origins in Cretian architecture. If the columns in the reconstructed palace of Knossos are compared to Bakst's design, obvious similarities can be noted. As Bakst refers to the Knossos palace in his diary (1904) such a comparison is valid.[5]

A costume design for the play, (Figure 32), also reflects both Bakst's eclecticism and his historicism. Although the motifs used in the costume design are of Archaic Greek origin, the costume itself is more in the style of the later Greek chlamys and cloak.[6] Greek vase paintings may well have served as a source for Bakst's figurative study. In his diary he states that on his 1904 tour to Greece he had seen Greek vases in the museum.[7] Bakst, however, simply drew on historical material in these designs and hardly personalized the imagery as he later successfully did in his designs for Schéhérazade (1910) and Cléopâtre (1909).

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The policy and philosophy of Mir Iskusstva encouraged eclecticism. In his introductory editorial Diaghilev wrote:

> Those who accuse us of blindly loving whatever is modern, and of despising the past, have not the slightest conception of our real point of view ... We have gazed at the past through a modern prism, and have worshipped only what we, personally, found worthy of adoration ...
>
> What we demand, first and foremost, is independence and freedom, and though we RESERVE for ourselves the right to judge, we do not in any way seek to modify the artist's impressions.[1]

In the same first edition, Diaghilev subordinated the importance of the work of art *per se* to its expression of the artist's personality:

> Beauty in art is feeling, told in images. It matters to us but little what those images are, for the importance of a work lies not in itself but in its revelation of a creative personality ... the importance and significance of a work of art lies in how clearly and sharply it defines the personality of its creator, and the degree to which it establishes contact with the personality of the beholder.[2]

It was Diaghilev's notion that the work of art should function as a medium of communication, transferred into the theatrical arts. There the performer was regarded as a kind of necessary conveyance between the intentions of the author and the audience. Although the highest value was placed on the individual personality of the primary, creative artist, individuality was frowned upon in the interpretive artist. In a review of current Russian theatre, Diaghilev wrote:

> There is a great tendency in our Alexandrinsky Theatre to create "types", according to the "artistic temperaments" of every actor on its roster, as a result of which, where the classics are concerned, however "great" an actor may be, he must perforce relearn everything from A to Z, and most important, forget his "greatness".[3]

So in his ballet company Diaghilev permitted no wilful self-expression by his dancers. As to the composite art of

theatre as a whole, Diaghilev advocated and admired originality. Of Stanislavsky's newly formed Moscow Arts Theatre, he claimed:

> The chief prerogative of this group lies in the fact that it can allow itself to take risks which any other daring innovator, enjoying less popularity, less authority, would dearly pay for. Here you have a group to whom everything will be forgiven: more, every effort will be made to give credence to its sincerity and the seriousness of its aims, however, outrageously they may seem.[1]

These writings for Mir Iskusstva by Diaghilev are hardly original. Just as he had a talent for recognizing and utilizing quality amongst the newest manifestations in the arts, so he was able to synthesize and rephrase current artistic ideas and theories. Occasionally this digested theory became quite ambiguous, as in a statement such as

> Modern art is not 'Shakespeare', for it neither imitates, nor is better nor worse than the art of its predecessors. All it seeks is to express itself at its most characteristic, whether in the work of one man or many.[2]

Diaghilev was better as an active organizer than as a theorist. His theories expressed in Mir Iskusstva underlay his later activities.

Interestingly, ballet was not mentioned in Mir Iskusstva until 1902, but once the group became involved in this art form they were prepared to make the most of its symbolist potential.[3] The propinquity of romanticism and symbolism in Russian visual art is paralleled by a similar development in ballet. Benois wrote of the masterpiece of romantic ballet, Giselle, in Mir Iskusstva in 1886:

> The ballet made a stunning impression on me ... Its exceptional charm was based on the absolute unreal story of the heroine.[4]

Benois, the first ballet enthusiast among the Mir Iskusstva artists, further noted:

> The ballet is a universe in itself, which no one has yet exploited, or even understood what mighty reserves of expression, harmony, beauty, meaning it may contain, even in comparison with tragedy.[1]

Benois' perceptive intuition of the sensitive potential of ballet soon infused most of the other members of Mir Iskusstva.[2] The responsiveness of the group to ballet, once they discovered the art, is understandable. Ballet's special ability to present myth, to evoke a dreamlike or enchanted past, to suggest a mystical world, dovetailed with the several aims of the Mir Iskusstva painters, and what the ballet at the Mariinsky theatre and the Russian court most seriously lacked, was visual design of high quality.

In Russia, as in most western countries, stage design had long been left in the hands of trained artisans. In his private theatre the industrialist Mamontov, had pioneered a fresh approach. His commissioning of painters to design his productions was innovative.[3] Especially noticeable in The Snow Maiden, (Figures 19 and 211),

> ... disposed of literal-minded stage production, dispensed with representational illusionism, produced painted décors of intense, evocative colouring suggested an environment with loose paint handling, and manipulated the stage not into a facsimile of reality but into a painted vision.[4]

In 1899, Diaghilev was appointed special assistant to Prince Volkonsky, the director of the Imperial theatres.[5] His occupation of this post gave the Mir Iskusstva painters a passport into the official world of theatrical design. However, a scheme to produce Delibes' ballet Sylvia with décors and costumes by his friends became his undoing. His ambition was resented in powerful circles, and he was abruptly dismissed in 1901, notwithstanding the praise which his Yearbook of the Imperial Theatres for 1899-1900 had received from the Tsar.[6] Although Bakst and Benois, along with Korovine and Golovine, did create designs for the Mariinsky during the next few years, both Bakst and

Benois had to wait until 1909 before they were given the opportunity to design in an innovative mode. For example, Benois was given a commission to design the décor and costumes for a minor opera, Cupid's Revenge (1906) by Alexander Taneev, at the Hermitage Theatre.[1] Somov designed the programme. Unfortunately, none of the designs have survived. Bakst also made his debut as designer at the Hermitage Theatre with a ballet called Le Coeur de la Marquise in which the great ballet teacher, Cecchetti, performed. The ballet was considered such a success that it was transferred to the Mariinsky Theatre in 1902.[3] In Le Coeur de la Marquise Bakst's designs were acclaimed.

> Against the white background of the exquisite little Empire salon the costumes stood out in a most distinctive harmony of colour.[4]

Unfortunately, only the cover to the programme remains, [Figure 34], therefore Spencer's description of the setting must be understood to be based on hearsay. As can be seen from this cover illustration, all the enthusiasm for the symbolists as well as for the other fields of art studied by Mir Iskusstva seemed not to have affected Bakst in the execution of this design. The romanticism in this illustration is evident. Bakst was obviously under the strong conservative influence of the St. Petersburg academic tradition. This can be noted in his use of the flowery neo-classical border, the reliance on the tradition of French Versailles in the format of the lattice work grid, as well as the Commedia dell'arte style found in the costuming of the two figures.

Le Coeur de la Marquise was commissioned for the Private Imperial Theatre, not as a play, as Benois suggested, but as a ballet and mime arranged by the choreographer, Marius Petipa.[5] The performance took place on 22 February 1902.[6] According to Spencer "the work immediately revealed Bakst's unique talent as a stage designer".[7] As mentioned, only the cover design for the programme has survived, therefore

it is difficult to evaluate Spencer's observation.

It was during 1903 that Bakst received a major commission to design the ballet La Fée des Poupées with music by Joseph Bayer. This was premiered at the Hermitage Theatre on 16 February 1903.[1] Nikolai and Serge Legat were responsible for the choreography. Although the ballet was "very light in nature, with mediocre music",[2] Bakst seemed to respond with enthusiasm to the theme of a toyshop. He changed the setting from Vienna of the 1810's to contemporary St. Petersburg,[3] using the facade of a well-known toyshop overlooking the Nevsky Prospekt, famous for its displays during the Palm Week Fair.[4] Again, no designs of this setting remain, but there is a collection of his illustrations of the costumes. The recording of these costume designs was an unusual tribute to a comparatively new designer, in that a series of coloured postcards of the costumes were issued in a folder, (Figure 35), by the Imperial Theatres.

As designs they show a move away from the traditional ballet costumes of the pre-1900's. The costumes are all based on historical source material, whether of Japanese, Biedermeyer, or the contemporary Russian periods. One costume (upper left) shows a distinctly Japanese derivation. The second, third and fourth show a detailed, albeit romanticised, Biedermeyer style. The last two show faithful interpretations of men's costuming of 1903 St. Petersburg.[5] The costuming, although not innovative in their renditioning, do illustrate a change in conceptualisation of ballet dress. The short projecting tutus are still very much in evidence. However, if compared to the costume for La Fille du Pharoan of 1891, (Figure 4), the change is immediately discernible.

In Bakst's designs the motifs are no longer convenient symbols appliqued along the borders. They are [illegible] patterned surfaces that cover areas of the costume. Further, the patterns used are unified with the costume, and are not

merely attached to the borders. The men's costumes are based on contemporary street garb as is especially noticeable in the figure of the soldier (bottom right). This was one of the first Russian ballets to use contemporary dress. In later Ballet Russe productions the ideas instigated by Bakst in this ballet were continued. For example, Bakst used contemporary costume in [illegible], and Benois designed the everyday wear of the Russian populace in Petrushka, which in its general design concept was not unlike La Fée des Poupées.

Diaghilev meanwhile continued to edit Mir Iskusstva until its demise in 1904. He managed the annual exhibitions that were another facet of the group's activities. His monograph on the Russian eighteenth century portraitist, Levitsky, was published in 1902, and in 1905 he also organized an exhibition of Historical Russian Portraits (1705-1905).[1]

Although the magazine Mir Iskusstva had ceased to exist in 1904, Diaghilev brought together a final Mir Iskusstva exhibition in 1906.[2] This last manifestation of Mir Iskusstva also turned out to be Diaghilev's last Russian venture. This was his first presentation to the West. He took the Mir Iskusstva exhibition to the Salon d'Automne in 1906.[3] There, in a special lattice work winter garden installation designed by Bakst, (Figure 36), the Mir Iskusstva painters were shown together with a range of Russian paintings (from Icons to paintings by younger artists, such as Larionov and Goncharova).[4] Bakst's décor for the exhibition

> ... was conceived as a garden with sculpture relieving the monotony of the rows of canvases.[5]

This was achieved through the use of trellis-work and had an overbearing aura of Victorian fustiness. It suggested the ambience of an arbour rather than a gallery, which detracted from rather than enhanced the pictures on exhibition, contrary to Spencer's description which stated

that it was "... a charming interior garden for the display".[1]

It was typical of the ideals of Mir Iskusstva that an exhibition should be presented as a unified concept. The ideal of relating the exhibits to an environment could be seen to foreshadow El Lissitzky's concepts in the early 1930's. This ideal of a unified presentation also established a precedent for some of the ideas developed and later used by the designers for the Ballet Russe.

Diaghilev's introduction to the catalogue explained:

> The present exhibition is a glimpse of the development of our art seen by the modern eye. All the elements, which have had an immediate action on the contemporary spirit of our country, are presented in it. It is a faithful image of the artistic element in Russia of our time with its genuine impulse, its respectful admiration for the past and its fervent belief in the future.[2]

This comprehensive exhibition of Russian art took place under the same roof as the usual Salon d'Automne exhibitions. The participants included Matisse and Fauves (who had caused such a scandal the previous year), Bonnard, Vuillard and the Nabis, Cézanne, and large retrospective exhibitions of Courbet and Gauguin.[3] The interesting point of these exhibitions is that, as they were noted in Diaghilev's introduction, he, as well as his designers Benois, Bakst and Roerich, must have visited at least some of the exhibitions. Therefore, the possibility of an influence of these artists on later scenography for the Ballet Russe productions cannot be disregarded.[4]

During 1906 Diaghilev also planned a concert of Russian music.[5] He expanded on the idea of a single concert the following year, with the inclusion of an entire season of Russian Music through the Ages at the Paris Opéra.[6] Like the art exhibition, the concert series favoured late nineteenth and early twentieth century composers, many of whom had never been heard of outside of Russia. These concerts were as successful as the exhibition,[7] with

Rachmaninoff, Rimsky-Korsakov, Alexander Scriabin and Josef Hofman performing their own works. This prompted Diaghilev to mount Mussorgsky's opera Boris Godunov[1] the following year. Diaghilev had intended to mount Rimsky-Korsakov's opera Sadko as well. However, Rimsky-Korsakov would not allow any cuts to be made to shorten the opera and thus only Boris Godunov was performed.[2]

Between its first performance at the Mariinsky Theatre in 1874 and Mussorgsky's death in obscurity and poverty at the age of forty-two in 1881, his opera Boris Godunov had been performed fifteen times in Russia.[3] It was then dropped from the repertory. In the early years of the twentieth century Rimsky-Korsakov re-arranged the work, re-orchestrating Mussorgsky's score and eliminating many of the so-called 'barbaric' elements.[4] Boris Godunov was then revived for the Russian baritone, Chaliapine. In St. Petersburg it was seldom presented more than once a year and Chaliapine's scenes were the only ones greeted with applause.[5] It was the most unpopular opera in the repertory. The Court and high society stayed away from performances believing it to be political and inflammatory. The opera was only supported by a small group of liberal intellectuals, the kouchkistes.[6]

> Diaghilev, however, loved Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov. He remembered as a child hearing his aunt Panaeva, great grand-daughter of the poet Pansev and a delightful singer, saying to her servants: "I'm going to sing today so don't forget to send for Mussorgsky". The composer was her regular accompanist, although naturally it was never his own music he was trying to play. The words "Don't forget to send for Mussorgsky" haunted Diaghilev all his life.[7]

Diaghilev stated that this was one of the reasons he decided to take a production of Boris Godunov to Paris in the summer of 1908.[8] Diaghilev had originally asked Benois to design the opera. Benois, however, declined as he stated that he disliked the

> Muscovite oriental style of architecture and dress (as specified in the libretto) but would be willing to design the Polish scenes in a Neo-classical style.[1]

Diaghilev then approached the Moscow painters Korovin and Golovin, who initially refused the commission - probably through fear of offending their patron, Telyakovsky, the manager of the Imperial Theatres, who would have nothing to do with Diaghilev (no doubt due to the Sylvia scandal).[2] Golovin, however, eventually agreed to contribute certain design concepts which formed the basis of the final designs. These would be realised by another designer, Juon. Golovin and Juon were eventually assisted by Korovin.[3] Bilibine, an expert on Russian history and icons, was called in to design and advise on the costumes.[4] Following his instructions, Diaghilev and Benois went hunting in the Tartar and Jewish shops of the St. Petersburg markets for silk, brocade, old head-dresses and traditional costumes.[5] Furthermore, Diaghilev sent Bilibine to the northern provinces

> ... where he travelled from village to village, buying old hand-woven sarafans, which had been hoarded in chests for centuries, particularly in the provinces of Arkhangelsk and Vologda ... Two famous Moscow firms also wove special brocades for us according to Golovin's specifications.[6]

These treasures, as well as the settings, were displayed on the stage of the little Hermitage Court Theatre for the inspection of the Grand Duke Vladimir, whose patronage Diaghilev had secured for the enterprise, as he had for the concerts during the previous year.[7] Vladimir, second of the five sons of Alexander II and uncle of the Tsar, was a committed patron of the arts.

It can be assumed, taking the diversity of designers at work on Boris Godunov into consideration, that the complete work could not even approach the concept of a Gesamtkunstwerk. Yet, judging from the few surviving photographs and

illustrations remaining, a certain visual unity in individual scenes may be discernible, especially in those scenes which show a strong Muscovite influence. For instance, in Act I, scene 1, (Figure 37), although the pain was applied in broad brushstrokes, it can be noted that, rather than being innovative, the scenographic concept was still firmly based on research, especially of the ancient Muscovy Empire as studied by the Abramtsevo colony of artists (of whom Korovin and Golovin were members). In 1908, however, the stage picture presentation was regarded by contemporary critics as at least original, as can be gleaned from the following article in Le Figaro:

> The great difference between Russian and French décors can be noticed; while our designers strive for realism and trompe l'oeil the Russians insist on "interpreting". They are Impressionists on a giant scale. Their skies are brushed in with sweeping broad strokes, their clouds are made deliberately to look like heavy great dumplings; the pointed minarets of their palaces are splashed in without thought of detail or relief ... as seen in their opera Boris Godunov and ballets Le Pavillon d'Armide and Prince Igor. These all are huge, wonderfully evocative sketches.[1]

This effect created by the Russian scenographers was not due to their supposed use of "Impressionism on a grand scale", but rather to the Mir Iskusstva group's involvement in the Russian art movements, especially in the use of a free textured paint application (for example, the works of Korovin, Mussatov, Vrubel and Maliavin).

In the watercolour illustration of the set for Boris Godunov, Act I, Scene 1, (Figure 37), the Muscovy influence is evident in the architectural motifs - the Union domes and the horseshoe arches, which are the direct result of the influence of the Abramtsevo colony's study of the art of ancient Russia. The use of these architectural elements can be traced to the similar usage of such elements in the Novgorodian Church of the Transfiguration, (Figure 38). This set would work as a background unit to Chaliapine's Boris costume, (Figure

39), which was that of a Medieval Boyar. The style and greatness of this costume suited the stage environment [illegible] were direct historical reproductions of a set [illegible] in Russian history.

Both decor and costumes were conceived to show the influence of Icons and Russian peasant art which was studied by the Abramtsevo [illegible] Talishenko colonies. However, the setting for the Polish scenes in Boris Godunov (which have not survived) were designed by Benois in a neo-classical manner. According to Benois these scenes were more neo-classical in nature because he "based the décor on the French ideal of the nineteenth century".[1] There was thus an amalgamation of different styles within one production. It was only later that the fusion of these styles formed an integrated aesthetic unit as in productions such as Petrushka, Schéhérazade and L'Après-midi d'un Faune.[2]

If a judgement is made on the aesthetic value of this production, it can be assumed that some scenes had a certain unity. But the production as a whole would have lacked a consistent aesthetic as individual scenographers were responsible for different scenes and each worked in his own individual style. However, this was one of the few productions in which Diaghilev allowed this to happen in most of the later ballets for the Ballet Russe seasons [illegible] one designer worked on a production.

It necessary to evaluate Diaghilev's contributions by 1908, the year before he commenced with the Ballet Russe seasons. He had established Mir Iskussiya, an art magazine which had brought together the leading artists in Russia. In this collaboration, the artists became aware of the individual styles in comparison to other artists. This was especially valuable for the Moscow and St. Petersburg artists. Although they continued to work within their own individualist styles, whether in easel paintings or designing for the theatre, as the Ballet Russe seasons

progressed, a definite cross-fertilization of ideas occurred. Added to this, Mir Iskusstva introduced these artists to works of the French and German avant-garde. This influenced the artists working for the Ballet Russe, particularly in the manner in which they used colour and form in scenography.[1]

This revolution in scenography was furthered in the Ballet Russe productions Diaghilev brought to Paris before 1914; productions in which the many tendencies and styles that went to make up Mir Iskusstva may be traced. The following features are of particular importance:[2]

> The use of synthetic principles in all design work: Neo-classical elements, as favoured by Benois and the St. Petersburg artists.
> Art Nouveau line as used by Bakst.
> Roerich and Stravinsky's evocation of remote pagan and ethnic rites and religions.
> The Hellenistic revival which was reflected in Bakst's designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune and Narcisse.
>
> The influence of the exotic Orient, as found in Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade and Le Dieu Bleu.
>
> The painting traditions of both Vrubel and Massatov, who had combined the ideals of the Russian Schools of Art, as seen in the designs for Golovin's The Firebird, Bakst's Schéhérazade and Benois' Petrushka.
>
> Kurovin's and Golovin's use of textured surface areas.
>
> The works of Goncharova and Larionov which reached back in their brilliant colours and use of tonal motifs in the revival of folk art, and icons as studied by the Abramtsevo artists.
>
> Added to these ideas the designers for the Ballet Russe also incorporated certain ideals from the French and German Art movements of the early part of the twentieth century.
>
> The theories of the plastic stage used by Craig and Appia were also utilized by the designers for the Ballet Russe in later productions. This amalgamation reached its peak in two productions: L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912) and Le Coq d'Or (1914).

It was with the production of Boris Godunov that the micro-cosm of the principles of scenography which were later

applied and combined are to be found. In the ballet seasons from 1909 to 1914, designers developed these features and ultimately created a stage-picture that was a decorative-expressive unit, as well as presenting a Gesamtkunstwerk, as will be demonstrated.

CHAPTER TWO : FOOTNOTES

p.54:1 Discussed in Chapter One, pages 38-43.

2 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 83
Rimsky-Korsakov, Diaghilev's teacher, on hearing this work, suggested that he give up musical composition.

3 Diaghilev utilized Suprematism or Constructivism; he later used their principles in scenography, for La Chatte (1927) and Ode (1928); he also oversaw a transitional period in Russian art and encouraged the young Goncharova and Larionov, who, in turn, can be correlated with the earliest experimental ideas of Malevich, in such productions as Victory over the Sun.

4 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 23.

p.55:1 Benois, A. Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet, page 159.

2 Percival, J. The World of Diaghilev, page 12.

3 McDuffian, M. Painters and the Ballet, page 59.

p.56:1 Five of them on his own initiative, the other six were collaborative exhibitions with the Russian Arts Council.

2 Dadaism is the only gap in this near capsule of twentieth century painting history. He also never admitted to his inner circle the German Expressionists or painters of a more mystical philosophical inclination, such as Malevich or Mondrian (although Miró could be classified within this group as well).

3 As is evident from the list of composers, Diaghilev was willing to adapt music of an earlier period for his use, but only once, in The Triumph of Neptune (1926), did he adapt visual designs not invented specifically for him or for the works of his time.

p.57:1 Lifar, S. A History of Russian Ballet from its Origins to the Present Day, page 207.

p.58:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 McQuillan, M. Painters and the Ballet, page 62.

p.58:4 Percival, J. Op. cit. page 13. As there is no evidence to the contrary, one must therefore agree with Percival in this observation.

5 Lifar, S. Serge Diaghilev, His Life, His Work, His Legend: An Intimate Biography, page 67.

6 Ibid. Published by Benois in Mir Iskusstva 3/4 (1899), page 17.

7 Ibid.

8 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 45.

p.59:1 Benois, A. Early Memories of Diaghilev - Introduction to the Diaghilev Exhibition 1954, page 12.

2 Ibid.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, pages 218-219.

4 Discussed in detail when dealing with this ballet, page/

p.60:1 As can be noted if the magazines are studied. (Victoria and Albert Museum).

2 As noted in the magazine's formal layout. A detailed study of the content of The World of Art has been done by McQuillan in her M.A. dissertation The World of Art. Therefore content will not be dealt with here.

3 Benois, A. The Russian School of Painting, page 36.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., page 33.

p.61:1 McQuillan, M. Op.cit., page 64.

2 Gold, Arthur, Fizdale, Robert. Misia: The Life of Misia Sert, page 142.

3 Kilpatrick, T. A Concise History of Russian Art, page 247.

p.62:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 27.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Benois, A. The Russian School of Painting, page 53.

p.63:1 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 579-581.

2 As will be discussed in the individual ballet design concepts.

p.63:3 Gray, C. The Russian Experiment in Art, page 193.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

p.64:1 As was the tradition of the time in Paris - an example being the Lohengrin décor, discussed in Chapter One.

2 Gray, C. The Russian Experiment in Art, page 523. (As elaborated on in Chapter One).

p.65:1 It can also be noticed that there is a strong Islamic influence in the layout of interweaving patterns found on the columns of the Teren Palace staircase.

2 As can also be noted in an ornamented enamelled book, (Figure 22).

3 Spencer, C. Basst, page 43.

p.66:1 Gray, C. The Russian Experiment in Art, page 524.

The Slavophile Movement. The origins of the Slavophile movement may well have been laid as far back as the year 1775, when the text of the greatest of all Russian medieval epics, the twelfth century Lay of Igor's Men was discovered. It encouraged followers of the writer and thinker, M. Momonosov (1711-1765), who discovered the epic poem, to take steps to promote higher education throughout the country. This aim, which was seconded by the poet B. Zhukovsky (1783-1852), the tutor of the future Tsar Alexander II (1855-1881), the man who implanted in the young Prince the humanitarian views which resulted in 1861 in the emancipation of the serfs, was well received. It was largely due to efforts of progressive people such as these that a number of provincial universities came into being. The new interests in the Muscovy past led to the creation, in 1842, of an archaeological society in the capital, St. Petersburg, and in 1864, of a similar society in Moscow. It was to be The Wanderers and Slavophile movements which were to form the cradle of the "modern" trends in Russian Art.

2 Rice, T. T. A Concise History of Russian Art, pages 231-235.

The diverse nature of the movement began in 1863. This was in part a result of the St. Petersburg

p.66:2 (contd.) Academy's decision in 1863 to set the theme of Odin in Valhalla as the subject for the annual gold medal award. Thirteen students were so angered by the Academy's choice of a theme entirely divorced from "actuality" that they resigned from the Academy and formed an independent group. In 1870, with I. Kramskoi (1837-1887) as their leader, they founded a society which they called the Society of Wandering Exhibitions (Peredvijnika). They intended showing realistic pictures similar to those of Courbet and Millett in subject matter, but not in painterly style, with the purpose of advocating social reforms to the country by means of travelling exhibitions. Kramskoi was the most mature as well as the most talented and vigorous of the "Wanderers". He soon became as well known for his passionate articles as for his precise, carefully observed paintings. His portraits were competent works, as can be seen in Portrait of a Miller, (Figure 24). It is a sincere, yet somewhat pedestrian work. It illustrates the typical "realist" painterly style of Kramskoi, as well as being indicative of the social matter favoured by The Wanderers Group.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 34. Specifically in that he was also certified as mad before he died.

4 Berwoundar. Mikhail Alexandrovich Vrubel, page 42.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid, page 43.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid, page 44.

p.67:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 54.

2 Varabyncy, D. Russian Painters of the Early Twentieth Century, page 14.

3 Ibid.

4 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 38.

5 As will be seen and discussed when the scenography for ballets is discussed in the following Chapters.

p.68:1 Taking Aurier's definition as the basis of this assumption, pages 23-24.

2 Ranskall, F. The Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow: Art News 1973, page 6.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 60.

p.69:1 Gold, A. and Fizdale, R. Misia, pages 156 and 157.

2 As will be illustrated when the ballet is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

3 Discussed in detail on pages 73-74.

p.70:1 Benois, A. Preface to the Catalogue of Russian Art, page 3.

2 Ibid, page 4.

3 Ibid, page 5.

4 David, in Neo-Classical works such as the Oath of the Horatii emphasized the flattening of the picture plane. This was achieved by not using the Renaissance ideal of one or two point perspective, but rather that of planes paralleling those of the picture-surface, depth being hinted at by these planes which suggested, but did not state, a third dimension.

5 Benois, A. The Russian School of Painting, page 42.

p.71:1 As will be shown when discussing individual ballets designed by the scenographers for the Ballet Russe.

2 Gullan, P. The Symbolists, pages 14-15.

The crucial tenet of the Symbolist philosophy was that of an activity which existed alongside, not in direct relationship to the natural world. Moreover since art obeyed only its own rules, it should not simply reflect external realities, that is "to name an object". Art's ideal, according to the Symbolist dictum, was to express three-quarters of the enjoyment found in the poem: Mallarmé's suggestions - that was the dream element. This would cause a deliberate ambiguity, a quality which was central to Symbolism in general.

1 One can also assume that here he became aware of the works of Matisse, Vuillard and Denis. There are certain elements in his works such as The Réservoir which hint at the knowledge of Denis' paintings such as the stylization of tree forms and their reflections, as well as their simplified rendering.

4 Sarabyanov, D. Russian Painters of the Early Twentieth Century, page 18.

5 Ibid, page 19.

6 Ibid, page 19.

7 Ibid, page 77.

8 Ibid, page 78.

p.72:1 As will be shown when discussing their works in detail (Chapters Three to Seven).

2 As applicable to Footnote 71:2.

3 As evident if Denis' La Dance Breton is compared (collection Joselowitz) 1891.

4 Maeterlinck's play The Bluebird and, later Kandinsky and Jawlensky's Blue Rider group of paintings all make use of the juxtaposition of such colour tones. The Blue Rose, the second generation of Symbolist painters in Moscow, who were directly inspired by Mussatov and succeeded Mir Iskusstva as the new movement in Russian painting after 1905 also make similar colour tonalities.

p.73:1 Sarabyanov, D. Op.cit., page 89.

2 Ibid.

3 Diaghilev, S. Introduction to Paris, Salon d'Automne, 1906, page 33.

4 The Ballet Russe designers, however, only seemed to acknowledge the works of Vrubel and Mussatov as their chief influences.

p.74:1 This is especially noticeable in The Red Whirl is compared to Vallati's Woman on a Couch (1896).

2 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 125.

3 Ibid.

p.75:1 Ibid, page 124.

2 Figure 16, showing the letterhead designed for Mir Iskusstva by Bakst illustrates, as discussed in this Chapter, another aspect of his work - the use of a sinuous line.

3 McDermid, M. Ballroom and the Ballet, page 67.

4 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 78.

5 Mayer, E. Bakst, page 37.

6 If the chiamy of ancient Greece is studied it can be clearly established that Bakst used it as a prototype. The Changing Face of Fashion - Carter, E., pages 17-22.

7 Mayer, E. Op.cit., page 41, citing Bakst. Bakst was also to use Greek vase paintings as a source for his designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune.

p.76:1 Kilar, S. Diaghilev, pages 56-57, citing Diaghilev.

2 Ibid, pages 57-58, citing Diaghilev.

3 Ibid, page 61, citing Diaghilev.

p.77:1 Ibid, page 79.

2 Ibid, page 71.

3 Klimoff, E. Alexandre Benois and His Role in Russian Art. Apollo XCVIII, 142 (1973), page 465.

4 Ibid.

p.78:1 Lifar, S. Diaghilev, page 84.

2 Ibid.

3 Discussed on pages 63-65.

4 Marshall, H. The Pictorial History of the Russian Theatre, pages 8 and 38.

5 Haskell, A. Diaghileff, page 34.

6 Ibid.

p.79:1 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 31.

2 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 30.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid, page 31.

p.80:1 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 43.

2 Ibid, page 45.

3 As specified by the choreographer.

4 Spencer, C. Spirit, page 37.

5 The scenario of the work is placed during 1903; however, the costumes of the 'dolls' reflect various historical periods; for instance, the Biedermeyer period. The dolls are in the toy shop, their purchasers are of the 'contemporary 1903 period.

p.81:1 Haskell, A. Diaghileff, page 42.

2 Ibid

3 Ibid, page 43.

4 Traditionally, Diaghilev is said to have assisted Larionov's and Goncharova's trip to Paris at this time. See Mary Chamot's The Early Works of Goncharova and Larionov, Burlington Magazine, XCVII, page 627 (1955). More recently it has been pointed out that Goncharova did not go on that trip. See Linda Nochlin and Ann Sutherland Harris, Women

p.81:4 Artists 1550-1950, page 286.

(contd.)

5 Spencer, D. Ballet, page 42.

p.82:1 Ibid, page 40.

2 Diaghilev, S. Introduction to Paris, Salon d'Automne 1906, page 75

3 Ibid.

4 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, pages 62-65: Benois, Bakst and Roerich were in Paris at the time, therefore they must have seen at least some of these exhibitions.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Lievens, Prince Peter: The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 44.

p.83:1 Ibid.

2 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 101.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 49. Also it must be remembered that Diaghilev had also attempted to re-write the Imperial scene from this opera during his early experiments in the musical field.

8 Ibid.

p.84:1 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 72.

2 As mentioned in this Chapter as reason for Diaghilev's dismissal from the employment with the Imperial theatre staff.

3 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 103.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid, page 111

6 Ibid.

7 Haskell, A. Diaghileff: His Artistic and Private Life, page 55.

p.85:1 Le Figaro 12.2.1909, page 4 translator Ariadne Mackrell.

p.86:1 Benois, A. Memoirs of the Russian Ballet II, page 250.

p.86:2 To be discussed in the Chapters analysing these ballets

p.87 1 As will be shown in Chapters dealing with individual ballets.

2 All the following features have been discussed in detail in this Chapter.

p.87 3 This is particularly evident if an early Goncharova painted detail of the head of a saint is studied, from Icon Painting with Motifs of 1908, (Figure 40). In this work the influence of Russian icons is extremely pronounced; the head of the saint closely parallels those found in icons such as St. Nicholas, (Figure 95), and Our Lady Vladimorskaya, (Figure 97).

[illegible] THE 1909 SEASON

[illegible] Because of the success of Boris Godunov, [illegible] decided to bring another Russian opera season to [illegible] 1909.[1] This proposed opera season, however, even[illegible] out to consist mainly of ballet works. A [illegible] Diaghilev's contemporaries claimed credit for [illegible] the Russian ballet to Paris. Richard Buckle [illegible] was the existence of the

> [illegible] Marinsky company headed by the ballerina [illegible] with young artists of [illegible] such as [illegible], Nijinsky and Karsavina, which made the Paris [illegible] season inevitable.[2]

[illegible] that the new choreographic ideas of Fokine, [illegible] they were by Isadora Duncan's dancing style

> [illegible] found to find a new public outside Russia [illegible] and Benois were inevitably destined for [illegible] fame.[3]

[illegible] Nijinsky[4] wrote that Vaslav Nijinsky persuaded [illegible]

> [illegible] the early winter of 1909 to present the [illegible] ballet in Western Europe.[5]

[illegible] how he and Pavlova, at a luncheon in St. [illegible] the winter of 1908

> [illegible] to take advantage of this opportunity [illegible] the formation of a committee for the presentation [illegible] in Paris) to show ballet as well.[7]

[illegible] of taking Russian ballet to the West had for some [illegible] part of Diaghilev's "export campaign" as is [illegible] when, during 1906 in Moscow, he told the French [illegible], Robert Brussel, "that in three years, I will [illegible] the Russian Ballet to Paris".[8]

[illegible] the first production of Le Pavillon d'Armide at the [illegible] Theatre in November 1978, Diaghilev related to

Benois that "... this must be shown to Europe".

During his 1908 summer holiday in Switzerland, Fokine received a letter from Benois revealing that

> ... had the idea of persuading Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev to take the ballet company to Paris and to present Le Pavillon d'Armide and other Fokine ballets.[2]

Astruc, of the Société Musicale, the promoter of the Parisian concerts whose interest extended to Russian opera describes how it was he who asked Diaghilev during the season of Boris Godunov in 1908 to bring the Russian ballet to Paris in the following year.[3]

Nijinsky, Pavlova, Dandré, Benois, Bakst and Astruc may all have correctly recalled these conversations, and individually believed that they had been the deciding factor in the promotion of a Russian ballet programme to be shown in Paris. It had been Benois who first persuaded Diaghilev to take the art of ballet seriously.[4] Diaghilev had observed the reform of Fokine in this field. He had seen in Le Pavillon d'Armide that a new unity or Gesamtkunstwerk in design, scenario, choreography and performances was possible, and had realised that in Pavlova and Nijinsky he had two accomplished dancers who could interpret the new ballets and concepts of Fokine.[5] Diaghilev was quite capable of independently concluding that new opportunities were open in the West, particularly because in Russia Teliakovsky was in command of The Imperial Theatres and Diaghilev had fallen from favour with the Tsar. That Diaghilev made both Nijinsky and Pavlova think that they had talked him into exporting the Russian ballet to the West was a feat of diplomacy.[6] Fokine, the choreographer, was also essential to Diaghilev's scheme. However, as Diaghilev had never worked with him, he depended on Benois to introduce Fokine to the idea of touring the Russian ballet. The essential fourth party, Astruc, was indispensible in Paris as manager.

Diaghilev's decision to display ballet [illegible]

public, rather than any other Russian art forms at his disposal may seem to have been imprudent as he had already had notable success in Paris with his presentations of Art Exhibitions and Opera. Furthermore, other ballet companies and performers had visited Paris with little success. For example, Manzotti's Excelsior company visited Paris in 1880, and during the summer of 1905 Pavlova and Bolm had led a small troupe on a tour of Europe, including Paris in their itinerary.[1] Kchessinskaya had made some guest appearances at The Opéra in 1901 and 1908.[2] None of these performances were well received.[3] There was no evidence to suggest that Paris, which had seen the re-lowering of ballet in the Romantic Period[4] and its resurgence in the age of Degas,[5] could in the early part of the century be persuaded to take interest in this décadent art form.

Initially, Diaghilev was convinced that

> ... A programme of opera which included a ballet action as a light divertissement was the only acceptable form of presenting ballet as entertainment.[6]

The contract for the Easter and Autumn season of 1909 was arranged at a dinner with Gabrielle Astruc at Chez Paillard in 1908. Astruc undertook the presentation of the 1909 Ballet and Opera season in Paris.[7] First Astruc noted the names of ballets Diaghilev proposed to present. Le Pavillon d'Armide and two acts of Sylvia by Les Delibes (in three tableaux). Sylvia was deleted, no doubt because of the scandal Diaghilev had had in Russia over this ballet.[8] Other ballets to be presented were Chopiniana and Egyptian Nights. It was evidently intended that the evening of ballet would alternate with opera, for next on the list appeared the opera Mozart et Salieri by Rimsky-Korsakov (sung by Anselmi and Chaliapine). The theatre Astruc proposed would not be The Opéra but the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt. This contract was signed by Diaghilev and Astruc, the programme was left in a flexible state, and the season was scheduled for May 1909.[9]

On Diaghilev's return to St. Petersburg, the former colleagues of Mir Iskusstva assembled to plan this first joint season of opera and ballet.[1] Benois introduced Fokine to the group at this time. He was apparently won over by the group's ideals, especially when he heard that they intended to include his choreographic works Le Pavillon d'Armide, Egyptian Nights and Chopiniana in the Paris repertoire.

The ballet company was assembled and comprised artists from the Imperial Theatres who were on their summer vacation. Their manager was a friend of Fokine, Grigoriev, who had been stage manager with Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg.

During the pre-planning meetings it was decided to change the concept of Chopiniana, which had originally been costumed in national dress,[2] basing the designs on old lithographs of the great ballerinas, Taglioni, as well as to re-orchestrate Chopin's piano music.[3] The work was to be renamed Les Sylphides and would have the form of an abstract ballet blanc.

Egyptian Nights was also to undergo transformation. It was retitled Cléopâtre, and Arensky's overture was replaced by Taneev's from the opera Oresteia. Cléopâtre's entrance was to be danced to music from Rimsky-Korsakov's opera Mlada. The Bacchanale was to be danced to Autumn from Glazunov's Seasons. The bravura divertissement ended with the dance of the Persian girls from Mussorgsky's opera Khovanshchina.[4] These musical changes were implemented because Diaghilev "felt that Arensky's original suite for Egyptian Nights was too weak".[5] The French critic, Nouvel, remarked that with such a conglomerate score it was "nothing but a medley of salade russe".[6] He was correct, yet Cléopâtre was regarded by some "to be sensational".[7] It is curious that the fastidious Diaghilev presented three ballets in

his 1909 Season with music which was unsatisfactory, as well as being in conflict with the theory of a Gesamtkunstwerk. Cléopâtre was an astonishing mélange by six different composers. Tcherephine's score for Le Pavillon d'Armide was considered derivative,[1] and Chopin's Mazurkas, Valses and Preludes used in Les Sylphides although musically of a high order, lose their special quality when orchestrated.

When Diaghilev planned the Paris season it was on the understanding that he was to receive a subsidy of 100,000 roubles which the Grand Duke Vladimir (uncle of the Tzar) had promised from the Imperial purse.[2] Although Diaghilev had fallen from Imperial Russian favour, he was still not without some influence, especially after his highly successful exhibitions and concerts. It was due to these exhibitions and concerts that he could rely on the aid of the Grand Duke Vladimir, who was the chief artistic supporter of the Russian Court. Diaghilev also depended upon Kchessinskaya's ability to manipulate her unique relationship with the Tzar (she had been his mistress),[3] in order to gain additional funds. The financial position altered drastically when the Grand Duke died on 22 February 1909. Kchessinskaya on learning that she was only to dance in Le Pavillon d'Armide withdrew from the company.[4] The loss of these influential supporters led to the withdrawal of the promised subsidy, and the permission to use the Imperial Theatre for rehearsals.[5] Diaghilev managed to raise enough private funds to avoid cancelling the season but the financial implications and loss of support made it necessary to cut the proposed programme.[6] He decided to present only two full-length operas, Ivan the Terrible and Judith, the first act from Glinka's Russian and Ludmilla, as well as the Polovtsian act from Borodin's Prince Igor.[7] Each of these was to be given in a programme with two ballets.[8] The act from Prince Igor which was presented relied heavily on the dance, as the Polovtsian camp scene dominated.[9]

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It seems that it was because of these circumstances that Diaghilev was forced to present a Russian Ballet Season which included very little opera to the Parisian audiences and perhaps not at all through the conniving of his friends, dancers and choreographer. It must also be noted that ballet productions are generally cheaper to mount than operas.

A further problem faced Diaghilev before the season could commence. The Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt could not be obtained because the programme was reorientated towards ballet performances,[1] and ballet was a despised genre at this time owing to the bad performances during "the decline of ballet" period. Astruc secured the dilapidated Théâtre du Châtelet directly opposite the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, and Diaghilev set about redecorating this venue.[2] A new red cloth was used to cover the walls, passages and even some of the floors of the auditorium.[3] The redecorating of the theatre auditorium, although novel, bears a parallel with Diaghilev's ideas for the exterior decoration for The Russian Portrait and Mir Iskusstva exhibitions - he employed the same tactics in all his theatrical ventures.[4]

The first programme presented by the Ballet Russe in 1909 opened with new designs by Benois for Le Pavillon d'Armide.[5] During 1907 Benois had designed the settings and costumes for the St. Petersburg production, (Figure 41). These he redesigned (especially Scene 1) for the Paris performance and felt that he had greatly improved the design concept, (Figure 42):

> In the St. Petersburg version I had been worried by the proximity of lilac, pink and yellow, and by the somewhat motley detail of the décor for the second scene. These defects I now corrected. The perspective of topiary in Armida's garden leading to a baroque templetto at the top of a splendid staircase had in St. Petersburg been seen at an angle; it was now presented full-on, and this enabled Valz, our wizard stage manager from Moscow, to contrive two gigantic water pyramids on either side. The

> _rempietto_ was replaced by a distant palace "blossom'd high in tufted trees".[1]

In this description Benois clearly differentiated between the 1907 and 1909 productions of _Le Pavillon d'Armide_.[2] Benois intended the 1909 ballet sets to be a glorification of "that most French of epochs, the eighteenth century".[3] Benois, the descendant of French, German and Venetian stock and bearing a French name, tried to

> ... show the Parisians that he understood the _style noble_ of Versailles better than they did ... Those who were used to the sickly sweetness invariably used in Paris theatres to characterise the Rococo epoch (as, for instance, the production of _Manon_ Massenet's opera[2] at the Opéra Comique) found our colours too vivid and the grace of our dancers too pretentious. But to those who really understood Versailles, the Sèvres china, the tapestries, the gilt apartments of the palaces and the architectural parks, our _Pavillon d'Armide_ was a revelation. Among our most enthusiastic friends were Robert de Montesquiou and Henri de Regnier.[4]

The designs for _Le Pavillon d'Armide_ mixed the styles of Louis XIV and Louis XV - Baroque and Rococo styles. A similar mixture of styles is to be seen at Versailles.[5]

The choreography for the ballet seem to have been influenced by the rather absurd "romantic libretto",[6] based as it was on Théophile Gautier's work _Daphnis_.[7] It is adapted for the ballet by Fokine.[8] In Gautier's work, however, one encounters the images of an animated Beauvais tapestry set in a Rococo pavilion. In the ballet the pavilion in Scenes I and III is more Baroque and the tapestry (centre stage) purports to be a Gobelins. The scenario was romantic, Hoffmannesque and, on studying it today, rather absurd. However, it appealed to Benois as being "a mysterious and rather erotic ghost story".[9] The scenario briefly tells of the arrival of the hero, Vicomte René at the Pavilion, his welcome by its owner, an old Marquise, his supposed dream where a tapestry comes to life, after which he is entertained in a garden by the sorceress Armida (represented in the tapestry),

and finally of his death the following morning when he is made to realise it was not a dream but, in fact, reality, and he had become the slave of Arolda.[1]

The greatest innovation in this ballet was that the set changes between scenes occurred without the lowering of the front curtain.[2] The flying of the scenery without the lowering of the front curtain was a radical development in the scenography of the period, and kinetic movement of parts of the stage set was without precedent in the commercial theatres of the time. There were exceptions, for although actual set changes took place in full view of the audience in symbolist art theatres (examples being productions by Paul Fort, Lugné-Poë and at times Meyerhold),[3] the full dramatic potential of the actions of scene machinery was not realised. It could be assumed, however, that the scene change involved the spectator empathetically in not only the action of the scenario, but also in the action of the stage mechanics. Such scene changes had not occurred on commercial stages before full scene changes having taken place behind lowered cloths, thus maintaining the theatrical illusion[4]. The empathetic involvement of the audience in these scene changes would have corresponded with Fort's ideal of an active rather than a passive audience participation.[5] The ideal be ng that the audience was made to realise the function of the stage as a venue and not an extension of their perception of the 'real' world.

Further, it can be noted that the scenario and settings, although rather pedantic in their rendition, incorporated many symbolist ideals, such as the correspondences between the 'real' and 'imaginary' worlds - both in the scenario where the tapestry becomes a gateway to a dream world, as well as in the manner in which the setting changed, revealing the dream world beyond the 'real' pavilion. Further uses of the symbolist stage ideal reportedly appeared to have been apparent in the use of projected coloured lighting.[6] This use of coloured light, of importance for scenography in

general (discussed in Appendix 2), changed aspects of the painted scene. The change in lighting, previously discussed in Chapter One, was a major element found in both first and second generation symbolist scenographic ventures. Further, as will be shown, the colouring and execution of Scene 11 of Le Pavillon d'A-mide, (Figure 42), relate quite strongly to the work of the Russian symbolist artist, Borissov-Mussatov, (Figures 29 and 30). It appears that Benois, who was obviously acquainted with Mussatov's work through the Mir Iskusstva exhibitions and magazine, emulated his palette and technique when executing this scene, as well as utilizing his figurative costume types.[1]

Le Pavillon d'Armide's first scene depicted a dimly lit interior of a Baroque pavillion, (Figure 43). This contained tall windows, with ornate oeil-de-boeuf, alternating with painted marble columns. Plaster modelling above the central niche represented allegorical figures resting on clouds, and supported a sumptuous canopy decorated with feathers overhanging the 'magic' Gobelins tapestry.[2] In front of this tapestry, stage centre, stood a giant ormulu clock. Motionless dancers impersonating Time and Love stood on either side of the clock. To the right of the tapestry there was a curtained alcove with a bed, and to the right of the alcove was a dressing table. The décor itself was that of a box set constructed of parallel drops painted in false perspective[3] designed and decorated in a Baroque/Rococo idiom. The use of Corinthian columns and pilasters and the decorated oeil-de-boeuf windows are directly derived from Benois' classical study at the St. Petersburg Academy. The set is similar to previous ballet décor in its representation on a gigantic scale of a room with trompe l'oeil painted details. In fact, it is not at first glance dissimilar to Brückner's Lohengrin décor, (Figure 1). The discernible and essential difference is, however, that in the scenography for Le Pavillon d'Armide,

the designed elements are specified in the scenario. On judging the décor from a contemporary standpoint, it appears rather unexciting. The manner in which the settings were executed were different from those previously seen on commercial stages, as is evident from the following account in Le Figaro:

> The great difference between Russian and French décors can be noticed, while our designers strive for realism the Russians insist on "interpreting". Their skies are brushed with sweeping broom strokes and their palaces are splashed in with textured colour as seen in Le Pavillon d'Armide. It is a huge, wonderfully evocative sketch.[1]

Secondly, it must be remembered that in studying Benois' watercolour sketches, especially for Scene Two, (Figure 42), one is looking at a design for stage décor and not a painting. As such it is adequate. As a painting of the time it is hardly innovative, and exhibits none of the current avant garde pre-occupations.

The scenography was typical of Benois' illusionistic grandeur, which was compatible with the demands of the scenario as well as of the staging of a 'spectacular' entertainment. Thus, it could be further argued that at least some elements of Gesamtkunstwerk are evident as there is a correlation between scenography, scenario and Fokine's choreography. Benois' set for Scene Two, because of his use of the pervasive textural paint surface, integrated the stage areas of backcloth, legs and borders. This use of a painterly technique, remarked on in Le Figaro, needs elucidation. The Russian artists in their scenography, unified the diverse elements of the stage picture through a technique which ensured a constant textural surface, thus facilitating visual unity. The loose, textured application of paint on all surfaces highlights the fact that the scenography presented not a re-presentation of the existing world, but a deliberately 'painted' stage set. The focus was on the process of painting, without disguising the finished product. The product, therefore, did not

masquerade as anything other than a painted set. It was a focus on the artificiality and theatricality of the environment rather than its supposed reality-as had been the case prior to the sets of the Russian designers' work, especially noticeable in realist theatre presentations.[1] The process of thought behind the painterly manner in which the settings were executed, were those of visual equivalents.[2]

The designs for the Ballet Russe productions, such as Le Pavillon d'Armide, Schéhérazade and Prince Igor, were in fact meshing reality-(real) perimeters - although dressed in costumes which echoed the themes in the settings - and real props - with the deliberate artificiality of their environments. Bakst stated:

> ... I consider my sets as paintings in which the performers move, saving for a work that is a painting with continually changing elements ...[3]

He was obviously referring to this particular aspect of Russian painted scenography. In the use of obviously painted effects, as well as the duality between real objects and artifice, the designs as executed for the Ballet Russe parallels the symbolist theatre dictum of

> ... making the audience aware they were watching a performance because the décors did not reflect 'a real life' ... the theatre is artifice and thus it must remain. It is only through this involvement with the artificial that scenography achieves its expressive decorative beauty.[4]

The use of perimeters in an obviously painted environment is most clearly noticed in Le Pavillon d'Armide, Scene II. This setting was an essay in arches and obelisks. The dancing area was defined by a semi-circle of dark, constructed, painted topiary, while Armida's tempietto rose from painted undulant woods on the backcloth. The distant tempietto was circular behind its portico. It recalls in its fantasy the Piedmontese palaces of the Baroque architect and scenographer, Juvara, "especially as it was set against a background of the Alps".[5] The tempietto was

[illegible]pped by an obelisk or spire like that of Sacharov's [illegible]dmiralty in St. Petersburg.[1] The two constructed foun[illegible] on either side of the stage were fed from the nearby [illegible]ine.[2] However, judging from a photograph of this scene, (Figure 44), the fountains were not as grandiose as they were envisaged in Benois' sketch, (Figure 42), or were not working to full capacity.

[illegible] disturbing lack of congruity is in evidence in the scenography for Le Pavillon d'Armide. This is apparent if scenes I and III (the Pavillon interior, with Benois' use of accurately painted architectural elements) are contrasted with the lighter more painterly Scene II. Thus a total gesamtkunstwerk is not in evidence in the scenography as there is a lack of technical consistency.

However, the 1909 production of the ballet was much more successful than the 1907 St. Petersburg presentation, especially the set for Scene II, (Figure 41). In the 1907 version the stage was more cluttered because of the use of angled flats on stage-right. In the Paris version, (Figure [illegible]), a larger area of floor space was available for dancing, because of Benois' use of central perspective, influenced as [illegible] was by the Italian Renaissance stage designers, especially [illegible].[3] Benois thus returned to earlier traditions in [illegible]graphy in his attempt to recapture the mood of eighteenth [illegible] Versailles. As Buckle states :

> [illegible] was in the landscapes of Fragonard and Hubert Robert that the Rococo style verged on Romanticism and it is those painters that Benois' natural arch of foliage, which frames the garden scene, recalls, however, there is nothing in France quite like Benois' [illegible] at the summit of the steps ... The [illegible] and costumes of Benois' ballet had been inspired as the tradition of Versailles.[4]

[illegible] evaluation of Benois' settings for no [illegible] prototype for the scenery in Le Pavillon d'Armide [illegible] found in the work of Fragonard or Robert. Further, [illegible] were painted in what was considered a 'Russian

manner' (also not really equitable with Fregonard's or Robert's techniques) which meant a looseness of painterly style. This technique with

> ... the looseness of vigour of the painting of the décor for Scene II of Le Pavillon d'Armide echoed the suppressed passion of the Russian dancers use of the classical vocabulary. This was innovative even by St. Petersburg standards; for Paris, accustomed to the dismal, danced interludes in operas, and the occasional undistinguished ballet performed by technically brilliant but artistically limited dancers, they had the force of a revelation. Because Fokine had had the courage to break away from the stereotyped attitudes of the classical formula his dancers were revealed as more expressive artists. Ballerinas like Anna Pavlova and Tsaara Karsavina astounded not just by their technical excellence but by the emotional force of their interpretations. Among the men, inevitably Vaslav Nijinsky's prodigious physical gift took the audience's breath away. As when making an exit in Le Pavillon d'Armide he leapt off stage and seemed to soar upwards out of sight; but it was probably Adolph Bolm at the head of the Polovtsian warriors in Prince Igor who most effectively shattered the current image of the male dancer. Instead of the pansy and effete figures who took male roles when they were not entrusted - as in Les Deux Pigeons and Coppélia - to buxom ladies, there was a ferocity and unquestionably virility of Bolm and the whole male ensemble.[1]

Thus both the choreographic as well as the painterly aspects of the scenography for Le Pavillon d'Armide were favourably received.

The costumes designed by Benois were still basically dependent on the formulas used for designing ballet costumes during the late 1890's. The costumes for the nine roles being based on historical data whilst those for the dancing roles were stylised versions of a particular period - the 'historical' elements being incorporated in the form of appliquéd patterns on the conventional tutus and tights worn by the dancers. Benois however, altered these conventions in order that a certain unity could exist between costumes. This aspect was furthered in his colour usage which linked the colours used in the costumes with those in the décors. Further, the costume-

designed by Benois, especially for the dancers, contained an elaboration of detail not in evidence before 1909. This detail is noticeable in the design of the slightly longer tutus as well as the application of layers of cloth over the tutu instead of the usual appliqué of design motif used in earlier ballets. This aspect is noticeable if Armida's costume, (Figure 45), is compared to the costume for Le Fil du Pharoah, (Figure 4), where Benois' design through its use of the layered tutu appears softer and more in a 'period' style than does the tutu with appliquéd law 'ah motifs.[1]

Benois adapted the costume style common in ighteenth century French court masques for the basis of his costume silhouette.[2] This was achieved through the use of the adapted Roman tonnelet, periwig and overskirt. A typical costume in this style was that designed for Rêne in Scene II, (Figure 46). Here it may be observed that the 'Roman' elements of the costumes are in the style of the Versailles court masques of Louis XIV - periwig and kilt. The kilt was longer than that worn during the Roman period. This quasi-Roman kilt was topped by an elaborately decorated armour breast plate with undercovered slashed sleeves. The periwig was crowned by a plumed helmet. The effect was a romanticised version of a Roman soldier. The ideal was present but the actual appearance was an adaptation of an historical convention to fit in with the needs of the period in which it was worn by the dancers.

In designing the courtiers' costumes, (Figure 47), Benois retained a dress-style that was derived from the Versailles fashion of the Louis XIV period. Although the skirt for the female courtier was shorter than those used at Versailles, because of the detail of the motifs used, it was not dissimilar to the tonnelet fashionable in all French court masques of the eighteenth century.

Nijinsky's costume, (Figure 48), in Scene II was white, yellow and silver and was trimmed with festoons of silk, lace ruffles and ermine tails.

It was a simplified form of the courtly male dancing costume of the eighteenth century such as the Masque costume Boquet had designed, (Figure 49), in 1778-79.[1] If Benois' and Boquet's costumes are compared the similarity is remarkable, arguing that Benois must have been aware of the Boquet design. It could thus be stated that this confirmed Benois' recreating his design ideals for Le Pavillon d'Armide in an attempt to recapture the mood of eighteenth century Versailles.[2] As was the case with the settings, the costumes were equally influenced "by Benois' ideal vision of Versailles".[3] It was this aspect of Benois' designs which separated him from previous ballet costumiers. In the majority of ballets prior to 1909 it is found that the costume types for various characters in the same ballet were radically different.[4] This was not so in Le Pavillon d'Armide.

Taking a photograph of the Nijinsky costume, (Figure 50), as an example it can be noted that as with Boquet's design, the dancer wore a tonnelet or wire overskirt - an exaggerated development of the kilt worn under the stylised Roman armour of dancers in the time of Louis XIV. On his head was a white silk turban with an ostrich feather. Round his neck and high up under the chin there was a jewelled band.[5] Benois' designs for the two ladies attending Nijinsky were "in yellow and gold".[6]

Armida [Pavlova][7] wore a white turban bound with pearls and a blue bodice and overskirt, (Figure 45).[8] Armida's costume was still heavily reliant on the accepted short projecting tutu. Benois' interpretation, however, differed from earlier ballet designers. He lengthened the skirt and embellished the costume with motifs, not as appliqué as was the case prior to 1909, but with swathes of material that were arranged to recall the style of the Versailles masques. Benois eventually co-ordinated costume design with a completely accurate and satisfying placing in historical and scenario context when he designed Petrushka in 1911. (This was not fully realised in Le Pavillon d'Armide).

Le Pavillon d'Armide, the first ballet presented by the Ballet Russe, contained in essence the principles which would later influence all ballet and theatre scenography. Although the major images in the ballet were derived from the romantic and classical ballet traditions, innovative features have been noted. For example, coloured lighting was used to bring atmospheric change to a scene (such as the quality of lighting in Scene II, changing the colouring from that of midday to sunset).[1] This use of light had its origins in symbolist theatre production.[2] Another element derived from symbolist theatre was the involvement of the audience in the production on the level of being made to realise that what they were witnessing was a theatrical experience. This was achieved through the breaking of the illusionary stage format by presenting scene changes without lowering the front curtain,[3] as well as by the use of scenery which was rendered in an obviously painted manner. Finally, by altering the conventional tradition of ballet costuming in order that they were in keeping with the scenario and scenography, Benois promulgated a movement which was innovative in the sphere of ballet costume design, as well as laying the foundations for future experimentation in this field (as will be seen in the costumes for Schéhérazade, Carnaval, L'Après-midi d'un Faune and Jeux).[4]

In later scenography by Benois these aspects were explored to a greater extent. Bakst, however, achieved similar goals earlier - in 1909 - with his designs for Cléopâtre, and Schéhérazade in 1910.

If it were not for the fact that Diaghilev's repertory for this season was less a result of careful planning than of "making do" with existing works and embellishing them, his placing of the Polovtsian Act from Borodin's opera Prince Igor after Le Pavillon d'Armide, would be acknowledged as a master-stroke of programme-building. No two works could be more different or more calculated to display the skills

of the Russian Company. The public was transported from the splendours of a fairy-tale Versailles in Le Pavillon d'Armide to the remote solitude of the Asiatic steppes in Prince Igor. As Buckle states:

> --- what more total contrast to Le Pavillon d'Armide than the third act of Borodin's Prince Igor. Roerich has designed an empty, desolate landscape, in which are pitched the beehive tents of the nomadic twelfth century Polovtsi, and the smoke of their camp fires rises against a tawny sky. The Parisian audience must [had] had the strange sensation of being transported to the ends of the earth.[1]

To give the effect of isolation and desolation Nicholas Roerich abolished stage wings and painted his scene on a curved cyclorama. This was an innovative concept as legs were usually used to mask the backstage theatre space. Because Roerich rejected the use of legs, the horizontal and panoramic aspects of the painted (curved) landscape were stressed.[2] While this stress on the horizontality of the stage format was innovative for ballet theatre, Edward Gordon Craig had already utilized the horizontal aspect of the stage format, although for different reasons. Craig had lowered the proscenium arch for performances at The Hampstead Conservatoire in 1924.[3] With this new configuration, the horizontality of the proscenium opening was stressed. The reason Craig provided for this innovation was that he was able to operate the use of footlights and light his scene from above.[4]

However, by 1930 Craig emphasized the vertical elements in his designs because the electronics of stage lighting had been improved. It is possible that Roerich, in stressing the horizontal aspects of the scenography, was influenced by Craig for they had met and discussed various aspects of scenography whilst Craig was in Russia designing Hamlet for The Moscow Arts Theatre in 1908.[5]

Roerich's scenography for Prince Igor, with its new horizontal format, created a visually exciting scene.

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> --- what more total contrast to Le Pavillon d'Armide than the third act of Borodin's Prince Igor. Roerich has designed an empty, desolate landscape, in which are pitched the beehive tents of the nomadic twelfth century Polovtsi, and the smoke of their camp fires rises against a tawny sky. The Parisian audience must have had the strange sensation of being transported to the ends of the earth.[1]

To give the effect of immensity and desolation Nicholas Roerich abolished stage wings and painted his scene on a curved cyclorama. This was an innovative concept as legs were usually used to mask the proscenium theatre space. Because Roerich rejected the use of legs, the horizontal and panoramic aspects of the painted (curved) landscape were stressed.[2] While this stress on the horizontality of the stage format was innovative for ballet theatre, Edward Gordon Craig had already utilised the horizontal aspect of the stage format, although for different reasons. Craig had lowered the proscenium arch for performances at The Hampstead Conservatoire in 1904.[3] With this new configuration, the horizontality of the proscenium opening was stressed. The reason Craig provided for this innovation was that he was able to negate the use of footlights and light his scene from above.[4]

However, by 1909 Craig emphasized the vertical elements in his designs because the electronics of stage lighting had been improved. It is possible that Roerich, in stressing the horizontal aspects of the scenography, was influenced by Craig for they had met and discussed various aspects of scenography whilst Craig was in Russia designing Hamlet for The Moscow Arts Theatre in 1908.[5]

Roerich's scenography for Prince Igor, with its new horizontal format, created a visually exciting scene.

> From the moment the curtain rose on the Polovtsian segments the audience was seized by a sense of utter strangeness of this unknown land between Persia, Tartary and China, sparsely populated by warring tribes.[1]

Colour, form, texture as well as the feeling of a vast panoramic space were integrated and framed by a false proscenium arch, which further stressed the horizontality of the scene by lowering the proscenium arch (as Craig had done at The Hampstead Conservatoire). This proscenium arch was decorated in floral patterns that were derived from Russian peasant art.[2] Such patterns are in fact similar to that seen on a carved window-sill detail, (Figure 21), and the Terem palace stairway detail, (Figure 20), which are of medieval Muscovy origin.

The set for Prince Igor (being this floral proscenium arch) was executed in a free painterly manner, showing low-lying hills and beehive huts against a vast colourful sky, (Figure 51). The whole effect was

> ... that of raw primitivism, in bold colours which were literally slashed on the canvas backdrop.[3]

According to Grigoriev, Roerich's intention for the décor and costumes was to promulgate an evocation of the remote Russian past, infinite space and "the mystery of pagan rites and elemental symbolist forces".[4] Both the set and the costumes were derived from Russian folk art. Roerich gleaned his knowledge whilst working as an archaeologist and through his contact with the Wanderers and Slavophile groups[5] who were equally interested in the ethnic art of Russia. It is also relevant that Borodin, when he composed his opera, used the twelfth century epic poem The Lay of Igor's Men for his libretto. It was this poem that formed the base from which the Slavophile movement sprang.[6]

There were no extant relics of the Polovtsi and nothing was known of the existence of this fighting nomadic tribe. Roerich, an archaeologist and specialist in primitive Russian

cultures, drew much of his inspiration for the costume designs of Prince Igor from what he had discovered on his earlier archaeological digs of other cultures. Consequently he produced costumes for the Polovtzi which were "a combination of the Yakut and Kirzig dress",[1] (Figures 52 and 53). The results were very colourful and seemed to convince the Parisian audience "as a distant barbarism".[2]

The aspect of barbarism was inherent in the scenario as well as the music of Prince Igor. The music was termed "oriental and barbaric",[3] and the scenario underlined the musical themes of the score. Act II was set in the Polovtsian camp where Igor (the baritone Chorunov) and his son (the tenor Smirnov) were held captive by the Great Khan Khontchark (the bass Saparojetz). A dance divertissement was held for their entertainment at the end of which Igor was offered anything which would make his captivity bearable. He, however, declared that he lacked nothing but liberty.[4]

The danced divertissement which occupied a large portion of the act was choreographed by Fokine. It was this section that caused a sensation. According to Cocteau this was because the dancers were

> ... ferocious of aspect, their faces smeared with soot and mud, their coats green and mottled red and ochre, their trousers striped in bright hues; one is reminded of a lair of wild beasts rather than human beings.[5]

It is interesting to note that the term 'wild beasts' (Fauves) was given to Matisse and a group of painters in their exhibition of 1905 at the Salon d'Automne.

The colours used in the Prince Igor scenography were derived from Roerich's knowledge of the Fauve exaltation of pure colour, especially the influence of the Chatou group of Fauves (Matisse, Derain and Vlaminck),[6] with their uniformity of light, pictorial space-construction (the tension between space and picture surface created through colour), purity and simplification of means, and

the concern with expression and decoration. Roerich visited Paris in 1905 and saw the Fauve exhibitions.[1] Therefore, it is not unlikely that he was aware of their use of colour when designing Act II of Prince Igor.

The design concept for Prince Igor offers an excellent example of a scenography that is both decorative and expressive. Roerich must have been aware of Borodin's thoughts concerning this opera, for he wrote that he

> ... was aiming at colourful scenic action, rich in incidents, a sort of "chanson de geste" in which the story flows into the visual clarity of the presentation. It is Lyric epic translated into lyricism and symphony. A character is not a character conceived in the spirit of the drama's theatrical limitations, but it is the life of emotion concentrated in a human figure. The play becomes a painting, the painting is animated in music and scenery, the state is charged with colours and transfigured in songs and dances.[2]

Thus, it may be assumed that Roerich's scenography was in harmony with the musical framework of the opera. It also is perfectly in keeping with the dramatic. Therefore, the work must be considered as a unit - a Gesamtkunstwerk.

The colour Roerich used played an important part in creating a unity with scenario and music. The orange and green sky created a feeling of depth because of the combination and relationship of the colours to one another. The top half of the sky was pale green blending to orange. The feeling of vastness which Roerich intended is achieved because the orange moves forward on a visual plane whereas the top pale green recedes, an effect noted by Cocteau and Buckle.[3] Such colour usage finds its parallel in the early Fauve techniques such as that used by Vlaminck,[4] as well as that used by Gauguin.[5] Gauguin, however, would never have used the texture of applied paint seen in this set. This implementation of painterly texture could possibly be equated with a similar paint application employed by the early German Expressionists and Fauve artists such as Vlaminck,

Derrain and Kirchner.[1] Roerich noted that for both the set and costume designs for Prince Igor he was drawing on his "knowledge of the works of Gauguin",[2] which he had seen at the Mir Iskusstva exhibitions of 1904 and 1905.[3]

It is in the costume sketches that a direct parallel with the works of Gauguin may be noted. These costume sketches, (figures 52 and 53), illustrate the same linear treatment, Cloisonnism, which in the work of both artists consisted of areas of colour bound by heavy contour lines. In Roerich's sketches these outlines are also used to delineate the peasant motifs incorporated in the costume, as noticeable in the tunics of the Polovtsian warriors, (figure 52). In Roerich's designs for the costumes he utilized some of Gauguin's harmonies such as the contrasting of the reds, yellows and greens. The saturation of these colours as well as their proximity to one another parallel a similar usage by Gauguin.

The sketches for the costumes, (figures 52 and 53), illustrate a unique concept in ballet costume design. Unlike Benois' creations for Le Pavilion d'Armide these costumes were abstractly and entirely based on costumes of the past.[4] None of the previous conventions used in ballet costumes are in evidence in the scenography of Prince Igor.[5] The only concessions to ballet was that they did not restrict the dancers' movements. The primitive shapes and colours, the detailing of the fabrics and the line used for the motif designs are similar to the designs of the ancient Muscovy empire as can be noted in examples of Muscovy artefacts are studied, such as an enamelled bowl, (figure 22), although Roerich's designs are simplified in comparison to those used on the bowl. There are also motifs used in Roerich's designs, such as the simplified floral forms, which directly link with the stylised flower from a window frame, (figure 21). Roerich used similar design motifs in his production of Le Sacré du Printemps in 1913.

Of all the ballets in the 1909 season Les Polovtsian dances

from Prince Igor caused the most interest. Its savage concept, the use of shape, the feeling of space and the use of colour established a precedent for the future; colour and shape combinations, which convey and engender a special emotive response, were used. This psychological and visual impact on the audience would in later works such as Bakst's Schéhérazade (1910), be explored in greater depth, it being in 1910 that Bakst began to formulate his colour theories. In contrast Roerich may have worked more intuitively as he stated so fervently that like Gauguin and Borodin, he felt that

> ... the harmonious effects of musical chords and combinations of primary colours with their complementaries were almost literally identical, giving the same satisfaction to the ear and eye respectively.[1]

There is thus no doubt that Roerich was working within the framework of the Gesamtkunstwerk theory using colour as the linking and emotive receptive factor.

The last item on the first programme was Le Festin, a divertissement which consisted of an arrangement of Character and National dances together with one pas de deux, performed to music by Russian composers. Le Festin pretended to be a ballet. It was, however, nothing more than a series of divertissement strung together to form an evening's entertainment, although Karsavina, the Ballet Russe principal ballerina, wrote that :

> Fokine's principles will not allow him to think that he has consented to something so old fashioned as a divertissement being included in a programme supervised by himself, and he pretends that Le Festin with its traditional and modern choreography welded loosely into a whole, is a ballet.[3]

This work was really only an excuse for dancing, mostly to "the most Russian of Russian music".[4]

The sets were borrowed from other productions as was the music. Some new costumes were designed some old ones

used [illegible] therefore it cannot be said to comply with any of the ideals of Gesamtkunstwerk, expressive-decorative scenography, or in fact with a unity of production and presentation of any level. A few isolated designs emerged which [illegible] discussion as they furthered the aesthetic promulgated [illegible] scenographers for the Ballet Russe.

[illegible] noted that the set for Le Festin, (Figure 54), was the same as that for Korovin's first act décor of the opera Russlan and Ludmilla, designed for the Mariinsky Theatre, but painted afresh for the 1909 Paris Season.[2] There is a problem concerning this statement, as later in the same season Diaghilev mounted Russlan and Ludmilla with sets by Korovin. It seems unlikely that the same backcloth could have been used in two productions within the same season. The same colour sketch backcloth for Russlan and Ludmilla, [illegible] to have been used for Le Festin, shows a banqueting-hall based on the Muscovy architecture so beloved by the Moscow school of artists. The heavy Muscovy columns and tripartite arches are illustrated. Korovin's fluid painterly style is evident, especially in the execution of the ceiling and roof-beams. The set has been destroyed and as no phographic records appear to remain no conclusion can be reached.

The Russian music used was from vastly different composers which shows how fragmented Le Festin was. For example, there was

> ... the march to Rimsky-Korsakov's Coq d'Or, a Georgian Tesghinka from Glinka's Russlan, Tchaikovsky's Blue Bird pas de deux from The Sleeping Beauty ... the Czardas from Glinka's A Life for the Tsar, Tchaikovsky's Buffoon's dance from Casse-Noisette ... Petipa's Grand Pas Classique from Raimonda and the finale from Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony.[3]

Bakst, Benois, Bilibine and Korovin designed the costumes for the ballet. The fantastic costumes by Bakst for the Tchaikovsky pas de deux turned the ballerina, Karsavina,

into the bird whereas it was originally the man who was the bird in Petipa's production.[1] Karsavina was attired in flaming ostrich feathers on headdress and skirt, (Figure 55). The design as shown in Bakst's sketch is extremely ornamental, with its panniered skirt and tall ostrich plumed headdress. On looking at the sketch one wonders how Karsavina managed to dance in this concoction. It must surely have been modified. Bakst's design for The Firebird costume of 1910 along similar lines must have been far more practical. Yet, judging from the sketch of the 1909 costume (no photographic record seeming), a development in ballet costume design is obvious. The short projecting tutu is still evident, yet there is a wealth of decorative appliqué which is quite unlike the ballet costumes of the pre-1909 period. The designs, although recalling Art Nouveau, have their origins in the Abramtsevo school's study of ancient Muscovy textile prints. Sweeping here they have been abstracted. Instead of the circular motifs found in Muscovy textiles Bakst elaborated the basic circle design into feathery orange and gold spirals. An ideal motif when describing the bird-like character Karsavina was portraying. These spiral forms are continued in the orange ring on the tights. All is synthesized into a design that is exotic.

According to Buckle Nijinsky's costume was that of a turbanned prince with "a mustard, lime-green and gold tunic sewn with pearls and topaz".[2] (Figure 56). On comparing the sketch and the actual costume it may be seen how closely the original reveals faithful to the concept. (Figure 57). The costume, as with that designed for Karsavina, projects an opulence of the Orient. The design woven within the fabric is based on ethnic Russian textile designs[3] and the shape and format of both costumes are Eastern in quality. This Eastern influence, noticeable in most of Bakst's works, was to fit its height in his 1910 designs for Schéhérazade.

The music to the programme was "a notch-perch" and the designs, because of the many designers working within one production, probably presented a comparable disunity. Judging from the surviving evidence there seems to be no visual relationship between the different costumes and, therefore, it can be suggested that Le Festin was not conceived as an integrated production. Le Festin was the final production in the first programme.

The second programme opened on May 25th 1909.[2] Chaliapine made his first appearance in Rimsky-Korsakov's opera Pskovitienne, renamed by Diaghilev Ivan the Terrible.[3] Astruc suspected Chaliapine may be the chief attraction because of the success of his performance in Boris Godunov the previous year for the Saison Russe".[4] He was paid almost as much as the rest of the company put together.[5] Although his success was great that of the ballets as a whole was greater. Ivan the Terrible was one of the full length operas in this Diaghilev season. There was no dancing in it.[6]

On the 2nd June 1909 the répétition générale of the second mixed programme of opera and ballet was presented.[7] This programme comprised the first act of Glinka's opera Russian and Ludmilla and the ballets Les Sylphides and Cléopâtre.

It was Benois who had urged Diaghilev to include in the Paris repertory the second version of Fokine's ballet Chopiniana, renamed Les Sylphides.[9] Diaghilev had new orchestrations of the Chopin pieces made by Liadov, Glazunov, Tcherepnin, Sokolov and Stravinsky.[10] For Les Sylphides Benois designed "a romantic setting of ruined Gothic Church in a moonlit glade".[11] (Figure 58).

In the photograph of the set for the original production, (figure 58), the ruined cathedral on stage left and forest stage right as specified in the scenario may be seen. The ruined cathedral is executed in a painterly manner and,

perhaps because of this, its form is not clearly recognizable. The only elements that point to it being 'gothic' are the narrow arched windows. A somewhat ambiguous gravestone image is positioned behind the central figure with upraised arms. The set is in the romantic theatrical tradition,[1] similar to those used in the ballets of the 1850's - especially Giselle and La Sylphide. If this photograph is compared with the original used to illustrate the opening production of Giselle, (Figure 15), this romantic influence may be observed. The forest, the ruin, the gravestone and the long tulle tutus of the dancers incorporate the language of the romantic stage picture. All these elements are noticeable in Benois' designs. There is, however, one aspect which does not totally comply with this formula. This is the manner in which the set has been painted. Judging from the photograph, (Figure 58), the execution was much freer than that used in the 1850's. This is particularly noticeable in the backcloth. The vertical slashed lines may be paint texture or alternatively due to the backcloth not having been properly stretched. The cathedral and forest are rendered in a loose painterly style. In this manner the set for Les Sylphides corresponds in treatment to the set for Scene II of Le Pavillon d'Armide, (Figure 42). Benois used a freer painterly style of presentation in both sets whilst relying on concepts which were derived from a historical base, utilizing this in context with the presented scenario. (Le Pavillon d'Armide was based on the ideal of eighteenth century Versailles, Les Sylphides on the romantic ballet presentations of the 1850's). Therefore it may be concluded that at this point the only innovation Benois introduced to scenography was that of a looser paint application, rendering his settings more painterly, and so more theatrically viable. The set remains that of a stage setting (due to the looseness of the painting technique) and is not an imitation of the 'real' world.[2]

The colours were [illegible] greys and dark greens[3], and the set

was lit in blues[1] as the scene was supposed to take place in "a glade in the forest in moonlight".[2]

The calf-length white dresses used in this ballet are reminiscent of those designed by Ciceri[3] for Taglioni in the mid-nineteenth century romantic ballet La Sylphide, as well as those worn by Carlotta Grisi[4] in Gautier's Giselle. This can be seen in the photographs, (figures 59 and 60), of the ballerinas in costume are compared with the illustrations for Giselle, (figure 15). The dresses are almost identical and the ballerinas in both cases wore flowered headdresses, and were purported to have wings [illegible] Act II attached to their waists".[5] These wings are barely visible in the photograph of Karsavina and Nijinsky, (figure 60). "Wings were included by Benois as they represented the ideal symbol of reincarnated spirit forms".[6] This symbol having its origins in the mid-nineteenth century.

Benois did not seem entirely happy with the costume he created for Nijinsky.

> It seemed to me to be a little comic when I saw it on the stage. It consisted of a black velvet jacket, a collar A l'enfant, a light tie, long curls and white tights, and yet his slightly carnival appearance made the artist more like a figure from some old headed reticule or painted fanpshade. It was just such a funny improbable troubadour who formed the dreams of our own grandmothers, the creators of the embroidered reticules and painted fanshapes.[7]

Nijinsky's costume was a romanticised version of the poetic troubadour style and, therefore, in keeping with the concept of the scenario as well as the ballerina's attire. It seems that all the costumes were executed in black and white - white for the sylphs, and black and white for Nijinsky's costume.[8]

All the elements, when presented as a stage picture, seem to appear unified in their romantic illusion. The re-introduction of the longer tutu emphasized this romanticism.

Despite Benois' eclecticism, and no matter how much the contemporary viewpoint deplores or rejects this romanticism, the ballet as a whole presented a unified image. There was no innovation in design principles as Benois was recreating a past epoch, but the designed format was unified in its presentation, taking into account the function of the stage-floor space as well as the unity of costumes, set, music and scenario - thus creating a Gesamtkunstwerk, in accordance with Wagner's prescribed ideals.

As in Scene II of Le Pavillon d'Armide, Fokine's Les Sylphides consisted of a series of dances. The first ballet portrayed the formal splendours of Versailles where classical ballet was born, the second, Les Sylphides, "evoked the tormented dreams of the 1830's".[1] Les Sylphides can be seen as a symbolist ballet for it evoked other worldly correspondences.[2] That is the correspondences between the 'real' world of the stage and the personage of the 'poet', with the evocation of a dream inhabited by sylphs or spirit forms.[3] The costumes and set, although romantic in feeling, further this symbolist vision - the ballerinas being evocations from the spirit world,[4] the set being that of a ruined church with adjoining grave yard in a forest. The settings for Giselle Act II and Les Sylphides are almost identically described in their respective scenarios.[5] Significantly Giselle was considered by Autier to be "a symbolist work par excellance".[6]

Les Sylphides, which was first presented in its final form at the Mariinsky in St. Petersburg in the previous year (1908),[7] was totally unlike anything seen on the ballet stage before. Dance melted into dance, group into group, and although the traditional pas de deux was used, all formality was taken out of the port de bras, all virtuoso steps were omitted.[8] The object was not to display

technique but to create a mood.

Never before in a choreographic format had principal dancers been so merged with the corps de ballet.[1] Never had a dancer turned her back on an audience.[2] Never before had a male solo contained no double turns in the air, nor failed to end with a préparation and a series of pirouettes.[3] An example of how "instinctively Fokine breathed the air of a new age",[4] as inaugurated by Isadora Duncan in the early part of the twentieth century, was observed in the different endings he created for each solo.[5] In the first valse Karsavina finished with a pirouette and stopped on her toes with her back to the audience.[6] With the first Mazurka Pavlova ran off the stage.[7] In the Mazurka Nijinsky, after a jump, fell on one knee and stretched out his right hand.[8] In the Prelude Baldina froze on her toes, facing the audience hand to lips, "as if catching the sound of a distant bird or imploring the orchestra to play still more softly".[9] Fokine claimed that his "symbolic intention in Les Sylphides was that the male dancer was a poet, or he was Chopin ..."[10] The three female principals and the corps de ballet of sixteen were dancers, yet they were meant to be "fairies or figments of the poet's imagination".[11] Various critics have compared the ballerinas in Les Sylphides "to water, trees, clouds, mist and festoons of white flowers"[12] which indicates the evocative nature of the work where the ballerina was seen as an ambiguous symbol - the ideal of the symbolist tradition as stated by Aurier.[13]

Les Sylphides was an abstract[14] symbolist ballet. In ballet the term abstract denotes a work having no narrative line. In 1909 the idea of complete abstraction had not been explored fully in easel painting. Therefore it was not surprising that Benois did not experiment with abstraction for the scenography, even though Les Sylphides was the first abstract ballet in choreographic format.

In Les Sylphides a unified scenographic concept was achieved.

but unlike Roerich's designs for Prince Igor, Benois based his work on the concepts of a bygone age, whereas Roerich was reliant on contemporary painterly methods, whilst using archaeological sources.

Cléopâtre, which followed Les Sylphides, was as much a contrast in design style as Prince Igor had been to Le Pavillon d'Armide. The ballet was a melodramatic, scenographically excessive spectacle, in contrast to the quiet, almost dreamlike quality inherent in Les Sylphides. The ballet was

> ... newly re-created for PARIS from the versions of Arensky's Egyptian Nights mounted by Fokine at the Maryinsky in 1908.[1]

The scenario told of the arrest of the Queen, Cléopâtre (Ida Rubenstein), at a temple. Here she was taken from the sarcophagus in which she travelled, and divested of her protective veils. At this point an arrow with a love-letter landed at her feet. She 'read' the letter, and an Egyptian nobleman, Amenes (Fokine), was brought forward as the writer. He pleaded for an affair with the Queen, much to the distress of his lover, Ta-Hor (Pavlova). The plea was granted with the proviso that he drank poison at the end of their idyll. The affair (amidst much dancing) then proceeded followed by the poisoning.[2]

Benois, who helped write the scenario, was aware of its absurdities:

> ... Egyptian gentlemen never paid court to the temple slaves, and never shot arrows with love letters to the feet of the Queen. The daughters of the Pharaoh would not dream of indulging in love affairs on the threshold of a temple and never poisoned their temporary favourites before the eyes of the people who had come to worship them. Lastly, if Cléopâtre did keep Greek dancers it would not have been in front of the Gods that she would have allowed them to dance the mad Bacchanale.[3]

The music was originally written by Arensky but Fokine, on Diaghilev's insistence, added

> ... two dances, one by Gladzounov and the other by Glinka, and a finale to music by Mussorgsky. [the Bacchanale] [1]

Cléopâtre, with its melodramatic theme and its music by different composers, was again a mixed bag of musical ideas.[2] Therefore it is impossible to describe the work as a musically successful Gesamtkunstwerk,[3] although in set and costumes a definite unity was to be seen. As far as it can be gathered from contemporary reports the scenography, scenario and the purloined music were, however, received enthusiastically by the audience. As Nijinska states:

> The théâtre du Châtelet was sold out every evening during the run of Cléopâtre. The mood of the public remained wildly enthusiastic.[4]

The critics, on the other hand, were not as enthusiastic, as Nijinska reports:

> The French critics were quite outspoken in their disapproval of the music for Cléopâtre, a pot pourri of several composers.[5]

Fokine was, however, able to realise his ideals of a dance-drama divorced from the conventions of the old style of ballet. Cléopâtre was not a conventional ballet. The dancers performed barefoot or in slippers, similar to Isadora Duncan and Loïe Fuller. Nobody stood in one of the five positions nor executed port de bras.

Although Benois was instrumental in the presentation of the ballet it was Bakst who designed the set and costumes. Bakst's set, (Figure 61), was a grand conception and the impression it created on the Paris audience "was so powerful that it launched a new age of exoticism",[6] which reached its peak with Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade in 1910.

As Nijinska recalls:

> ... the total spectacle achieved by Bakst was striking, and the ballet Cléopâtre was recognized in Paris as the success of the designer-artist Léon Bakst, and proved a turning point of theatrical decorative arts in France.[7]

Why and how this occurred is documented by Nijinska. She remembers that

> ... the scenic presentation - the set, costumes, and props retained the archaic Egyptian style of the first presentation of Egyptian Nights but at the same time gave it a completely new appearance with strikingly different colour and designs. As the curtain opened, the orange-rust hues of the Egyptian stage set, bathed in a hot African sun, astonished and enchanted the eyes of the spectators. Tall red-orange Egyptian columns stood against the blue sky, and huge monuments - pharonic figures - formed a spectacular background.[1]

The set was also regarded as impressive by Jean Cocteau

> The ballet is too famous and M. Bakst's set and costumes too noteworthy for my comments to contribute in any way. Bakst's scenery was well executed, the concept was good, and the colour rose-rust granite and blue were beautiful.[2]

Judging from Bakst's watercolour sketch of the set, (Figure 61), it showed a vast Egyptian courtyard supported by massive columns and flanked by gigantic statues. The prevailing colours appeared to have been orange, red, pink, green and blue. This sketch for the décor is all that remains of the set which was accidentally burnt in 1913.[3] Therefore, when taking into consideration the comments made by Nijinska and Cocteau together with the watercolour sketch, it may be concluded that when executed the set must have been accurately based on the original design.

The temple "bathed by the hot African sun"[4] was an effect probably achieved through stage lighting. Judging from Nijinska's description, Bakst and Diaghilev must have employed the most advanced lighting of the period utilizing the new straw-yellow, pink and blue filters with their lighting units. These would give the impression of an atmospheric heat-haze. Therefore it may be assumed that not only was the set painted in vibrant colours, not previously experienced by the Parisian audience (excepting in Prince Igor),[5] but that the lighting plot provided

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additional colour intensity. The lighting, however, not only illuminated the performance area but intensified the colours, thereby adding an expressive-decorative element to the scenography.[1]

The colours of the set were echoed in the costumes, which seemed to have excited considerable comment, as seen in the review published by Huntley Carter in the London Times. He stated that when Cléopâtre was presented in London that

> ... Bakst's vibrant and exciting use of chromatic combinations and the use of primary colours, which were held together by the design framework in which he used characteristic Egyptian motifs were caught up and repeated in the costumes and the ornaments worn by the dancers, were both innovative and exciting.[2]

Carter's description suggests that both set and costumes formed a theatrical unity of design concept.

The unified, decorative-expressive quality of the work seems to have been most successful in the mise-en-scène of the ballet.

> Balanced on the shoulders of six stalwarts, a kind of chest of gold and ebony was borne aloft. A Negro youth kept circling about it, making way for it, urging on the bearers in his zeal. The chest was placed in the centre of the Temple its doors were opened and from it was lifted a kind of glorified mummy swathed in multi-coloured veils which was placed upright on ivory pattens.[3]

The 'mummy', Ida Rubinstein, was subjected by four slaves to various manipulations. They gradually unwound her veils of different colours. These veils were then draped across the stage and their colouring echoed those used in the set, thus forming an elaborate integration between set, costumes and lead character. The mise-en-scène was written by Benois.[4]

Benois' mise-en-scène comprised Cléopâtre being slowly displayed by slaves who unwound her first veil which was red with lotuses and silver crocodiles painted on it.[5]

The second veil was green with the histories of the Egyptian Dynasties embossed on the cloth in golden filigree.[1] The third veil was blue, and through it the out-line of a [illegible] could be discerned.[2] This veil revealed Madame Rubinstein [illegible] fall with a sweeping circular gesture. She [illegible] the audience perched unsteadily on her pattens,

> slightly bent forward, with something of the movement of the Isis' Wings, she moved across the stage.[3]

On her head she wore a blue wig, with golden wing motifs on [illegible] of her face. (Figure 5).[4]

[illegible] scenography was magnificently theatrical, especially [illegible] the [illegible] entrance of Cléopâtre. The décor and [illegible] vulgarized a vogue for Egyptian antiquity.[5] The [illegible] for Cléopâtre were based on a stylization [illegible] Egyptian antiquities. Rubinstein's costume, a version [illegible] by Queen Hapsetshut, was taken from wall paint-[illegible] This can be established when this costume design, (Figure 5), is compared with Egyptian murals found at the [illegible] Temple at Deir el-Bahari. This reliance on Egyptian antiquity as a source applied to the set as well. The columns had a lotus bud type capital and the "enormous [illegible] were based on those of the Pharaohs at Karnak".[8] The scenario and décor were presumed to be so authentic [illegible] Kaiser Wilhem II, after having attended the ballet in Berlin, called together the members of The Society of Egyptologists of which he was President, and discussed with them the cultural significance of the ballet and urged them to study Benois' mise-en-scène.[9]

The Cléopâtre designs were an improvement on preceding ballet décors, with the exception of Roerich's scenography for Prince Igor. The reason for the comparative success of Cléopâtre in visual terms was that it presented a unified aesthetic statement as can be gleaned from Huntley Carter's review. The set was still rather pedantic in its rendition, [illegible] and constructed on a huge, somewhat

overwhelming scale.

Following the trend set by Prince Igor during the [illegible] programme presented by the Ballet Russe, the dan[illegible] Cléopâtre were not costumed in the conventional [illegible] They were attired according to the designer's [illegible] of the correct dress of the historical pe[illegible] example, in the Syrian Dancer's costume, (Figur[illegible] the tutu is replaced by loose harem trousers he [illegible] waist by a sash, and a striped pink transparent bodi[illegible] very different from the formalized, conserva[illegible] u[illegible]d for most ballets prior to 1909.[illegible]

In Cléopâtre, and later S héhérazade (1910), [illegible] with an obvious precedent in the work of Del[illegible] introduced, (Figure 63); Bak[illegible]t's designs, how[illegible] never be fully realised on stage. Danc[illegible]rs of the [illegible] would neither have dared dance with exposed brea[illegible] would they have been as buxom as this design by Bak[illegible] showing an Odalisque from Cléopatre, (Figure [illegible]), [illegible] Edward Gordon Craig, who was also an innovator [illegible] graphic format, complained bitterly abo[illegible]t these [illegible] the ballerinas.[5] He stated in an article Kleptomania [illegible] The Russian Ballet that :

> M. Bakst has a pretty knack of drawing colour[illegible] supplements and covers for illustrated paper[illegible] Although the designs are ugly enough to shock [illegible] the Parisians, the ugliness of Bakst's design[illegible] is not due to any stern qualities in his work. [illegible] it is never terrible like Daumier, nor has [illegible] the irony of Beardsley's demons. Bakst is ugi[illegible] All his women are drugged and in a kind of [illegible] orgy. The costumes he puts them into are mut[illegible] Bakst's passion for beads and his [illegible] thick lips and flat noses enable him to indulg[illegible] in a ring or two now and again. The women he d[illegible] protrude , therefore, when he attempts to sugge[illegible] something Eastern (and Russian ballets are wedde[illegible] to the East) he gets curiou ly confused. Indian [illegible] and Chinese hate that which bulges. Bak[illegible] ador[illegible] bulge ... it helps his bead[illegible] so much. In shor[illegible] Bakst is vulgar.[6]

overwhelming scale.

Following the trend set by Prince Igor during the first programme presented by the Ballet Russe, the dancers in Cléopâtre were not costumed in the conventional tutu.[1] They were attired according to the designer's concepts of the correct dress of the historical period. For example, in the Syrian Dancer's costume, (Figure 62), the tutu is replaced by loose harem trousers held at the waist by a sash, and a striped pink transparent bodice - very different from the formalized, conservative costuming used for most ballets prior to 1909.[2]

In Cléopâtre, and later Schéhérazade (1910), an Odalisque, with an obvious precedent in the work of Delacroix, was introduced, (Figure 63). Bakst's designs, however, could never be fully realised on stage. Dancers of the period would neither have dared dance with exposed breasts[3] nor would they have been as buxom as this design by Bakst, showing an Odalisque from Cléopâtre, (Figure 63), indicated. Edward Gordon Craig, who was also an innovator of the scenographic format, complained bitterly about these designs for the ballerinas.[5] He stated in an article Kleptomania or The Russian Ballet that:

> M. Bakst has a pretty knack of drawing coloured supplements and covers for illustrated papers. Although the designs are ugly enough to shock the Parisians, the ugliness of Bakst's designs is not due to any stern qualities in his work; it is never terrible like Daumier, nor has it the irony of Beardsley's demons. Bakst is ugly. All his women are drugged and in a kind of sofa orgy. The costumes he puts them into are cute. Bakst's passion for beads and his devotion to thick lips and flat noses enable him to indulge in a ring or two now and again. The women he draws protrude, therefore, when he attempts to suggest something Eastern (and Russian ballets are wedded to the East) he gets curiously confused. Indians and Chinese hate that which bulges. Bakst adores bulge ... it helps his beads so much. In short Bakst is vulgar.[6]

The innovative nature of the costumes by Bakst seems to have been ignored by Craig. They are imaginative and, besides having a feeling for the exotic, fit perfectly with the scenario and set. Although Craig condemned Bakst's manner of costume illustration, the costumes when presented on the stage were innovative in their use of pattern and design motifs as seen in the photograph of Rubinstein, (Figure 5). Bakst's costume designs were obviously altered in performance. It may be assumed, however, that the colouring and designed motifs remained consistent with the designed sketches.[1] The colours and patterns used, such as the broad stripes, the paisley and circular motifs in harsh pinks, browns, ochres and black (seen in Figures 62, 63 and 64), must have been used in the original costumes, taking contemporary accounts into consideration.[2] These motifs in their colouration probably produced a perfect link with the orange, red and rust used in the set. They would have produced, in combination, an intensity of colour that must have been quite remarkable.

Bakst's experiments with saturated colour had its precedent in Prince Igor. These experiments were possibly stimulated by the work of Gauguin and the Fauves. In fact, the use of colour and design motifs lead a contemporary witness of the Paris performance of Cléopâtre, Martin Birnbaum, to write that he imagined that

> ... the amorous Queen's galley glided down the river with its precious burden, to the landing-stage crowded with sleeping Syrians in silver, gaudy Jews with head-dresses of pearls and rubies; svelte Egyptian dancers in golden tissues, Dionysian Priestesses, Corybantes and black serviteurs.[3]

Although this never appeared on the stage one may speculate that the emotive, visual impact of the scene was powerful enough to have stimulated Birnbaum's imagination. These were conjured up through the sheer spectacle of Bakst's décor and costume designs.

The prototypes for the exotic images in Bakst's scenography

were obviously the harem scenes depicted by Delacroix.[1] Such imagery must also be seen in the context of the symbolist ethos.[2] The underlying source which set these different images into a Bakstian mould was undoubtedly Vrubel who, as early as 1900, had designed Egyptian costumes, (figure 27). And his paintings - like the 1898 The Dance of Tamara (figure 28) - had illustrated the same type of exotic patterning conveying a frantic, mesmeric obsession with exotic detail.[3]

A great deal of nonsense has been written about Bakst's orientalism. Whilst his ballets influenced popular taste, oriental subjects in literature and painting had attracted artists and writers throughout the nineteenth century. During his first period in Paris, from 1893-1896,[4] Bakst could have studied paintings of vast oriental scenes at the Salon, unashamedly relishing exotic detail under the guise of historical reconstruction, as did his true successor of the Hollywood epics, Cecil B. de Mille. A painting like Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse's The Last Days of Babylon, influenced by Flaubert's Salammbo,[5] could easily have served as a setting for one of Diaghilev's oriental essays in exoticism. By 1900 not only Vrubel but many Western painters were fascinated by the Orient. The 1903 Exhibition of Muslim Art at the Pavillon de Marsan,[6] Paris, led to Matisse's involvement and to his visit to Tangiers. Martin Battersby claims that

> ... in fact this nostalgia for a legendary Persia and Arabia had its beginning around 1900 in Paris and was the result of a publication of Dr. Mardus' translations in search of The Thousand and One Nights Entertainment - they appeared between 1906 and 1908./

Bakst based his designs on historical fact. The costumes and set, however, were fanciful elaborations. The 1909 set and costumes were an innovative step forward in the field of scenography. This is especially the case if they are compared to Benois' nostalgic essays for Le

Pavillon d'Armide and Les Sylphides.

Bakst's designs for Cléopâtre conformed with the concept of the scenario and theme of the ballet. Along with a visual unity of colour and historical reference an integrated unit within the stage picture format was created. Cléopâtre was, however, not a wholly successful Gesamtkunstwerk because of the melange of music used. Cléopâtre was such a success that Astruc and Diaghilev decided to present it during the third programme after the long opera Ivan the Terrible as "Ida Rubinstein could not be counted on to fill the house".[1] There were to be other changes in the programme. Extra performances were announced. Serov's opera, Judith, was premièred as the fourth programme, as planned, on 6th June.[2] It was followed by Chaliapine and Litvine.[3] Le Pavillon d'Armide completed the programme. Although Glinka's Russlan and Ludmilla presented in the fifth programme was music of a superior order compared to that of Judith, all performances of Russlan and Ludmilla were cancelled after the première, and Judith was subscribed due to its popularity.[4] Finally, before leaving Paris, Diaghilev was invited to present a gala programme of ballet at the Opéra, thus achieving his ambition of scoring at this prestigious venue.[5]

The 1909 season of the Ballet Russe de Diaghilev was the first major presentation which later led P. Lieven to comment that "... the Ballet de Diaghilev forced the renaissance in theatrical design".[6]

To support this statement the 1909 programme has to be seen in historical context. Before its presentation ballet and opera had had a stereotype setting.[7] This remained true for Paris ballet and opera productions, one exception being the Art Theatre performances. In Russia, however, a few isolated productions achieved a certain unity, examples being Mamontov's private opera production of The Snow Maiden (1896),[8] as well as the first production of Le Pavillon d'Armide (1903) at the Mariinsky.[9]

The Ballet Russe presented a radical change to the existing scenographic format. This was achieved through the use of loose paint application which unified all aspects of the painted scene, presenting a scenography which acknowledged its artificial environment - an obviously painted stage-picture.

The Russian designers concentrated on the backcloth and legs. The backcloth was no longer intended as a solely illusionistic impression of a third dimension within the stage picture framed by the proscenium arch. It now represented a symbol of place as well as presenting an obvious artifact on stage because of the manner in which it was painted. The methods Bakst and Benois utilized were those of the backcloth as a decorative, visual area - a plane that could suggest a further dimension, such as Benois had achieved in his second scene for Le Pavilion d'Armide, (Figure 42).

Benois' designs differed from the designs for the pre-1900's as the sixth was not simply a perspective scene divorced from what was being performed on stage. In all Benois' and Bakst's designs the dimension tended to emphasize the height of the stage rather than its depth. They left the bottom third of the backcloth virtually unclutttered, thus creating an area of neutrality at performance level. Areas which were further away were generally higher up on the picture plane of the backcloth and depth was hinted at in the manner of oriental art. This mode of visual organisation was not a complete success until Bakst's designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912). Here he resolved the problem of the backcloth painting completely. The manner in which Bakst attempted to solve this problem in his designs was by creating a perspective system with a vanishing point about three-quarters of the way up from the bottom of the backcloth, thus creating areas of interest above the dancer's height which did not conflict with the performer. This almost adhered to Craig's and Appia's ideals

of maintaining the importance of the performer, and Benois' and Bakst's solution eliminated the illogicality previously encountered in backcloths where "the height of a painted doorway reached the actors' elbow".[1] This defused some of the arguments Appia and Craig had against the use of the painted pictorial backcloth. As has been argued another feature in these early settings for the Ballet Russe was that they were not merely decorative, but through the use of colour and texture, as well as lighting, they became expressive. Furthermore, the changing of scenes in full view of the audience (as in Le Pavillon d'Armide) implied aesthetic functionalism and a change in the concept of the relationship of audience and performance.

The first season of the Ballet Russe de Diaghilev introduced the concept that ballet costumes could be more or less accurate in historical context. They did not have to conform to the accepted style of costuming prior to 1900.

The designs of the 1909 season reflect an effort to create a positive unified-aesthetic statement behind the frame of the proscenium arch. The ballet presentations of 1909 were the beginning of an achievement for which Mir Iskusstva had strived; a unity in visual concepts, a bringing of Russian artistic modes to Europe, and an amalgamation of all existing art forms and movements within stage presentations.

In the 1909 presentations the Russian designers were still divided between those artist/designers who favoured the St. Petersburg school of Europeanised Art, such as Benois (as seen in Le Pavillon d'Armide), and those who fell under the influence of the Moscow school of folk and ancient Muscovy art and artifacts, such as Roerich (as seen in Prince Igor). These convergent ideas were later amalgamated by the designers of the Ballet Russe.[3] This would facilitate the change from the inconstant form of ballet presentation which, according to Ivor Guest and other critics, were

> ... the years of decline in all the areas of ballet presentation, mainly evident in Paris, but spreading throughout Europe between 1870 and 1900.[4]

The directions which Diaghilev's future works were to take can be found in these first ballet productions. Les Sylphides was the first abstract romantic symbolist ballet. It was the forerunner of the productions Carnaval and Le Spectre de la Rose. Cléopâtre initiated the spectacular productions such as Schéhérazade, Le Dieu Bleu and Thamar. Le Festin provided the prototype for a succession of Russian national ballets which ended with the pre-war production in 1914 of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera/ballet Le Coq d'Or. Finally, the primitivism of the Polovtsian dances from Prince Igor reflected in its choreography and designs, foreshadowed the production of Le Sacre du Printemps in 1913.

FOOT NOTES : CHAPTER THREE

p.98:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 61.

2 Ibid.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 53, citing Bakst.

4 Wife of Nijinsky.

5 Nijinsky, R. Nijinsky, page 58; Romola citing her husband Vaslav.

6 Critic and friend of Pavlova.

7 Dandré - Anna Pavlova, page 66.

8 Austric, G. Revue Musicale, December 1930, citing Diaghilev.

p.99:1 Benois, A. Reminiscences, page 235.

2 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 139.

3 Austric, G. Op.cit.

4 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 93.

5 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 107.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

p.100:1 Carlo Cecchetti's letters. British Museum. (Copies obtained in May 1960 through correspondence with the Museum).

2 Buckle, R. Op.cit., page 105.

3 Sweet, L. The Ballet of the Second Empire, page 146.

4 Ibid.

5 Percival, J. The World of Diaghilev, pages 18 and 19. Particulars relating to Degas' paintings and actual exercises at the dances of The Paris Opéra.

6 Austric Papers. Summarized in his report to the Tzar, November 1908. Victoria and Albert Museum. (Copies obtained in May 1960 through correspondence with the Museum). Citing Diaghilev.

7 Austric Papers. Page 15.

8 Diaghilev was forced to resign his official post with the Imperial Theatres because of his proposal for the presentation of Sylvia.

p.100:9 Austric Papers, page 16.

10 Ibid.

p.101:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 125.

2 Ibid, page 125.

3 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 74. By Stravinsky, however, Grigoriev adds Diaghilev only met the composer in February 1909.

4 Buckle, R. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 29.

5 Ibid. Buckle cites Diaghilev.

6 Ibid. pages 16-17. Buckle citing Nouvel

7 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 112-113.

p.102:1 Haskell, A. Diaghileff, page 52.

2 Ibid.

3 Kchessinskaya, M. Dancing in St. Petersburg, page 93.

4 Ibid.

5 Haskell, A. Diaghileff: His Artistic and Private Life, page 53.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 108.

9 A war-like Nomadic tribe that terrorised Russia during the 8th-18th centuries.

p.103:1 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 139.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 As will be fully discussed when dealing with the works presented by the Ballet Russe. This meant the integrating of the entire production and did not necessarily include an audition as well.

5 Benois had already designed this ballet in St. Petersburg for a 1907 production.

p.104:1 Spencer, A. Ballet Designers, page 102. It has also been suggested by Peter Nicolls in What Diaghilev Did, Dance and Dancers, February 1934, page 14, that Diaghilev was responsible for this change.

2 Beaumont, C. Five Centuries of Ballet Design, page 104. In this book the 1909 production sketch for Scene II is attributed to the 1907 St. Petersburg production. This illustrates one of the many errors

p.104 (contd.)

in Beaumont's work, especially in the area of pictorial documentation.

3 Benois, A. Op.cit.

4 Benois, A. Op.cit., page 291. Robert de Montesquiou was the Parnassian poet, son-in-law of Hérédia, and had published his poems about Versailles, La Cité des Eaux, seven years before the 1909 production of Le Pavillon d'Armide.

5 As can be noted in both the interior and exterior of the Palace and surrounds are studied.

6 Guest, I. The Ballet of the Second Empire, page 226.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 128. This would have appealed to Benois as he was equally impressed with the scenario of Giselle - a scenario such in the same mode.

p.105:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, pages 98-105 - summary of the scenario.

2 Ibid. - although the lights were dimmed.

3 Symbolism and its use in the Art theatres has been extensively discussed in Chapter One.

4 Discussed in Chapter One, when describing the symbolist principles employed in Art theatrical productions.

5 Benois, A. Reminiscences, page 107.
Haven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 56.

p.106:1 If Scene II of Le Pavillon d'Armide is compared with Maliutav's The Goblin, (Figure 32), and The Reservoir, (Figure 30), the similar use of colour as well as the ambiance of landscape representation may be appreciated.

2 Benois, A. Op.cit., page 108.

3 As can be noted in the illustration, (Figure 43), in the bottom of the Arbor are studied - they are flat whereas if they were constructed they would echo the perspective of the Rose.

p.107:1 Le Figaro, 18.5.1909, page 17. (Translator Ariadne Mackrie).

p.108:1 The illusionist and realist theatre traditions are discussed in Chapter One.

2 It should also be mentioned that the trend in the

[illegible]

early nineteenth century in painting was to focus on the process of painting and the effects of texture and pigment - in this way the designers for the Ballet Russe were experimenting in a [illegible] manner to the artists of the avant-garde.

[illegible], C. Bakst, page 103.

[illegible], D. Revolutions in Twentieth Century Stage Design, page 23.

[illegible], C. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 47.

[illegible] - a Russian eighteenth century architect.

[illegible], F. Spirit.

[illegible] Iskusstva, 1902, Volume 3, an article was devoted to Torelli and his influence on Baroque designers. The most notable aspect of this was the emphasis placed on the use of a central perspective.

[illegible], S. Diaghilev, pages 140-146.

[illegible], R. and Crisp, T. The History of Dance, [illegible].

[illegible] in Chapter One, when describing ballet [illegible] of the 1890's.

[illegible] the costumes for Le Pavillon [illegible] and compared with costumes for Court [illegible], for example, that designed by Boquet, [illegible].

[illegible] Designer for the Court of Louis XIV [illegible].

Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 140-146. Description of the fabrics used - derived from Buckle's description.

As stated by Benois when describing his ideals for the [illegible] of Le Pavillon d'Armide.

As discussed on pages 11-21.

There is some argument as to whether this costume was not [illegible] used in London in 1912. The original [illegible] costume might not have had the neckband.

Karsavina, T. Theatre Street, page 197.

Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 144. Karsavina [illegible] the role as Pavlova was not in Paris.

[illegible] Description of materials used by Karsavina,

p.113:1 Discussed in Appendix 2. The [illegible] created through the introduction of [illegible] (straw) and 'surprise pink' light[illegible]

2 Symbolist use of light[illegible] pages 23-37.

3 When the curtain is not [illegible] the audience is obviously aware [illegible] of the production - illusionism [illegible] tained as the working of the [illegible] brought to the fore.

4 The experiments and innovations [illegible] for Schéhérazade, Carnaval and L'Après midi [illegible] Faune will be discussed when the ballets are analysed in text.

p.114:1 Buckle, R. Op.cit., page 142 [illegible] completed by Borodin; therefore in some [illegible] the Polovtsian act is labelled Act II.

2 The curve of the cyclorama should succ[illegible] the wing areas in place of flown legs

3 Leper, J. Edward Gordon Craig.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., page 28.

p.115:1 Cocteau, J. Cock and Harlequin.

2 As discussed on pages 60-67.
These motifs would again be used in [illegible] format in Petrushka (1911) and Le Coq d'O[illegible]

3 Cocteau, J. Op.cit., page 79.

4 Grigoriev, S. The Russian Ballet [illegible] ag[illegible] citing Roerich.

5 He wa[illegible] aware of the Slavophile and Vande[illegible] through his contact with Mir Iskusstva, a[illegible] his association with the Abramtsevo colon[illegible]

6 Discussed in Footnote p.66:1, Chapt[illegible] Tw[illegible]

p.116:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 230.

2 Cocteau, J. Op.cit., page 78.

3 Ibid.

4 Scenario summarised from the libretto - Ang[illegible] (SCL 3714), pages 21-27.

5 Cocteau, J. Op.cit., page 79.

6 As noted in their works: Matisse's The Dinn[illegible] Table, (Figure 124), Vlaminck's House in the Country and Gauguin's Decorative Landscape.

p.117:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 43, citing Roerich.

2 Pannain, G. Borodin and Prince Igor, page 7.

3 Cocteau, J. Cock and Harlequin, page 79.
Buckle, R. Nijinsky page 232.

4 In such works as House in the Country (1906) and The Boat Wash-Houses (1906).

5 Noticeable in such works as Decorative Landscape (1888).

p.118:1 Noticeable in such works ... Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's Woman on a Blue Divan (1907).

2 Benois, A. Memoirs II, page 145, citing Roerich.

3 Roerich as a founder member of Mir Iskusstva must have seen some of the works exhibited and published.

4 Because of his involvement with archaeology - also they made no concession to prescribed ballet attire, as Benois had done in Le Pavillon d'Armide.

5 The standard attire of the male dancer and the short tutu are not in evidence in Roerich's designs for Prince Igor.

p.119:1 Lieven, P. Op.cit., page 52. As commented by Lieven, Roerich, Borodin and Gauguin shared these interests.

2 Ibid.

3 Karsavina, T. Theatre Street, page 198.

4 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 142.

p.120:1 Ibid, page 142.

2 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 121. However, as no photographic or illustrative material is available, the assumption must be taken on hearsay. The author has written to the Moscow Theatre Arts Museum (April 1980) but has received no reply. In a letter to Mr. Buckle (July 1980) he assured the author that it was the same or similar cloth.

3 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 142-143.

p.121:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 84.
Richard Buckle does not believe that this was, as Fokine thought, because Diaghilev had announced a ballet called L'Oiseau de Feu which was not ready ... Buckle does not think he announced it

p.121:1 contd.

nor did he commission it successively from Liadov and Stravinsky until the end. (From a reply received from Mr. Buckle to the question posed here - December 1981).

2 Ibid.

3 These textile designs are, according to Sarabyanov, D. Russian Painters of the Early Twentieth Century, page 26, similar in design to those used on the Teres Palace stairway, (Figure 20). However, most fabrics have faded to such an extent that the motifs are no longer legible.

p.122:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 84.

2 Grigoriev. Op.cit., pages 18-19.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 138-140. Remembering that the second programme was a full length opera - this was the second mixed programme. It is necessary to correct certain errors propagated by writers on the subject of the 1909 season. Chaliapine did not sing in Prince Igor as Grigoriev describes him as doing at the opening of the season. Pavlova and Fokine did not dance in Le Pavillon d'Armide at the première as Grigoriev stated. Pavlova had not yet arrived. Karalli danced with Mordkine not only at the répétition générale described above, but also at the première. It is interesting that Karsavina was of the opinion that Pavlova delayed her arrival to see how the ballet was received in Paris before deciding to take part in the season. It is these observations that make Buckle a reliable source for factual information.

8 Sokolova, L. Dancing for Diaghilev, page 74.

9 Ibid.

10 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 72.

11 Ibid.

p.123:1 The romantic theatre tradition. Defined in Chapter One.

7 Because of the painted texture of the set being foregrounded the décor no longer could be interpreted as an extension of the 'real' world, but rather as a device which would draw attention to its theatricality.

p.123:3 Buckle, R. Op.cit., page 145.

p.124:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ciceri - Italian scenographer of the late 1840's.

4 The ballerina who originally created the role at the Paris première.

5 Nijinska, B. Early Memoirs, page 79.

6 Clarke, M. and Crisp, L. The History of Dance, page 94.

7 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 117.

8 Nijinska, B. Op.cit., page 76. Judging from the descriptions as well as the photographs, a further observation may be made in that whenever and wherever this ballet is produced today, this is the colour scheme used in the costumes.

p.125:1 Buckle R. Nijinsky, page 78.

2 Taking Aurier's theories into consideration.

3 The work, therefore, complied with Aurier's and the symbolist ideals as discussed in Chapter One, pages 23-25.

4 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 46

5 See scenario for both works - Oxford Companion to the Ballet, pages 34 and 96.

6 Lucie-Smith, E. Symbolist Art, page 78.

7 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 82.

8 Ibid.

p.126:1 Ibid, page 83.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Kirstein, L. Fokine, page 79.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Beaumont, C. Michel Fokine and His Ballets, page 43.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Fokine, A. Op.cit., page 84.

p.126:11 Grigoriev. Op.cit., page 123. Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 31.

12 Lucie-Smith, E. Op.Cit., page 79.

13 The ideals of the symbolist theatre tradition, as stated by Aurier, are discussed in Chapter One.

14 Meaning having no specific narrative line.

p.127:1 Nijinska, B. Early Memoirs, page 275.

2 Hall, F. The World of Ballet and Dance, scenario summarized, page 38.

3 Benois, A. Op.cit., pages 295-297.

p.128:1 Nijinska, B. Op.cit.

2 Ibid, page 176.

3 Taking Wagner's definition as set out in Chapter One.

4 Nijinska, B. Op.Cit., page 2[illegible].

5 Ibid. Nijinska paraphrasing the critical response to the ballet.

6 Cocteau, J. Cock and Harlequin, page 52.

7 Nijinska, B. Op.cit., page 276.

p.129:1 Ibid.

2 Cocteau, J. Cock and Harlequin, page 52.

3 Buckle, R. Op.cit., in a railway tunnel whilst the company was on tour in South America.

4 Nijinska, B. Op.cit.

5 Prince Igor is discussed in pages 115-119.

p.130:1 As discussed in Appendix 2.

2 Carter, H. Fine Arts Society Catalogue 1912 - London Times, page 14.

3 Cocteau, J. Op.cit.

4 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 87.

5 Ibid.

p.131:1 Ibid.

2 Cocteau, J. Op.cit., page 54, description modified in text.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

p.131:5 Nijinska, B. Op.cit., page 276

6 Ibid.

7 Osborne, H. The Oxford Companion to Art, page 235. It is obvious that a precedent for antique Egyptian studies can be established with the works of Gauguin in their stylization of form, which he derived from postcards of Egyptian murals; with Rousseau when he proclaimed Picasso "a master of the Egyptian style"; with Seurat where an Egyptian influence was noticeable, for example, in 1886 Lalv claimed Grande Jatte had an "Egyptian style in its figurative composition".

8 Buckle, R. Op.cit., page 115.

9 Ibid.

p.132:1 Discussed in this Chapter with regard to The Prince Igor scenography.

2 Discussed in Chapter One, pages 11-21.

3 Although Isadora Duncan purportedly did dance nude once.

4 Although the majority of French dancers of the time did appear to be Junoesque in proportion - taken from photographic studies - the Ballet Russe dancers (Karsavina and Pavlova) were slim in comparison.

5 This may have been due to his involvement with Isadora Duncan whose dance technique was at first glance so different to that of Ballet Russe (although Fokine and later Nijinsky were much influenced by her choreography and dance).

6 Craig, G. Gordon Craig on Movement and Dance (from The Mask Volume IV page 321.

Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 245.
In 1913 Craig was, however, commissioned to design for Diaghilev, unfortunately the design commission never reached fruition; it would have been interesting to see how Craig with his criticism against Bakst would have treated a similar project.

P.133:1 Taking into account contemporary descriptions of the costumes: Nijinska, B. Early Memoirs, pages 268-277; Nijinsky, R. Nijinsky, pages 182-194; Grigoriev, S. Early Memoirs of the Ballet Russe, pages 115-126.

2 Ibid.

3 Birnbaum, M. Catalogue, Berlin Photographic Company, New York, 1913, page 114.

p.134:1 This is especially noticeable in Delacroix's Odalisque figurative works, see Figure 63.

p.134:2 Oscar Wilde's Salomé: the perfumed exoticism in the writings of Huysmen and the Symbolists; the disturbing ambivalence of Aubrey Beardsley's Salomé illustrations and the vampish heroines of Gustave Moreau.

3 Vrubel's work is discussed in Chapter Two, page 49-57.

4 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 32.

5 Meyer, E. Bakst, page 14.

6 Ibid.

7 Battersby, M. The Decorative Twenties, page 12.

p.135:1 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 188.

2 Ibid.

3 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 102.

4 Buckle, R. Op.cit., page 185. The Parisian audience "felt that Russian and Ludmilla was "not Russian enough".

5 Ibid. He had always wanted to present a gala performance at ballet at the Opéra.

6 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 73.

7 The stereotyped type of veil used before 1909 is discussed in Chapter One, pages 11-21.

8 The Snow Maiden is analysed in detail in Chapter One.

9 The first production of Le Pavillon d'Armide is described in this chapter when analysing the 1909 production of the same ballet.

p.137:1 Bentley, E. Theories of the Modern Stage, page 33.

2 Apollo And Craig sometimes employed the painted backcloth but only used abstracted elements and forms on these cloths. The most specific designs were vague mountain and cloud shapes which hinted at their representation but were never formalised reproductions.

3 As will be seen in Benois' designs for Petrushka (1911), Bakst's L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912) and Goncharova's Le Coq d'Or (1914).

4 Guest, I. The Ballet of the Second Empire, page 225, and Clark, M. and Crisp, C. Design for for Ballet, page 187.

CHAPTER FOUR : THE 1910 DIAGHILEV SEASON

Diaghilev's 1910 ballet season opened at The Opéra on 4th June.[1] The first programme consisted of Carnaval, Schéhérazade, Le Festin, Giselle and The Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor. The second programme consisted of The Firebird and Les Orientales.[2]

The season was to see the furthering of the scenographic ideals initiated by the Mir Iskusstva group. In the areas of choreography and stage design the productions epitomised the striving after new dance forms by Fokine as well as unified decorative-expressive and symbolist stage pictures, as created by Benois and Bakst.[3] Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade and Carnaval were perfect examples of scenography which embodied the theories of Gesamtkunstwerk[4] in that in colour, form and content they presented a unified concept with the choreographic, scenario and music. These ballets combined the contemporary European artistic modes as well as the two Russian schools of painting which Bakst had studied during his association with Mir Iskusstva. Benois' designs for Giselle placed him firmly in the academic St. Petersburg mould, being derivative and eclectic rather than formative or innovative.

The 1910 season presented the first Stravinsky score for a ballet, The Firebird, revitalising ballet music. Diaghilev subsequently commissioned contemporary or avant-garde composers to write scores for his ballets. Finally, 1910 was the year in which the company would be permanently formed under the title of The Ballet Russe.[5]

From 1910-1914 the ideas manifested in the 1910 ballet season were to achieve greater definition in scenography. These designs may be classified into two distinctive categories: the exotic and the romantic. The exotic

productions according to Lieven,

> ... were those based on Eastern or Russian concepts. The French desired a folklore element, expected a special exotic flavour in performance and presentation. In short they wanted what they as Frenchmen understood to be 'du vrai Russe'".[1]

Romantic ballets were

> ... those which were considered opposite to the exotic, and were usually based on existing French Classics, such as Giselle, or set in a period that derived from European and not Russian ancestory.[2]

The scenography for the 1910 ballets showed an even more radical break with the décor of the pre-1909 era.[3] Even in Benois' décor for Giselle, which was reactionary, the designs backcloth, set and costumes no longer existed as separate entities but presented a unified concept. By 1910 the scenography was designed by an artist, thereafter supervised by that artist. Added to this the designs were in accord with the music, choreography and scenario thus presenting a theatrical unity - a Gesamtkunstwerk. The revolution in stage design principles that Mamontov's Private Opera had begun, that of the artist taking over from the craftsmen in the field of scenography was complete. As will be shown, the results were those of a unified presentation where colour and shape-harmonies in costume and setting were combined behind the frame of the proscenium arch to form a visual unit.

The 1910 season was to see the painterly designers working in closer proximity with the ideals formulated by the plastic school of designers such as Craig and Appia. In Carnaval, for instance, the performer became a highlighted element in the production as a result of the simplicity of the décor. This was in accordance with Appia's ideal of massgebend, that of the performer being the unit of measurement on the stage.[4]

Prior to the commencement of the 1910 season Diaghilev encountered financial and other problems. As Peter

Lieven stated:

> Financial considerations and difficulties began to disturb Diaghilev; he went to Paris at Easter (1909) to try to arrange matters. Nothing materialised. Finally, something turned up in St. Petersburg. The Prime Minister, Count Kokouzov, informed the Tzar of the advisability of making Diaghilev a grant of £1,000.[1]

This financial assurance did not last for the Grand Duke Serge Michailvitch went to the Tzar after seeing a rehearsal of Schéhérazade, and claimed that

> ... this is not ballet, but heaven knows what! Some kind of decadent spectacle, discreditable to Russian Art abroad ...[2]

The result was that the Tzar refused the grant.[3] The position was serious as the money had to be repaid and it had already been spent by Diaghilev. Princ Argoutinsky and Prince Rathoff, two of the Russian nobility, came to Diaghilev's aid and supplied the money.[4]

Another problem encountered by Diaghilev was that his prima ballerina was unavailable for the season. Pavlova had other commitments and could not therefore dance the role of Giselle.[5] In addition Karsavina had arranged a London season at the Coliseum.[6] Pavlova did not change her schedule. Karsavina, however, chose to break her London contract and arrived in Paris in time to perform.[7] This led to the establishment of Karsavina as principal ballerina in the Ballet Russe seasons from 1910 onwards. Diaghilev and Benois became enchanted by Karsavina's character. Benois recorded that

> ... Tamara was not only a beautiful woman and a first-class, highly individual artist, but has as well a most attractive personality, was open to varied interests, and infinitely more cultured than most of her comrades ... unlike Pavlova, with whom one could not talk except in a half-coquettish ballet fashion, Karsavina was capable of sustaining a serious conversation.[8]

By 1910 Diaghilev had planned that the ballet should visit

other international centres.[1] He negotiated with managements in London and New York.[2] He also arranged for the Ballet Russe de Diaghilev to dance in Berlin on its way to Paris and in Brussels after the Paris season.[3] The London season was cancelled when King Edward VII of England died on May 7th.[4] The New York season was also not realised that year. The ballet did, however, visit Berlin in May on its way to Paris.[5] They appeared in the Theatre des Westens in Charlottenburg. Of the new ballets only Carnaval was shown in Berlin.[6]

From Berlin the Ballet Russe de Diaghilev went to Paris and during the opening season Schéhérazade was presented on the 4th June 1910.[7] Two months before the opening of this season, and six months before he died, Rimsky-Korsakov had written of the dancer Isadora Duncan:

> What I dislike about her is that she connects her art with musical compositions dear to me ... How vexed I should be if I learned that Miss Duncan danced and mimed my Schéhérazade.[8]

Because of Rimsky-Korsakov's attitude Diaghilev encountered some difficulty in persuading his widow to allow him to present the symphonic poem Schéhérazade as a dance drama as "it was certainly not a ballet".[9]

If the composer had seen Fokine's production he may well have been distressed,[10] just as Debussy and Stravinsky were shocked when they saw dancing to their musical scores.[11] Chopin and Schumann might have reacted similarly at ballets performed to their piano compositions re-orchestrated by other composers.[12] Duncan and Fokine used existing musical compositions such as the piano pieces by Schumann and Chopin as well as the Schéhérazade symphonic poem by Rimsky-Korsakov, which were danced to a scenario that was different to the programme originally conceived by the composer. It was for this reason, as well as the fact that the music was rearranged for dance, that would have displeased the composers. However, when Fokine, who took his cue from Duncan, had

[illegible] Sylphides [illegible] in Schéhérazade [illegible] he used a symphonic [illegible] much more daring scale. [illegible] Duncan and Fokine led the way [illegible] Robbins, Frederick Ashton [illegible] used existing scores [illegible]

[illegible] there was one danced [illegible] Waltzes or Mazurkas. By [illegible] an elaborate symphonic [illegible] Schéhérazade, Fokine and his collaborators, [illegible] and Bakst, were going much further than they had in [illegible] Sylphides. In view of the numerous compositions inclu[illegible] [illegible] quartets and parts of operas [illegible] for ballet scenarios in recent years, [illegible] to consider the problems facing the [illegible] the choreographer of Schéhérazade. As this [illegible] a detailed evaluation of the [illegible] in connection with Rimsky-Korsakov's musical [illegible]

[illegible] heard and enjoyed this music. For [illegible] associated it in his imagination with [illegible] The Arabian Nights, with the story of [illegible] He had even imagined a tableau [illegible] to the music.[3] Benois continued to find in Schéhérazade [illegible] of the harem and not of the [illegible] Rimsky-Korsakov's original concept of the [illegible] as described

> [illegible] the unifying thread of the story as consist[illegible] of brief introductions to movements I, V [illegible] IV, and the intermezzo in movement III written [illegible] violin solo and delineating Schéhérazade her[illegible] as telling her tales to the stern sultan.[5]

[illegible] and Fokine used this

> [illegible] unifying thread, an arabesque for solo violin [illegible] harp accompaniment, as a theme for Schéhéra[illegible] or rather for Zobeïda, as the Sultana was

> called in their ballet, and could not use the pesante opening theme - which Rimsky-Korsakov called the unison phrase - for the Sultan, Shah or King.[1]

According to Fokine's annotated score the first movement of the symphonic poem was to be an overture and the third [illegible] to be omitted.[2] The ballet opened with the [illegible] ishment of the Sultan's main wife, Zobeïda. The King of India, Shah Shahryar, was shown sulking because his [illegible] Zeman, King of Persia, had told him [illegible] unfaithful (as stated in the original [illegible] Arabian Nights). The Shah sat cross-legged [illegible] being coaxed by his wife whilst his brother [illegible] glowering, keeping an eye on the whispering [illegible] fat chief Eunuch was in attendance. A [illegible] seated Odalisques who andulated their [illegible] in 3/8 time failed to divert the Shah. At the end of the dance he rose [illegible] Brusque chords in the [illegible] aside the [illegible] Zobeïda and announced [illegible] no hunting. Echoing trumpet fanfares confirmed his [illegible] The fanfares and the marches were varied and prolonged considerably before the Shah's expectations [illegible] Therefore Fokine arranged that "the Sultan [illegible] Huntsmen and Soldiers be brought [illegible] off the stage".[3] A bassoon solo accompanied [illegible] whom the ladies of the harem implored [illegible] and admit their negro lover. Their pleading [illegible] ed by warbling in the higher woodwinds. There was [illegible] no theme for the Golden Slave, Zobeïda's lover. A reappearance of the Shah's theme in the background [illegible] the movement's final accelerando "explained away, [illegible] absence, the imminent threat of his return".[4]

The last movement which Rimsky-Korsakov called [illegible] Baghdad - the Sea, was relabelled Orgy- Slaughter [illegible] the ballet it followed the other movement without [illegible] The first statement of the Shah's theme at the very beginning of this section needed to be accounted for, because he was

away hunting. This theme re-appeared twice before the orgy reached its climax. It was used in the scenario as a forecast of the Shah's return. It also helped to dramatise the wariness of the slaves as they entered the Shah's private realm. A solo violin accompanied the embraces Zobeïda exchanged with her Golden Slave. The turning music of the storm and shipwreck lent itself to the brain of Shahryar when he returned to find his wives entertaining their paramours. Fokine, however, encountered a problem, for during the storm music there was to be found a suppressed statement of the Shah's theme and distant fanfares occurring during the festival music. So Fokine brought on the outriders of the Shah's return before the Janissaries really set to with their scimitars to slaughter the wives and slaves. Zobeïda's final violin cadenza was her pleading for her life. At the end of her cadenza she killed herself. "The curtain fell in silence as the Shah wept."[1] In this manner the librettists adapted an existing score for the ballet Scheherazade. This adaptation and conversion of a piece of music for ballet set the precedent for future choreographers in their use of existing musical works - works that are re-worked to conform with certain ballet requirements.

The décor for Schéhérazade was originally to be designed by the Russian artist, Anisfeldt, but his sketches "seemed vulgar",[2] according to Diaghilev, and were rejected. The commission was then given to Bakst. The scheme he designed was initially rejected but was accepted after a few minor modifications. During his lifetime Bakst was hailed as the creator of "Oriental Fairylands", proclaimed the rejuvenator of theatrical decoration and praised for having awakened theatrical design "from its naturalistic lethargy",[3] In Schéhérazade, most of Bakst's critics felt that this was achieved through colour, variously described as orgiastic, ecstatic, voluptuous and exuberant, blazing and brilliant.[4]

The exotic splendour of Schéhérazade clarified what

Cléopâtre (1909) initiated. Bakst's colour combinations were a revelation to Parisians who were used to muted pastel tonalities and shades of grey in the painted stage picture format.[1] The multitude of sharply contrasting colours that Bakst assembled and worked into a harmonious whole in Schéhérazade opened infinite possibilities for later developments in both his and other artists' work for the stage. It must also be stressed that through his very use of colour and form Bakst created scenography that was not only decorative but, as will be shown, dramatic-expressive.

In Schéhérazade Bakst illegally displaced the painted backcloth;[2] the décor was made up of soft materials: curtains, drapes, cushions and carpets, in accordance with his vision of the barbaric and voluptuous orient.[3] The setting and costumes for Schéhérazade showed a complete break from the earlier traditions of ballet design. This was achieved through a total unity of presentation, through the use of colour and design elements that harmonized one with the other in both costume and décor. Because Bakst was originally trained as a painter[4] he "thought of his stage scenes as paintings to which he had not yet painted in the personages".[5] Bakst, as he did with most of his scenographic designs, presented his décor for Schéhérazade in the form of a painted picture. His design for the harem, (Figure 55), had, besides the vast use of draped materials, architectural features related to the mosques and pavilions of Shah Abbas at Isfahan[6] with their blue and green tiled walls[7] and painted coffered ceilings.

This set depended on the mixture of colour and textiles to create its impression without the usual formal structures of legs, borders and flats.[8] Bakst's concepts were due to his training as an artist, and his colour theories were based on the idea that colour could determine the emotional responses of an audience:

> I have often noticed that in each colour of the prism there exists a gradation which sometimes

> expresses frankness and clarity, sometimes despair. This can be felt and given over to the public by the effect one makes of the various shadings. This is what I tried to do in Schéhérazade. Against a loganberries green, I put a blue full of despair, paradoxical as it may seem. The painter who knows how to make use of this can let flow the thousand tones without making a mistake; can draw from the spectator the exact emotions which he wants them to feel.[1]

Despite Bakst's rather florid description, his statement illustrates that he was perfectly aware of the emotional effects of colour.[2] It is this aspect that creates from the Schéhérazade scenography a decoratively expressive statement. It may be surmised that in his use of colour Bakst was influenced by the Fauves with their use of extreme "intensity of pure colours which they used arbitrarily for emotional and decorative effect".[3] This use of the fauve palette is not surprising as Bakst had attended the fauve exhibition at the Salon des Independents in 1906.[4] He also displayed a definite Fauvist influence in his painting, Bathers on the Lido, (figure 66), executed in 1910.[5] In this with the Fauvist palette and colour combinations as well as pictorial construction may be apparent. The use of intense colour in its pure form

> ... compositionally arranged in a decorative manner in which the diverse elements of the composition are the elements through which the painter represses his feeling.[6]

are apparent on studying this work. The use of colour and compositional elements in this painting by Bakst parallel certain of Braque's, Dufy's and Derain's works.[7] In addition a similar use of emotive colour may be noted in Bakst's scenography for Schéhérazade. The assumption made is that as the painting Bathers on the Lido and the Schéhérazade scenography were completed within the same year certain similarities such as the use of intense colour and colour construction may be noted. Therefore it can be stated that when Bakst was designing Schéhérazade

he made use of fauvist principles of colour usage and construction.

In addition to noting the utilization of the fauvist palette, a further aspect of the emotive use of colour should be considered when analysing the Sindbad scenography. It is a generally accepted convention in Western society that colour is used emotionally. However, the studies of the emotive use of colour vary widely in the way that colour preference or "pleasantness" was, and is, operationally defined. B. Wright and I. Rainwater state that:

> In many cases the definitions are quite broad, allowing for much leeway in interpretation on the part of both subject and researcher.[1]

Thus, in spite of the large number of studies over the last hundred years, knowledge concerning specific effects of colour and saturation has remained ... low.[2]

H. S. Vernon, however, claims that "... perception is often associated with

> ...feelings of pleasure or displeasure. Most people have preferences for certain colours rather than others. Indeed, the order of preference seems fairly constant among Western peoples. It is as follows: blue, red, green, purple, orange and yellow. Intermediate colours are usually felt to be less pleasant than pure colours. Particular colours may give rise to particular emotional reactions: red to excitement or anger, blue to calm pleasure, black and grey to sadness or depression.[3]

These theories apply only to Western society. A great deal of discussion has been devoted to the question as to whether primitive peoples perceive colours as we perceive them, since their languages do not include the colour names included in ours. Furthermore, different cultures interpret colours in differing symbolic terms. The most notable example is that in Western society black is the colour of mourning, whereas in Japan white represents this state.

Therefore Bakst's use of emotive colour in his décor for Schéhérazade could be perfectly acceptable in its broad connotation, for a Western audience. The designs for Schéhérazade would formulate a colour usage which would no longer utilize colours that were muted in order to form a neutral backdrop for the action on the stage. Colour now played an integral part in the entire production echoing the sentiments of scenario as well as music and choreography, projecting its own emotional content, thereby achieving an expressive Gesamtkunstwerk.

Bakst's ideas for the designs for Schéhérazade were not formulated in a vacuum. The designs show a direct influence of Russian peasant art,[1] folk painting seems to have been an equally important influence.[2] Bakst's designs also show a stylistic development encountered in Roerich's 1909 designs for The Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor, which reflect the influence of the Fauve palette, Gauguin's colour and the works of the Murinuy artists.[3]

A new concept in stagecraft is seen in the decor for Schéhérazade - depth is created primarily through colour and not only by use of linear perspective.

The set for Schéhérazade, (figure 65), incorporated a few painted architectural elements. These consisted of three blue doors leading to the slave quarters, a staircase, backing wall and columns. These architectural representations were diffused by their colour presentation which gave them the impression of "being seen in purple twilight".[4] The dominant features of the set were the immense looped curtains framing the top and left side of the stage. The painted curtains were in apple green striped with blue, spotted with pink roses, and incorporated larger circular patterns in black and gold. From the curtains hung golden lamps which are clearly derived from Islamic prototypes. The motifs on the curtains are derived from Russian peasant textiles which Bakst studied at the Ambramtsevo

colony.[1] Bakst was later to continue his interest in ethnic fabric design when, in 1918, he executed many designs for commercially produced textiles, (Figure 67).

The patterning used in the draperies of the Schéhérazade set, though supposedly of Eastern origin according to contemporary critics were derived from ethnic Russian textiles. This is evident if a floral pattern, (Figure 68), and an ethnic Russian bowl, (Figure 72), are compared to the designs used by Bakst in his Schéhérazade draperies. The designs used in the Schéhérazade curtains may be seen to be derived from these ethnic sources, excepting that Bakst transferred the positive and negative shape of the earlier textile design, (Figure 68). When studying the enamel bowl, (Figure 72), it may further be noted that the floral forms used as surface decoration correlate to the rose pattern, in form and structure, used by Bakst to surround the largest, positive pattern in the Schéhérazade curtains. Green and blue were the overall colours used in Schéhérazade. Bakst's use of peacock green and blue, an unheard of combination in theatre design in 1910, inspired Cartier to set emeralds and sapphires together for the first time in Western history.[2] The colours used in the décor were complemented by the painted coral-red floor cloth with carpets containing blue and rose-pink serigs, and piled with similarly painted cushions and bolsters. Behind the Shah's raised divan to the left, where the great curtain fell to the ground, was a curious platform supported by a steep staircase. The sole purpose of the platform was to display a feat of daring and endurance by the dancer Orlov,[3] who played one of the Negroes. At the end of the dance-drama he was killed by one of the Shah's guards on the platform, and then

> ... had to hang head downwards, spread-eagled on the steps with open arms and hold this painful but effective pose till the curtain fell.[4]

It may be suggested that Bakst was an even greater designer

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The patterning used in the draperies of the Schéhérazade set, though supposedly of Eastern origin according to contemporary critics were derived from ethnic Russian textiles. This is evident if a floral pattern, (Figure 68), and an ethnic Russian bowl, (Figure 22), are compared to the designs used by Bakst in his Schéhérazade draperies. The designs used in the Schéhérazade curtains may be seen to be derived from these ethnic sources, excepting that Bakst transferred the positive and negative shape of the earlier textile design, (Figure 68). When studying the enamel bowl, (Figure 22), it may further be noted that the floral forms used as surface decoration correlate to the rose pattern, in form and structure, used by Bakst to surround the larger, positive pattern in the Schéhérazade curtains. Green and blue were the overall colours used in Schéhérazade. Bakst's use of peacock green and blue, an unheard of combination in theatre design in 1910, inspired Carrier to set emeralds and sapphires together for the first time in Western history.[2] The colours used in the décor were complemented by the painted coralsred floor cloth with carpets containing blue and rose-pink sprigs, and piled with similarly painted cushions and bolsters. Behind the Shah's raised divan in the left, where the great curtain fell to the ground, was a curious platform supported by a steep staircase. The sole purpose of the platform was to display a feat of daring and endurance by the dancer Orloy,[3] who played one of the Negroes. At the end of the dance-drama he was killed by one of the Shah's guards on the platform, and then

> ... had to hang head downwards, spread-eagled on the steps with open arms and hold this painful but effective pose till the curtain fell.[4]

It may be suggested that Bakst was an even greater designer

of costumes than of settings. His invention of patterns, influenced by his studies of the Abramtsevo colony textile designs, as well as his imaginative juxtaposition of colours, has seldom been surpassed. In the blue and crimsons of his turbanned Sultan, (Figure 69), in his scarlet and orange costume for the Eunuch, (Figure 70), the orange-vermillion and chrome-yellow nightcapped Janissaries, in the orange and yellow Odalisques, (Figure 71 - directly related to those painted by Delacroix), the diaphanously clad, speckled and bejewelled ladies of the harem, and in the bracelet-ed Negroes, (Figure 72), with their strange brassières, linked to their sunshed metallic lamé trousers by ropes of pearls, he showed even more than in Cléopâtre his imagination at work.

The costumes for Schéhérazade complemented the set for the ballet perfectly. This is especially the case in Bakst's water-colour sketch for Schéhérazade, (Figure 65), is studied. It can be seen that the painted figures, which conformed to the actual size of the performers are at a height which did not conflict with the more elaborate elements of the décor. That is the décor at performance height was not so detailed, and therefore the curtains and the costumes did not totally fuse visually with the set. In this area Bakst was moving towards Appia's ideal of the performer being sacrosanct. The dancer was not in conflict with the décor. This ideal of the performer highlighted (strong lighting was used and united, but not to conflict or submerged by the décor was more fully realised by Bakst in his designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune in 1912.[1]

In a study of some of the costumes it can be seen how innovative Bakst's concepts were. In La Sultane Bleue, (Figure 73), the figure is shown in harem pants, vest and turban. The costume is diaphanous, as were most of Bakst's designs. Complementary colours create a vivid effect. The bodice is blue and is heavily ornamented with a peacock feather design motif. The sleeves are transparent but have

lozenge designs embroidered and appliquéd on them. The costume is festooned with pattern. The use of various textures enhance the visual excitement because of the reflective and light absorbent qualities inherent in the fabrics. In the Negre Argent the costumes (Figures 72 and 74), harem pants were again used, this time in shocking pink echoing the rose outfit in the patterned curtain. Bakst used dark body make-up which must have furthered the dramatic visual impact of the costumes.[1] The decorative elements of the costumes such as the pearl harnesses, must have created an amazing effect because of the strong tonal contrast of light horizontals which cut across dark bare torsos.

In the Eunuque's costume (Figure 76), orange, red and yellow are used in combination. The costume was decorated in bright spike diagonals and lozenges. The harsh effect created by these motifs and colours, in harmony with the stiffened oval skirt is enhanced because of the contrast with the flow of the soft harem trousers. (In some productions, for instance that put on by P.A.C.T., these trousers are also stiffened).

All the costumes were consistent in design. If compared to the 1909 costume of The Firebird in Le Festin, (Figure 55), it can be observed that there is a similar 'exotic' appeal. However, the costumes for Schéhérazade were far more practical - at least the dancers could move in them. For the costumes of various odalisques, dancing girls and other women of the harem, Bakst restored designs as may be noted in, for example, the Odalisque figure, (Figure 71). The costume was reputedly inspired by the character, Patso-Patso, an Arabian belly dancer whom Bakst encountered while visiting Crete in 1907.[2] Bakst described Patso-Patso thus:

> ... her skin is very dark in complexion, with an emerging natural pinkish tone on her cheeks, when she smiles you can see her large blinding teeth,

> clear cut beyond belief. Her arms and hands are magnificent, narrow - maybe even too narrow - a bit like those of a monkey. But notwithstanding, they were magnificent, with long frail fingers, dark yellow painted finger nails, and prominent soft palms ... Parsa-Parsa appeals to us strongly because of her fresh gazelle-like eyes, Chinese-like at the edges; because of her youth (she is only fifteen); and even because of her uninhibitedness. She is a naïve, trusting little animal.[1]

However, this type of costume could also have been influenced by books illustrating Persian and Turkish women such as Racinet's Costume Historique, which offer examples of Persian dancing women in bulbous baloon pants, long cape-like veils, and bra-like bodices.[2] It is conceivable that Bakst also referred to Odalisques in the works of Ingres or Delacroix, an example being Algerian Women.

Bakst's designs for the harem women flew out of the symbolist world of Salomé. They were also part of an ineffinable fin-de-siècle ambience of a decadent society that was fascinated with the woman as an enchantress.[3] They may also reflect a renewed interest in the Orient that was evidenced by the famous translation of Arabian Nights, published in Paris at the beginning of the century. An interest in near Eastern art also manifested itself in a series of exhibitions held in the early years of the twentieth century. There were exhibitions of Persian art at the Pavillion de Marsan in 1903, another exhibition in Munich, and one in Berlin in 1910.[4]

For the most part Bakst's costume designs for the women in Schéhérazade are all variations of the harem pants costume. Generally the figure is rather directly presented, shown in a frontal view or three-quarter frontal profile view that helps give the viewer and costumier an idea as to the nature of the garment to be worn by the dancer. The costume design for an Odalisque seen from the rear, (Figure 711, is unusual in its presentation of the figure from the three-quarter rear view, as well as in the softer, less

[illegible] woman's sexuality. Nevertheless [illegible] sense of eroticism in this figure [illegible] the right breast silhouetted [illegible] the indication of under-arm [illegible] sexual desires of the [illegible] delicate modelling of the back, [illegible] and the stance of the woman out- [illegible] with arms akimbo, underscores [illegible] character as well as possibly [illegible] choreographic poses.[2]

[illegible] fantastic, barbaric and eroti[illegible] the Orient with the costumes for Schéhéra- [illegible] the costumes for Cléopâtre were as exotic, [illegible] for Schéhérazade were con- [illegible] that they earned him the title of [illegible]"[1]

[illegible] designers brought enormous change to the [illegible] costume. Schéhérazade presented a climax [illegible] format of ballet costumes. This was a revolu- [illegible] the costume designers. They were [illegible] traditional style but could now [illegible] character of the scenario of the [illegible] however, had to offer the maximum [illegible] general outline and shape the cos- [illegible] Schéhérazade were soft and voluptuous (as [illegible] of Nijinsky and Rubinstein, (Figure [illegible] with the great swags of drapery [illegible] Bakst had introduced angular [illegible] of the set, he also used angular [illegible] as fabric patterning. [illegible] the costume. Examples of the [illegible] (achieved by stiffening the fabric) [illegible] the Sultan and his henchmen. [illegible] the Sultan, (Figure 69), the out- [illegible] stiffening of the fabric. [illegible] sharp shape [illegible] harsh

effect which befitted their character and action in the context of the ballet. The idea of having the harsh angular silhouette intrude at a dramatic moment in the ballet was emotionally effective, thus furthering the expressive-decorative quality of the work as well as underlining the essence of the scenario, music and choreography. As important is the uses made of angular decoration within the costumes. This reinforces the visual character of the dress.

The colours of most of the costumes were in the mauve and pink range. These colours formed a perfect contrast with the red/green/blue set. Colours are used to complement and intensify one another, as can clearly be seen if the Sultan design, (Figure 631, and the Odalisque, (Figure 63) are compared with the décor, (Figure 65). Thus the moving performer would supply the perfect contrast and combination to the décor in which the action took place.

Schéhérazade presented a unified symbolic visual whole. The set and costumes not only adhered to Aurier's definition of what a symbolist work should contain,[1] but of equal importance it offered the spectator a 'symbol of place' — not a reconstruction of an existing reality but a sign for it.

In studying Schéhérazade there are certain aspects which must be highlighted in historical context. Compared with the kind of 'cardboard colour' ballet décor which was presented at the Paris Opéra, Bakst's painted décor exploited the fantasy and symbolic illusion of ballet. In contrast to the frequently plain-toned French settings, Bakst's use of colour fused into an overall painted texture and the dark and light values of the several colours, derived as they were from the paintings of Vrubel,[2] were clustered in support of a spatial illusion. Bakst's scenography served as a model upon which wider generalizations of the early Ballet Russe style was based.

> The barbaric, exacerbated, and magnificent sumptuousness of the décors and costumes was obtained by far simpler means than those used by our Parisian decorators. The great Russian painters of the Diaghilev company always had a horror of trompe l'oeil, of all that which was pretty, little of all that which tended to diminish, reduce, specify, of all that which hindered the spectators' imagination.[1]

As stated in Chapter One, spatially a ballet designer is faced with more physical limitations than scenographers for drama and opera. For the most part he must restrict his décor to the sides and back of the hollow box-stage leaving an unencumbered floor space for the choreography. In his Schéhérazade décor Bakst manipulated the frontal box space into a painted illusion of a deep diagonal recession to the right (the flats and backdrop) and a shallower diagonal recession to the left created by a flight of stairs to an upper level. The pendant drapes and lamps activate the upper parts of the stage space, so frequently wasted or darkly concealed. Further Bakst used a highly decorated floor cloth with painted representation of carpets, thus designing as a unit the entire stage environment. The use of the carpet floor cloth finds its parallel in Vrubel's works, especially The Dance of Tamara, (Figure 26).

> The painters of the Ballets Russes do not believe in the possibility and the necessity of recreating in the scenic space the exact place where the action unfolds. They appreciate that the symbolist illusion does not rest on the methodical utilization of traditional precedents of reproduction, perspective and trompe l'oeil, and that it is not necessary that each of the parts which make up the scenic image produce an absolute effect of reality .... The symbolist illusion is not born of the copy of the real world, but of the power of enchantment inherent in ballet, which directly touches the spectator, even when it suggests to him the most unexpected events and actions in the bosom of an irrational universe. The illusion appropriate to the ballet implies the respect of its conventions, the actions combined of its divers elements (music, scenario, dance, décor) each of which must possess a force of persuasion without which there is no possible ballet.[2]

From this it is apparent that Bablet had the view that Bakst's Schéhérazade was a Gesamtkunstwerk, as well as a symbolist exercise in scenography.

In support of the contention that Schéhérazade was a Gesamtkunstwerk, Fokine's choreography may be examined in its plastic use of the whole body, its rejection of pointe work, and its development upon musical rhythms of a symphonic nature which reflected the impact of Isadora Duncan, and yet possessed a classical control foreign to Duncan's bacchic abandon. It directly echoed the scenario and scenography thus producing a total theatre concept. This was an extension of Wagner's concepts producing a completely unified visual statement. The rhythms of colour-flow in the scenography was echoed by the choreographed body postures utilized by the dancers. Fokine's choreography was asymmetrical, as were Bakst's sets, and like Bakst's treatment of detail it wove the

> --- prodigious feats of a star performer such as Nijinsky into the fabric of the total choreographic form. For the first time a choreographer had been directly influenced in his use of movement by a painter, though Fokine would never acknowledge this.[1]

Fokine's choreographic form developed in a more continuous flow than ballet's previous episodic presentations of solos, ensembles, and divertissements.

Therefore it can be noted that in all its integrated forms Schéhérazade presented an innovative unified work that was rightly considered at the time as "totally new and bound to influence all future ballets, as well as pave the way for new methods of scenographic endeavour".[2] Bakst established a precedent for principles utilized by designers or artists who either chose to imitate his style of design or who, realising the limitless boundaries Schéhérazade had opened up in scenography, experimented with the integrated pictorial tableau. If some of the principles of contemporary art could be utilized within the confines of theatre design to create a

pictorial tableau, then the way was open for other artists to experiment within this field. This led to artists extending Bakst's theories of stage design as is to be seen in Picasso's cubist scenography for Parade (1917). Diaghilev later encouraged other avant-garde artists to work in the field of scenography.[1]

Stravinsky considered Schéhérazade the perfect achievement of the Russian Ballet from a scenographic viewpoint.[2] Picasso shared his view that it was a 'masterpiece' but added "You know, it's a special taste, but very well done".[3] Whether it was as Picasso stated "a special taste" or not, the whole conception of this exotic stage picture did present to the viewer a unified, decorative expressive statement which could be termed a totally successful Gesamtkunstwerk in the stage design oeuvre.

The extraordinary impact made by Schéhérazade on the Parisian public was to further promote a vogue for oriental design. Interiors, dresses and fabrics were designed in 1910 and 1911 as a direct consequence of Bakst's scenography for this ballet. The most famous delignors, Paul Poiret (1879-1944) and Erté-Romain de Tirtoff (1895-) were most influenced in this direction, designing clothes based on the so-called "Oriental Style".[4] As P. White states:

> Since the turn of the century a craze for Orientalia has been raging in Paris, and the climax came with the arrival of The Ballet Russe. Never had a Western public been exposed to anything like the orgiastic colours, barbarian and exotic sensuality, frenetic leaps and savage rhythms .... The costumes designed by Bakst did much to reinforce the vogue of Orientalism and vivify Poiret's Oriental designs.[5]

The influence of Bakst's design for Schéhérazade seemed to have been extensive, and not only limited to the field of dress design. Duchamp-Villon's Maison Cubiste, at the Salon d'Automne of 1912, displayed the combined talents of André Mare, Marie Laurencin, Paul Vera and Roger de la Fresnay, and this interior also appears to have been influenced by Bakst's vision of the Near East.

> Then there were the cushions, all those cushions - embroidered with roses, parrots, red fishes, and every kind of motif - on which reclined those lady Odalisques with their turbans. Decorative art had a field day here, and even the great names contributed ... The wall plaques were strewn with roses, or covered with little thickets, little women, fruit and flowers, splashed on with nervous grace, but nonetheless tedious in the long run. The furnishing materials woven or printed were influenced by Bakst's gay colouring.[1]

The costume historian, Brian Reade, has stated that without the enormous success of the Russian Ballet, and in particular Schéhérazade, it is doubtful that the Orientalism evident in Paris after 1909 would have been so profound.[2] Although Bakst had an enormous influence, he was not completely original. He was exposed to manifestations of Orientalism earlier in the century, as well as to contemporary movements in the decorative arts in Europe.[3]

Despite the evidence indicating Bakst's overpowering impact it must be remembered that he was not the inaugurator of the wave of Orientalism that swept Paris but rather acted as a catalyst. Indeed he was more the master purveyor of a revival of Orientalism that had been present since the turn of the century and which was a recurring phenomenon dating from the Rococo period. It is reflected in the success of J. C. Mardrus' translation of the Thousand and One Nights, published in Paris between 1900 and 1904, as well as by the pavillion Africa and Asia at the Paris 1900 Universal Exhibition. In the fashion way George Rochegrosse's design for the tapestry Franci in Africa and Orazi's exotic illustration La Belle Sans Nom reproduced in the Christmas issue of Le Figaro Illustré in 1900, established similar precedents in the decorative arts.[4]

The movement toward Orientalism had begun somewhat before Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade. Bold, opulent and visually exciting as Bakst's use of colour was, he was neither the first nor the only artist to use such extraordinary colour juxtapositions. The Fauve painters in

France and the Expressionists in Germany had used equally strident colour.

In any event it is clear that Bakst during his most prolific years was probably responding to a series of diverse stimuli, and moreover, that the public of that period was particularly responsive to Bakst's bold sensibility, through which those stimuli were filtered. What Bakst presented to the European audiences had never before been seen on stage.[1] Of equal importance was the type of audience that saw his spectacles, for it must be kept in mind that Bakst's viewers in Paris were largely made up of those enlightened few responsible for establishing "taste".[2] One may presume that many of them were aware of parallel developments in painting such as Fauvism, for example Cocteau, Apollinaire and Misia Sert, and therefore they reacted positively to Bakst's theatrical innovations. Bakst rightly deserves credit for the vital role he played as a link between high-art forms and other artistic endeavours. Too often developments in painting are placed in a context that is not entirely accurate. The exotic colourations and harmonies employed by the Fauves painters influenced twentieth century colour perception, but at the time when they took on the scene these innovations were appreciated by only a small group of cognescenti. Public taste was influenced by the works of artists in other fields with their own degree of originality - artists such as Bakst. Absorbing what was new in the work of others, Bakst magnified aspects of it and presented it to a wider audience. Bakst could even be called a populariser of "high art" trends.

The exotic effect of Schéhérazade must have been intensified as it was preceded by Bakst's quieter designs for Carnaval. The ballet Carnaval originated on March 5th 1910 when a ball was given by the magazine Satyricon in the Pavlov Hall in St. Petersburg.[3] Two young noblemen, Mikhail Kornfeld, later editor of the magazine, and Pavel Patiomkin, a poet, came to Fokine and asked him to stage a ballet to be given

at the ball.[1] Fokine suggested that Schumann's piano composition, Carnaval, was ideal.[2] The young men were enthusiastic.[3] Fokine later described how the ballet came into existence:

> We sat down with the German biography of Schumann, and Kornfeld quickly translated to me the part pertinent to Carnaval, which had a connection with Schumann's personal life ... From this and from titles indicated on the music, such as Harlequin, Columbine, Pantalon, Pierrot and Papillon, I was able immediately to visualize and construct the picture of the ballet: the series of separate characters linked one to the other - the proverbially hapless Pierrot, the comical Pantalon, the Harlequin always emerging victorious from his escapades, and the light play around the love between Columbine and Harlequin. The luckless Pierrot and Pantalon were literally improvised during rehearsals, the last of which took place minutes before the beginning of the ball.[4]

Apart from the great Russian director, Meyerhold, all those who took part in the St. Petersburg version of Carnaval were members of The Imperial Ballet.[5] Because these dancers were under contract to The Imperial Theatre it was not permissible that they perform in any outside works. However, because the dancers wore masks the authorities turned a blind eye to the proceedings.[6] The enforced anonymity of the dancers meant that their names could not be mentioned in the press. This has led to a confusion over the exact casting.

It was Grigoriev who informed Diaghilev about Carnaval.[7] By chance the Schumann suite had already been orchestrated in 1902 by Rimsky-Korsakov, collaborating with Liadov, Glazunov and Tcherepine.[8] Diaghilev decided to use Fokine's original ballet with this augmented score for the first programme in his 1910 season.

The setting was designed by Bakst and its comparative simplicity "startled the Parisian theatre-goers".[9] Bakst

> ... framed the stage with dark blue curtains which had a certain poetic ambiguity, for they suggested both a tent in which a party had been given and the booths in which the characters of the Commedia

dell'Arte entertained their audience.[1]

Along the top of the backing flats behind the dark blue framing curtains ran a dado of stylised floral forms in red, black and gold which, together with two red and black sofas with curly arms (the stage's only adornment), placed the date of the actions in the Viennese Biedermeyer period of 1840.[2] The elements of the décor such as the flats and the sofas can be seen in a photograph of Bakst's design accurately created in 1964 from his sketches by the Sadlers Wells Ballet, [Figure 76]. The original designs appear to have been lost.[3]

Bakst's designs for Carnaval were refined in comparison to Schéhérazade. The design was characterized by a uniformity and harmony of shape and colour that made a visual impact very different from the strident, colourful force of the scenography for Schéhérazade. Carnaval was also imbued with a nostalgia for a historical period, that of the Biedermeyer and Commedia. The colour used in both décor and costumes, as well as the design for the tarlatane was, however, consistent with the scenario. All elements blended perfectly. A unity between set, costumes, choreography, music and scenario was achieved.

In studying the recreated décor, [Figure 76], a unity of concept can be seen. In the photograph the blue curtains described by Buckle are strangely missing. The only decorated surface area, the stylized floral dado, is placed well above the performers' height. The stylized floral forms once again point to the influence of the Russian peasant art's use of similar simplified motifs.[4] In the décor for Carnaval Bakst had archived Appia's ideal of massgebend that is the performers were highlighted and did not play against painted décor. This ideal is further manifest in his designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912).

In choreographic form Schumann's scenario was closely followed by Fokine,[5] and contained reference to Schumann's

love life. These references embodied the gallicized characters of the Italian Commedia Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot, Pantalon, as well as autobiographical allusions: Florestan who chased Estrella, representing the headstrong, impulsive side of Schumann's character; Eusebius, who was shyly and reverently in love with Chiarina, the solitary, dreamy and romantic side of Schumann's nature. Estrella was Ernestine von Fricken with whom the composer was in love, and Chiarina the fifteen year old Clara Wieck, the pianist whom he later married.[1]

The girls were flounced crinolines with bonnets or frilled caps in keeping with the Biedermeyer costume style. Some were dressed in white, the others in yellow.[2] Chiarina had a white jacket and a rover blue skirt with tassels.[3] Papillon's

> ... white dress was shorter, more childish than the others, with little painted wings and bunches of ribbons, attached to her wrists.[4]

Columbine's (Karsavina) big white skirt had cherries painted around its innumerable scalloped frills, (Figure 77), and she wore black silk ballet shoes.[5]

The men, mostly top-hatted, wore brown or bottle-green frock coats with high collars and nipped-in waists in the D'Orsay style over buff or striped peg-top trousers, (Figure 76). Pantalon was dressed in ginger, with dyed moustaches and green gloves.[6]

> Eusebius, with his long black hair, wore a pink velvet jacket, shorter than the others, with striped black trousers. Pierrot was in traditional dress, baggy white trousers and smock with a limp black ruff, green pom-pom buttons and long trailing sleeves to hide his hands.[7]

This was the role originally played by Meyerhold in the St. Petersburg production. The Harlequin figure originally wore tight trousers. The illustration, (Figure 78), shows Harlequin embracing Columbine. The effect as noticeable in this photograph is that of a mixture of both the Commedia dell'Arte style of costume with Harlequin in black painted

face mask and skull cap and lozenge patterns on his tight trousers, and Biedermeyer fashion with Columbine wearing the flounced skirt and hat. Baket again worked from historical source material.[1] In spite of combining two different period styles he succeeded in creating a harmony. The duality of period styles hinted at a certain symbolist quality of timelessness.[2] In this ballet the influence of Bussatov's paintings of costume figures, that of stylizing and simplifying period costumes, can be clearly seen.[3]

Harlequin's tight trousers were changed to that of leotard and tights with similar patterning, (Figure 79), in the 1912 production. The introduction of tights rather than trousers is a simplification of the original design. The costume was form-fitting, accentuating the body-line. This simplification was probably more comfortable to dance in. However, an important factor was that it led to a general simplification of ballet costumes. This type of design, that of leotard and tights instead of the conventional pre-1900 trousers and top, was to reform all ballet wear. From 1912 leotard and tights became standard. Harlequin's tights were "in apple green, vermillion and white to match Colymbine's cherries".[4] He retained the floppy white silk shirt, black bow, black skull cap and a pale-eye black domino mask from the original Bakst design of 1910.

Fokine's Carnaval contained choreography that was directly influenced by his Les Sylphides. It differed in one respect. In Carnaval, as opposed to Schéhérazade, the scenario was not over elaborate and was related to Schumann's pragmatic score. Carnaval was choreographically interesting as it was neither a completely abstract ballet as Les Sylphides, nor did it over-emphasize the plot as had Schéhérazade. In its choreographic, scenographic, musical and scenario format Carnaval, like Schéhérazade, presented a unified, symbolist concept. The general mood conveyed through the scenography was that of the nostalgic past, unlike Schéhérazade, where both colour and form promoted a more positive - "explosive"[5] - reaction.

Carnaval conveyed an emotional quality, but it was of a quieter nature.

Bakst's design for Carnaval and Schéhérazade could be taken as prototypes for the directions that the Ballet Russe productions would take up until the First World War.

Carnaval contained the essence of the so-called romantic ballet designs of which Les Sylphides was the precursor. Giselle, L'Après-midi d'un Faune, Jeux and Le Spectre de la Rose were to follow in this tradition. Schéhérazade was to form the basis for the exotic ballets: Les Orientales, Le Sacre du Printemps and Le Dieu Bleu. Petrushka, Narcisse and Daphnis and Chloé were of interest for they covered both categories.

The second programme presented by the Ballet Russe in their Paris 1911 season began with the ballet Giselle.[1] It had not been performed in Paris since it was danced by Adela Grantzeva in 1868.[2] The old romantic ballet was conceived by Théophile Gautier and Vernoy de Saint-Georges as a vehicle to showcase the wide range of Carlotta Grisi's gifts,[3] and also had a strong role for the leading male dancer. The artist impersonating the village girl, Giselle, carefree and loving at the beginning of the ballet, had to go mad and die when she found that her young suitor was a Count in disguise and engaged to a Princess. When she reappeared in Act II as one of the sylphlike Willis, the dreaded dames des bois, she had to be technically strong enough to "dance her lover to death, but also have the ability to convey a feeling of love".[4] Count Albrecht had to be both Prince and Peasant. In the second act he had to perform an exhausting series of entrechats, cabrioles, pirouettes and tours en l'air, ending in a fall to the ground, "giving the impression of remorse and heartbreak".[5] The choreography was in "period style".[6]

According to Richard Buckle Karsavina had little trouble in performing the mime routines as originally choreographed.[7]

> [illegible], however, find difficulty dancing Prince Albrecht in Giselle as he was so carried away by Fokine's new choreography that he could not see his way satisfactorily to reconciling the [illegible] fashions of dance with heartfelt emotions; the public on the whole and particularly in London, would share his confusion.[1]

[illegible] had been taught the role of Giselle by her [illegible] Mme. Sokolova. Pavlova, who had made a speciality of the role in St. Petersburg and was supposed to have [illegible] to the 1910 Ballet Russe season, could have been [illegible] helpful to Karsavina but was not. When Buckle [illegible] Karsavina and asked if Pavlova had helped, she [illegible] "Not [illegible]".[2] Nijinsky, because of the difficulty [illegible] interpretation of Albrecht, was, according [illegible] constantly fighting with Karsavina".[3]

[illegible] always been sceptical of presenting this [illegible] the Paris audience. He had been persuaded by [illegible] (it).[4] Diaghilev doubted whether Parisians [illegible] in an interpretation of a well known [illegible] of the Russians.[5] Benois' nostalgic sets were, [illegible] according to him "a wonderful evocation of [illegible]".[6] Benois may have been correct in his [illegible] of his settings, for through lighting the Act I [illegible] have been very effective. Judging the [illegible] Benois' sketches they seem rather eclectic and [illegible]. Classical ballets generally seem to require [illegible] settings, which if drastically altered may [illegible] the original character of the [illegible] of the scenography. Clark and Crisp have [illegible]

> [illegible] contemporary design methods have been employed [illegible] designing Giselle, the result, because of the [illegible], has been ill received by the public [illegible].[7]

[illegible] an aspect of unity of presentation [illegible] traditional type of scenography in

harmony with the scenario and music.

Benois' sketch for Act I of Giselle, the Village scene (Figure 80), shows Giselle's cottage on the left and other dwellings on the right. Legs and borders are decorated with tree forms. There is a castle on a craggy hill set against a landscape of hills, meadows and a river. This sketch has a certain looseness of paint texture which was also probably used, according to Buckle, in the final presentation of the backdrop and constructed pieces.[7]

The Act I sketch for Giselle uses motifs which harken back to the late Middle Ages, and examples of the castle on the hill representation may be discerned in the work of, say, Breughel. (Figure 81 - here the castle on the hill in the upper right of the work is similar to Benois' castle motif.) Benois was interested in the work of German and Flemish schools of painting. This interest, however, was also directed at the later Renaissance landscape painting of Breughel. Benois was acquainted with Breughel's work as he had lectured on his landscape paintings to the Mir Iskusstva group in 1898.[8] There are features in Benois' presentation of Act I Giselle that parallel elements found in certain Breughel landscapes. For instance, if The Hay Harvest, (Figure 82), is taken as an example of a Breughel landscape certain similarities may be noted. The type of buildings illustrated in both Breughel's and Benois' paintings are vaguely similar as well as the foliage forms used as a framing device. Benois used trees as a framing element, but within the three-dimensional format of the stage picture. It should be noted that tree forms are often used as a framing device in classical ballets as is the case in almost any contemporary production of Giselle, Swan Lake or The Sleeping Beauty. Other similarities between Benois' décor and Breughel's paintings are the use of planes running parallel to the picture plane cut by diagonals created by the fall of light on the painted landscape - the crag and the distant river on both

illustrated works are almost identical. The only real difference between the two works can be found in the composition. In Brueghel's work the crag is on the right, the river on the left whereas in Benois' design the crag and river are centrally focused. Thus the comparisons drawn could be valid, due to the similarities in both works and also because Benois, belonging to the St. Petersburg Academy, was interested in the German and Flemish schools of painting.[1] Further the Mir Iskusstva group were dedicated to the study of all German and Flemish Art movements in their formative years.[2]

The major point of the comparison made is that Benois based his designs on the type of landscapes as executed by Brueghel and perhaps Broederlam. The similarities between these artists' work show Benois' ideals, especially in the designs of Giselle - these being retrospective in impulse rather than innovative in style.

A further difference between Brueghel's and Benois' work may be noted in the use of paint texture. Brueghel was influenced by the German Renaissance use of detail and smooth paint textures whereas Benois' sketch, probably both because it was a sketch as well as designed for the larger than easel painting format of the stage, was looser in its paint application (as has been previously noted in Benois' 1909 design for the set of Les Sylphides). In fact the looseness of the paint application could lead to a further comparison. In P. Bonnard's Dauphine Landscape, (Figure 83), (1) studied (circa 1905) - at the time displayed in The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg - a similar looseness of paint application, especially in the tree forms on the right, may be noted. As in Benois' design for Act I of Giselle, (Figure 82), these were painted allowing a dark background to show through the foreground areas. Benois, in elaborating on his technique, did acknowledge his use of working from dark to light. [3]

A further similarity is that Bonnard also employed à vista

landscape presentation. Although the same type of vista is represented in Benois' sketch, no use of Bonnard's clearly defined coloured areas can be observed in the Giselle Act I décor - Benois executing his designs in tonalities of brown and green.[1] Benois' knowledge and interest, therefore, was not only confined to the earlier period of art as he would have seen the Bonnard work as it was in the museum where he acted as curator.[2]

The reversion to a mode of representation that was based on artists of previous centuries was, however, further noticeable in Benois' designs for Act II of Giselle, (Figure 84). Here a romantic presentation of a "mountain forest and ruined cathedral"[3] can be noted. The design for Giselle Act II is clearly a reworking of the set for Les Sylphides, (Figure 58), of the previous year. There are obvious similarities in the representation of the ruined church, trees and grave yard. In the Giselle Act II sketch, however, there is a greater clarity in Benois' presentation of forms such as the ruined church, the gravestone (bottom left) and the trees. Both designs contain an obvious romantic mood quality. The imagery is very much in keeping with the scenario which specifies that the action takes place in a "haunted forest".[4]

The question remains as to the set design's developmental value in the area of scenography. Both the designs for Act I and Act II are too conservative and retrospective to be termed either innovative or in fact in any way progressive. These designs are naturally taking into account the different scenarios. They are, therefore, totally dissimilar to the colourful and innovative scenography that Bakst produced during the same 1910 season for Schéhérazade. Benois' designs are in the traditional idiom. Giselle, however, has always been considered a symbolist ballet because of its use of correspondences between the 'real' world and that of the 'otherworldly'.[5] In this aspect Benois' décors were successful. In their scenographic form they correlate perfectly with the symbolist and romantic

elements evident elsewhere in the work.

Benois had, at first, wanted to use the ultra-romantic costumes of the 1840's in the troubadour style for the ballet. However, "his courage failed in the end and his final designs omitted the more ridiculous elements of the style",[1] (for example, the long slashed trousers).

Although Benois' "courage failed him",[2] the designs for Nijinsky and Karsavina's costumes, (figure 85), are a direct continuation of the style of nineteenth century ballet costume. Nijinsky's costume was the prototype of the male ballet costumes used in all pre-1909 ballets. This can clearly be seen if Nijinsky's costume for Giselle Act II, (figure 86), is compared with that worn by Lycar in 1898, (figure 61), in Raymonda. The same tights, slashed pants and overshirt are used in both designs. Karsavina's costume for Act II is again similar to those designed for ballerinas who portrayed the spirits of the dead in the ballet. Karsavina's costume is in fact almost identical - wings, flowers in the hair and a long tutu - to those of the original Giselle production, (figure 15).

Benois' designs for the ballet were not a success and there are no innovative features to be found in his scenographic concepts. In fact many critics thought that "they were old opera sets re-used. This was mainly owing to their dark colouring".[3] Benois produced a reconstruction of the ballet which conformed to the original concept inherent in the scenario. The ballet, even considered in its dated and eclectic presentation, did adhere to the principles of a Gesamtkunstwerk in that the scenographic content was in accord with the scenario, music and choreography.

The other new ballets presented during the 1910 second season were The Firebird and Les Orientales.[4]

The history of The Firebird had begun on September 4th 1909.[5]

Whilst on holiday on the Lido Diaghilev had written to the composer, Liadov

> ... I want a ballet, and a Russian one; there has never been such a ballet before. It is imperative that I present one in May 1910 in the Paris Grand Opéra and at Drury Lane in London.[1]

Diaghilev may have decided to prevent a Russian ballet because of the attack by the French press on "the lack of national atmosphere of the Russian Ballet".[2] They seemed to desire a folk element and expected a special, almost exotic flavour in the performances and presentation. "In short, they wanted what they, as Frenchmen, understood to be du vrai Russe".[3]

By the end of 1909 Fokine had a complete scenario.[4] Hunting for folk tales he had sought information from the fashionable expert in this area, Remizov.[5] For the scenario Remizov jumbled together various classical Russian fairy tales. According to Lievan

> ... the resulting patchwork, although colourful, was not convincing for a Russian. It was as if Alice of Alice in Wonder:and were partnered with Falstaff in a Scotch jig.[6]

At first Liadov was asked to compose the music. He was, however, a slow worker and when Diaghilev discovered he had not written a note of music the commission passed to Tcherepin. According to Lievan, "the pieces he composed were not satisfactory".[7] In 1910 Diaghilev heard Stravinsky's Fireworks at a concert and stated: "It's wonderful! It's just what we want. That's the man we want for our ballet".[8]

Stravinsky was commissioned to compose the ballet.[9] The Firebird has always been quoted as the earliest example of close collaboration between a composer and a choreographer.[10] Many years before his memoirs were published (1961) Fokine told Lincoln Kirstein and Arnold Haskell, in broken English, how the music and choreography had been worked out together:

> Stravinsky brought a beautiful cavatina on the entrance of the Tsarevitch into the garden ... But I disapproved. I said "No, you must bring him in like a tenor. Break the phrase where he merely shows his head on his first intrusion."[1]

Apparently this spirit of collaboration was consistent throughout the formation of the ballet.

Diaghilev had wanted Vrubel to design the ballet, but according to Stravinsky, "Vrubel was dying or going mad".[2] Diaghilev therefore chose Golovin instead.[3] Benois felt that: "Unfortunately Golovin, a wonderful colourist and a lover of ancient Russian art, remained true only to himself ...".[4]

Golovin's association with the Ballet Russe before his scenography for The Firebird had been rather limited even although he had had experience as a designer in Russia. Golovin's designs were not well received by Benois who felt that they did not illuminate the drama. In his Reminiscences he stated that

> ... a group of poisonous toadstools, not unlike Hindu pagodas, symbolised Kastchei's realm. Beneath were layers and outlines of different colours, suggesting overgrowth and thickets that were soft, green, dank and close. There were also the figures of knights, petrified by the evil Kastchei when they had attempted to rescue the captive princesses. It seemed like a huge chequered carpet, blazing with colour but devoid of any depth. No one could penetrate into such a forest - indeed it seemed scarcely a forest at all.[5]

Benois may have been correct, but in studying the only remaining fragment of the sketch for the backdrop it is difficult to assess Benois' evaluation. Benois, however, stated that The Firebird décor contained

> ... a kind of archaic pointillisme - a semi-representational mosaic made up entirely of green, gold and silver beetles.[6]

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would seem that the palette was bright, but there is no hint of the 'silver and gold sketches' referred to by Benois. One may assume that the palette was not dissimilar to that used [illegible] rich in the Polovtsian Dances in Prince Igor (1909) or Bakst in Schéhérazade (1910).

This is a fragment of the original sketch, yet even in this form the design seems far more reliant on the principles of broken surface textures, creating a flat decorative statement. Unfortunately, as there are no other contemporary descriptions of the set, a further analysis is impossible. This fragment of the décor is all that remains. In the later revival of The Firebird, Goncharova redesigned the work.

Judging from the contemporary descriptions of Golovin's costumes it would seem they were very rich in colour.[1] Etkind records from an interview with Benois that

> ... Kastchei's servants and followers were elaborately attired, but they were neither frightening nor repulsive ... The result was that Fokine's choreographic ideas, performed by artists in working clothes at rehearsals, seemed to be extremely fantastic and eerie, but on stage everything was submerged in uniform, sumptuous luxury. The Kikimoras [the female monsters of the Wizard's Court] looked like pageboys, the Bellyboshkies [the male monsters of the Court] like Turkish janissaries [soldiers]. Even Kastchei [the Wizard] was hardly frightening.[2]

In the surviving black-and-white photographs, (Figures 88 and 89), showing the monsters and Kastchei, the designs, although not as frightening as Benois might have wished,[3] illustrate that Golovin had designed caricature monsters which seem to comply with the scenario.[4] The tabards and overskirts of the four 'monsters' in the front of the photograph are decorated with broken geometric motifs, (Figure 88). These decorations are echoed in modified form in the gnomelike masks and head-dresses. The figure behind wears no mask and is possibly a Bellyboshki (taking Etkind's description into account). Kastchei is presented in the form of a

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caricature, (Figure 89). He wears no mask. As observed by Buckle the make-up gives the character an other-worldly appearance, because of its stylization[1] and also because his face is almost entirely covered with a long false beard and head-dress in the form of a skeletal crown. His shoulders are padded and pointed and these together with his elongated fingers (as well as the crown) present the 'Immortal' Kastchei as a somewhat caricature wizard. As there are only a few remaining photographs of the costumes for The Firebird it is difficult to evaluate Benois' criticism.[2] He was, however, not the only member of the Ballet Russe who disliked Golovin's costumes. Diaghilev found Golovin's designs for the Firebird, the Prince and the lead Princess unsatisfactory and commissioned new designs from Bakst.[3]

Bakst's three designs are in a completely different style from his earlier work and are more obviously eclectic. The three watercolour sketches reflect his interest in Russian icons and have a certain Jugendstil character which evokes the work of Gustav Klimt (1862-1918). The mannered distortion in Klimt's work, for example Water Serpents of 1904/7, (Figure 90), finds its counterpart in Bakst's Firebird design despite greater sinuosity and elegance. Like Klimt, Bakst exploited pattern, this being even more noticeable in a contemporary Street costume design, (Figure 91). Whilst some of the motifs in the patterning of Bakst's designs are also to be found in Klimt's Water Serpents, for example the spirals in the feathered skirt of the Firebird, (Figure 92), and the scattered small block pattern in his street costume, the major influence seems to be Russian icons and ethnic textile designs.[4]

The influence of Russian icons and textile designs may be discerned in all three costume sketches, (Figures 92, 93 and 94).[5] The distortion of the heads, facial features and necks are reminiscent of the Russian icon, St. Nicholas, (Figure 95). The decorative bird images on the apron of the

Firebird costume sketch seem to be directly inspired by peasant Russian textile designs, (Figure 96), the forms used in the textile design such as the stylized bird motifs and triangles - are virtually the same as those on the apron of the Firebird costume, (Figure 92). This costume was executed in tones of gold with raised embroidered patterning. The head-dress and skirt were feathered but remained functional, unlike the similar costume which Baker had designed for Nefsavina in Le Festin, (Figure 55). The exotic tone of the Firebird's costume was enhanced through the use of Turkish trousers and slippers.

This eclectic approach can be clearly demonstrated in a study of Baker's costume for the Prince, (Figure 93). In this design the decorative elements within the costume are far more reliant on Muscovy peasant textile designs. Possibly because of the need of stage impact Baker decorated every element of the costume. The design of the Prince's costume was further enhanced, as Russian icons had been, by the appliqué of pearls to outline various elements - in this case the collar, tunic front and head-dress, as can be noted if the icon of Our Lady Vladimirskaya, (Figure 97), is compared to this watercolour sketch. It can also be noted that in the Prince's costume design sketch, the figure is drawn with contrasting diagonal rhythms, although these are not as dynamic as those encountered in the costume sketch of the Firebird. His costume refers back to those of the more conventional Russian medieval nobleman, appropriate because in the scenario the Prince is located in a real as opposed to a fantastic imaginative world.

The design for the costume of the leading Princess, (Figure 94), was very like that of the Prince, (Figure 93). This too was derived from Muscovy peasant sources. The cut of her costume was that of a Boyar maiden combined with elements of peasant dresses, especially discernable in the decorated and full-cut sleeves of her garment.

[illegible] richly embroidered costume owed a debt to traditional Ancestian and Ukranian garments,[1] as well as icon paintings such as Our Lady Vladimirskaya. (Figure 97). The costume is highlighted by embroidered pearl motifs accentuating the collar, dress front and hemline. The curvilinear floral motifs are similar to those in Our Lady Vladimirskaya. (The motifs in the icon and costume are very similar). The style of presentation is reminiscent of Russian iconsy but also displays 'expressionistic' distortion. The distortions, especially in the hand and head recall the work of Flint. Besides the influence of Flint, as Mayer has [illegible]

> The treatment of the face and hands is not related to the sensitive linear style found in Schéhérazade. This design together with several others that Bakst made for Firebird stand apart from the rest of Bakst's oeuvre. The bold handling of the forms, the rigid geometricity of the body and garment, and a wooden quality to the handling of the face, hands and feet indicate Bakst's response to the renewed interest in peasant images that had been occurring in Moscow under the influence of the early work of Kasimir Malevich, Michel Larionov and Natalia Goncharova to whose work Bakst was introduced by Benois.[2]

[illegible] in Goncharova's paintings such as her series Icon paintings with motifs (1908-1912) would lead one to support Meyer's observation. This is evident if a detail from this series is studied. (Figure 40). In the detail showing a [illegible] head painted in water colour on cardboard, a similar [illegible] and stylization may be observed, especially if compared to the head type utilized by Bakst for the Princess [illegible]. The type of distortion Goncharova employed [illegible] in Bakst's other designs for the Firebird [illegible], though not to the same degree of similarity. [illegible] source, therefore, which both Bakst and Goncharova used was Russian icons (as is implicit in Goncharova's [illegible] and it is evident that Goncharova and Bakst used these [illegible] in their scenography.

[illegible] and the flamboyance of Bakst's

costume design was not surprisingly lost in the finished garments. (Figures 99 and 100). However, the decorative patterns on the costumes were retained. It is unfortunate that most of Golovin's designs have been lost or destroyed. The overall impression created can only be assessed from critical reviews, a few remaining photographs, and a fragment of the Maiedrus. (Figure 87).

Despite the limited evidence available one may suggest that Bakst's three costumes would have integrated with the overall scheme. According to Benois, the costumes evoked a quality of "sumptuous luxury".[1] As some of the characters belong to the real world (The Prince) and others to a world of fantasy (Kastchei and the Firebird), the scenography underlined the symbolic connotations of the ballet, that of the correspondences between mortal (The Prince) and immortal (the undying Kastchei and the Firebird), creating a reality, as well as a 'fairytale' world in contrast to the 'real' world.[2]

Bakst's contribution to The Firebird was limited to three costume designs. That he would have liked to have played a greater role in the production of the scenography is suggested by the fact that he independently designed a marquette (now lost) for the set of The Firebird before Diaghilev commissioned the décor from Golovin. He conceived of the action taking place in a gigantic bird's nest.[3] The idea did not appeal to Diaghilev. When Diaghilev remounted The Firebird in 1918, he again rejected Bakst's concepts. That he was not entirely happy with Golovin's designs is suggested by the fact that he entrusted the scenography to Natalia Goncharova.

Benois thought the story of The Firebird was dull

> ... only succeeded in creating another fairy tale for children - not a fairy tale for grown-ups. The worst of it was that the hero, Ivan Tsarevitch, and the beautiful Tsareva were always remote from the audience. One did not believe in them, and therefore it was impossible to suffer with them

> The Evil Being, incarnated in Kastchei, the magician, was more alive and convincing ... But Kastchei appeared too late and perished too quickly.[1]

Benois felt that Diaghilev's stipulation that the ballet should last no more than an hour had restricted Fokine and Stravinsky, accelerated the action, and made the drama superficial.[2] Whilst one must admit that the story is odd, it is hard to imagine the ballet longer, or to see what could be gained by drawing the characters more profoundly. As a pageant, a tapestry, the ballet is satisfying. The innovation in the choreography consisted of the Firebird having to perform her main dance - one of the longest and most difficult solos ever conceived - at the very start of the work.[3] Another innovation was that there was no corps de ballet in the processional finale.

During rehearsals of The Firebird it became clear that Karsavina in the title role was going to be a success[4] as the leading dancer in a new production. Diaghilev would have preferred Nijinsky to have enjoyed this honour. He was to be given a similar leading role in the following year in the ballet Le Dieu Bleu which Cocteau and Reynaldo Hahn devised. Diaghilev stipulated that this ballet should have an Oriental theme.[5] It should have "décor and costumes by Bakst even more striking than those of Schéhérazade"[6] Nijinsky was to have a role like that of Karsavina in The Firebird which would set him apart from, and above the other characters, a supernatural being who moreover would not have to 'support' any ballerina and take second place to her.[7] In no new ballet by Fokine or himself would Nijinsky ever again support - in the sense of acting as a porteur - a ballerina. In Le Spectre de la Rose he would support Karsavina in an arabesque, but lift her very little. In Petrushka it would be the Moor who supported the ballerina. In the Greek ballets, because of the nature of their movement, the question would not arise.

The East was in fashion as it had been in the early days of

Victor Hugo, nearly a century before, and the divertissement that followed The Fireb' which was the last new offering of the season, had the same title as Hugo's book of poems, Les Orientales. The dancers Goltzer and Volkinn appeared in this, and Nijinsky had two numbers. One was Kobold, danced to Greig's piano piece of that name, orchestrated by Stravinsky.[1] For this Nijinsky wore green-blue all-over leotard and tights with patches of paillettes - "even his face was covered"[2] (Figure 1611. This ballet costume was unique as it consisted of body covering leotard and tights with appliqued motifs. It was abstract, revealed the body form and was the precursor of many modern dance costumes. It is not known who designed this costume. It is, however, interesting to note that Bakst re-designed the character of Harlequin using the same abstracted formula of body-fitting tights in the revival of Carnaval in 1912, as well as using similar chevron patterns within his costume designs. (For example Schéhérazade and Nijinsky's other Les Orientales costumes).

The other dance featuring Nijinsky and Karsavina was more static and was constructed of poses in the Siamese style. The costumes Bakst signed for their Siamese dance were a foretaste of those he was to design for Le Dieu Bleu the following year. The inspiration for both works was undoubtedly the 1908 visit of the Royal Bangkok Ballet to St. Petersburg,[3] which Bakst attended with Fokine and recorded in an oil painting, (Figure 1021. Serge Lifar bracketed the Siamese hand ballet with Isadora Duncan's visits to Russia in 1905 and 1908 as the major non-classical influence on Fokine's choreography.[4]

Bakst's Siamese Dance (1901) is a rather indifferent figurative representation of the Bangkok Ballet. Interesting elements for Bakst's later ballet designs were: the enclosing format of the architectural and sculptural features which strongly hinted at a stage setting comprising of side flats and backdrop, the use of exotic

elements such as the Indian statuary (to be found in Bakst's later designs such as Le Dieu Bleu),[1] and Siamese costumes which were to be used in various forms by Bakst in all his exotic ballet designs from Cléopâtre through Schéhérazade and Le Dieu Bleu.

The costume design sketch for les Orientales (Figure 103), is based on Siamese dance costumes. Bakst simplifying certain elements such as the headgear and shoulder pads yet retained the general feel of the costume type. If the photograph of Nijinsky in this costume, (Figure 104), is studied it will be noticed that the sketch and the costume are similar, thus illustrating how closely Bakst adhered to his original design concepts. The added decorative elements such as the chevron patterning on the legs and the greater detail in the designs on the torso, arms and legs of this costume were later additions. (These slight reflective chevrons, achieved through use of sequins, are almost identical to those used in the Kobold costume, hinting that Bakst most probably designed the Kobold costume for Nijinsky).

Bakst designed a front curtain for the ballet les Orientales, (Figure 105), which was unrealised. The bold colours and circle patterning show Bakst's predilection for painted, exotic fabrics. The draped fabric is arranged in impossible, flatly executed folds. An important element in this sketch is the technique Bakst used. The paint is freely applied in a series of vertical strokes, which impart a freshness unique in Bakst's stenographic ended arts.

The front curtain and the three costumes for this ballet are of interest basically only because they illustrate Bakst's different modes of expression, as well as the furthering of his aesthetic principles in scenography. It must be stated, however, that this ballet did not adhere to any of the principles of Gesamtkunstwerk (being designed by different designers), symbolist principles or even a development in scenographic aids.

As the production was designed by different artists there was obviously no interest displayed towards the principles of Gesamtkunstwerk, neither was there any particular innovation in design in evidence, nor any apparent involvement with symbolist principles.[1]

By the end of the 1910 season Bakst, Stravinsky and Nijinsky had emerged as the three great assets to the Ballet Russe. Bakst in particular established himself as a major scenographer. This was due to his designs for Schehérazade where he achieved a unified, aesthetic stage picture. So successful were these designs that they were acquired by the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, and Josef Peladan the "half-crazed Symbolist founder"[2] of the Salon de la Rose-Croix, acclaimed Bakst as "the Delacroix of the costume".[3] As a result Bakst was fêted by the haute-monde alongside Diaghilev and Nijinsky.

The productions mounted in the 1910 season showed that a uniformity of design principles could extend from that of easel painting to the stage. The presentation heightened the audience responses to the production, by involving the spectator through evocative imagery, thus forming in some cases an expressive decorative scenographic concept. These design and colour principles were derived from and influenced by Russian, French and German paintings. The productions of the 1910 season proved that a 'renaissance' had been achieved in theatre design.[4] For the most part the painted backcloth, sets and costumes were no longer separate entities. They were integrated and executed with vibrant, exciting colour. This was a far cry from the monochromatic designs of previous centuries. Not only were the colour and design presentations innovative but, because of their very nature they negated the false illusion of depth so beloved by previous theatre craftsmen. This was achieved through colour. Hot colours were used on the backcloths, causing them to exist on a plane that enhanced the decorative, expressive nature of the stage picture as well as partially negating depth.[5] More important when the designers of the

Ballet Russe suggested a perspective depth they generally did not use a vanishing point on stage level as had been the practice prior to 1900, but higher up above the performers' height. At times they reverted to the Eastern and pre-Renaissance method of composition where forms were piled up one above another. Such devices helped flatten out the backcloths, creating a stage setting that never hinted at being anything other than a pictorial statement. This design aesthetic, of a decorative-expressive, symbolist stage picture, was achieved during the 1910 season. In the productions that followed, these attributes would be developed further.

CHAPTER FOUR : FOOTNOTES

p.150:1 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet. pages 104-5.

2 Ibid. Summarized from Grigoriev's reproduced programmes.

3 Discussed in Chapter One taking Aurier's definition into account, pages 13-14.

4 The Gesamtkunstwerk theory is discussed in Chapter One, pages 3-7.

[illegible] Lieven, P. [illegible] of the Ballet Russe, page 106.

p.151:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 The Ballet décor design concepts are discussed in Chapter One, pages 1-18.

4 As had seldom been the case prior to the Ballet Russe seasons - discussed in Chapter One, pages 1-18.

5 It must be stressed that the performer was always a feature in Ballet Russe productions. The performers were highlighted through the use of stage lighting. This was necessary as their costume designs and those of the set were often integrated (through designed motifs and colour).

p.152:1 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet 1909-1929, page 68.

2 Larionov, M. Diaghilev and the Ballet Russe, page 116.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., page 117.

5 Benois, A. Reminiscences, page 313.

6 Ibid.

7 Karsavina, T. Theatre Street, page 96.

8 Benois, A. Op.cit., page 314.

p.153:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., page 315.

3 Ibid

4 Ibid.

5 Grigoriev, S [illegible] The Diaghilev Ballet, page 104.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

p.153:8 Rimsky-Korsakov, N. My Musical Life, page 441.

9 Benois, A. Op.cit., page 314.

10 Judging from Rimsky-Korsakov's comments on Duncan and the manner in which Fokine choreographed the work, as well as Benois' reworking of the scenario

11 Stravinsky, I. Chronicle of My Life, page 128.

12 Judging from their comments recorded in Buckle, R. Diaghilev, pages 141-168.

p.154:1 For example, Ashton's Month in the Country to the orchestrated music of Chopin, MacMillan with his pot pourri from, amongst others, Tchaikovsky for Anastasia and Robbin's more abstract works using the music of Stravinsky, Chopin, etc. (example, Dancers at a Gathering).

2 Benois, A. Early Memoirs of Diaghilev, page 28.

3 Ibid.

4 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 51.

5 Rimsky-Korsakov, N. Op.cit., page 412.

p.155:1 Beaumont, C. Michel Fokine and his Ballets, page 54.

2 Fokine, A. Early Memoirs, page 137. Parts of the annotated score are included in this work.

3 Cleven, R. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 110.

4 Ibid.

5 Fokine, A. Op.cit., page 138.

p.156:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, pages 137-139. Complete outline of libretto.

2 Haskell, A. Diaghilev : His Artistic and Private Life, page 93.

3 Levison, A. The Story of Léon Bakst's Life, page 214.

4 Lifar, S. A History of Russian Ballet, page 231. Levison, A. Ibid., page 215. Spencer, C. Bakst, page 43.

p.157:1 Svetlov, V. The Art of Bakst, page 18.

2 Ibid. Although a backcloth was still used it did not span the entire backstage area.

3 Ibid.

4 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 41.

5 Oenslager, D. Stage Design, page 197.

6 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 43. Which he had seen on his extensive tours of the Middle East and Greece in 1900-1906.

p.157:7 The same colouring as Bakst used in his décor.

8 As usually found in all ballet design prior to Schéhérazade - 'formal' in that the settings were usually structured and did not appear as amorphous as did the Schéhérazade scenography.

p.158:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, pages 70 and 71.

2 Ibid. As well as Bakst having used the same colouring in his décor for Schéhérazade and his painting Bathers on the Lido. (Figure 66).

3 Osborne, H. The Oxford Companion to Art, page 902.

4 Spencer, C. Op.cit., page 71.

5 Ibid. The use of colour in this painting has a similar intensity to that employed by the Fauves as well as using colour in the negation of a feeling of depth.

6 Lake, C. Dictionary of Modern Painting, page 125.

7 Examples being Braque's La Ciotat (1906), Dufy's Country Ball at Falaise (1911), and Derain's Le Faubourg, Collioure (1905).

p.159:1 Wright and Rainwater. The Dimensions of Aesthetic Experience - Psychology and the Visual Arts, page 340.

2 Ibid.

3 Vernon, M. D. The Psychology of Perception, pages 67-68.

p.160:1 Certain motifs within the scenography are directly linked with those used in Russian ethnic art.

2 This argument is presented despite the fact that in all the literature on the designers for the Ballet Russe, avant-garde French influence is ignored.

3 The Prince Igor scenography is analysized extensively in Chapter Three.

4 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 133.

p.161:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 21.

2 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 144. These colour combinations had, however, been used in the Far and near East.

3 Ibid. And not Nijinsky as according to Beaumont, C. in Michel Fokine and His Ballets, page 58.

4 Grigoriev. The Diaghilev Ballet 1909-1929, page 46.

p.162:1 To be analysed in detail wher discussing L'Après-midi d'un Faune.

p.163:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 121.

2 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 121.

p.164:1 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 25.

2 As can be noted if Racine's text is studied, especially pages 32-63.

3 As is evident if one of the more literal symbolist paintings are studied (Moreau's Salomé; Khnophs' Medusa or The Caresses) or their equivalent in literature (Wilde's Salomé or Maeterlinck's Pélleas et Mélisande).

4 Gordon, D. E. Catalogue of Parisian Exhibitions 1895-1914, page 53.

p.165:1 In accord with Nietzche's philosophy on primitivism, to be discussed further when dealing with the ballet Narcisse.

2 A feature often found in Ballet Russe (as well as others designs for Ballet costumes.

3 Spencer, C. Op.Cit., page 73.

p.166:1 The symbolist ethos is defined in Chapter One.

2 Vrubel's work is analysed in detail in Chapter Two.

p.167:1 Warrod, André. "Les Peintres et les Ballets Russes." Revue Musicale, page 51. (Translated A. McKinley).

2 Ballet, D. Esthetique Générale, page 96

p.168:1 Clark, M. and Crisp, C. Design for Ballet, page 72.

2 Ibid.

p.169:1 The work of avant-garde artists working for the Ballet Russe is discussed in the conclusion of this dissertation.

2 Stravinsky. The Observer, London, 31 August 1958.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 29.

4 White, P. Pioret, page 23.

5 Ibid, pages 24-26.

p.170:1 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 10.

2 Reade, B. Ballet Design and Illustrations 1581-1940, page 49.

p.170:3 Spencer, C. Bakst, pages 42.48.

4 Le Figaro Illustré, page 14.

p.171:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 49.

2 Such as Misia Sert, Cocteau and Appollinaire, as seen in their comments pages 61, 72, 89.

3 Chujoy, A. Fokine's Memoirs, pages 53-54.

p.172:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid, page 55.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid, page 64.

5 Ibid.

6 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, pages 134-135.

7 Gregoriev, S. The Ballet Russe, page 71.

8 Ibid.

9 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 132.

p.173:1 Ibid.

2 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 32. Descriptions of colours used obtained from Mayer's writings.

3 Having written to Mr. R. Buckle (June 1979) and Mr. C. Spencer (June 1979), both forwarded replies stating that to the best of their knowledge the set designs, in sketched form, no longer exist.

4 Noted in the Terem Palace stairway detail, (Figure 20), and the enamel bowl, (Figure 22).

5 Fokine, M. Op.cit., page 138.

p.174:1 Fokine, M. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 139. Details of the scenario.

2 Roslavleva, W. Era of the Russian Ballet, page 48. Colour description derived from Roslavleva's writing.

3 Ibid.

4 Reade, B. Ballet Design and Illustration, page 71.

5 As can be seen if Figure 77 is studied.

6 Rainey, A. Léon Bakst, page 62. Description derived from Rainey

7 Ibid, page 64.

p.175:1 As Bakst had in his designs for le Fée de Porpees in 1907

[illegible] Bruce Burton's article, as elucidated in Chapter One, of the reference

[illegible] Reservoir, (Figure 30), is studied.

[illegible] Diaghilev, page 181.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] The Romantic Ballet as seen by Theophile Gautier, page 86.

[illegible]

[illegible] Decca recording, page 14.

[illegible]

Relating to the movement and mime gestures as used in the ballets of the 1840's.

[illegible] Op.cit., page 103.

[illegible]

[illegible] Nijinsky, page 186.

[illegible] Op.cit., page 172.

Clark, M. and Crisp, C. Designs for Ballet, page 154.

Benois, A. Reminiscences, page 141.

Ibid.

Clark, M. and Crisp, C. Op.cit., page 155.

Burkin, B. Diaghilev, page 187.

Ibid., page 42.

Talbot - Rice, T. A concise History of Russian Art, pages 231-232. The St. Petersburg Academy looked to "the German, Flemish and French artists of the nineteenth century for their inspiration".

Ibid., page 254.

Benois, A. Memoirs, page 49.

The illustrations obtainable are in black and white, the description to be found in Benois' Memoirs, page 49.

Benois, A. Memoirs, page 48.

The ideal of the Romantic and Gothic in works of literature are elements such as the ruined cathedral in a haunted moonlight grove.

Brahms, I. Footnotes to the Ballet, page 26.

Ibid. Also adhered to the symbolist principles as discussed on pages [illegible].

p.181:1 Cocteau, J. My Contemporaries, page 91

2 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 11[illegible]

3 Ibid. The Birth of the Ballet Russe page 114

4 Ibid, page 115.

5 Slonim, M. Russian Theatre from the Empire to the Soviet, page 34.

p.182:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe [illegible]

2 Ibid, page 106.

3 Ibid. [illegible] to their reaction to Giselle

4 Beaumont, C. Michel Fokine and his Ballets [illegible]

5 1[illegible], page 73.

6 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe [illegible]

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 118; Diaghilev, page 124 Beaumont, Diaghilev, page 228.

p.183:1 Haskell, A. Ballet Russe, page 125.

2 Stravinsky, I. Conversations, page 96. An interesting observation which underlines the previous assertion made, that of Vrubel being one of the chief sources of inspiration to the designers for the Ballet Russes is highlighted by the fact that Diaghilev wished to commission him for The Firebird scenography.

3 Lieven, P. Op.cit., page 146.

4 Benois, A. Reminiscences (1941) pages 306 to Vrubel, if he had designed the work would probably have been similarly criticised by Benois.

5 Ibid.

6 Etkind, M. Alexander Benois 1870-1960, page 161

p.184:1 Ibid, page 107.

2 Ibid, page 147.

3 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 92.

4 Fokine, A. Scenario, The Firebird, page[s] 1-5

p.185:1 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 197.

2 Lieven, P. Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 108. There are few visual records of any kind from this first production, mainly because of the negative responses it received, as Lieven states "... it was

p.185:2 (contd.)

only the music that saved this work", page 108.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 72.

4 Bakst, through his association with the Mir Iskusstva group and their interest in Russian ethnic designs often used these as source material, further the group was interested in the German schools of painting and must have been aware of the works of Klimt. In studying Klimt's Water Serpents, (Figure 90), and Bakst's Firebird costume, (Figure 92), there are similarities of body distortions in the emaciated arms and the elongated and angular hands. In both works these are too similar in concept to be dismissed.

5 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 76.

p.186:1 Karsavina's costume has been analysed when discussing Le Festin.

p.187:1 As can be noted if Snowden, J. The Folk Dress of Europe is studied, page 43, or if a photograph of the Royal family in traditional dress, (Figure 98), is compared to The Firebird costumes.

2 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 24.

3 Expressionism for Bakst constituted this phase of Romanticism, in a tragic mode, bound to the anguish of the times, and to the resurgence of the Slavic and Nordic spirit, as studied by the Wanderers and Slavophile movements in Russia.

p.188:1 Bennis, A. Early Memoirs of Diaghilev, page 92.

2 See Aurier's definition, page 15.

3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 102.

p.189:1 Bennis, A. Reminiscences, page 172.

2 Ibid, page 77.

3 This was not the customary format for any ballet prior to The Firebird.

4 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 143.

5 Buckle, R. Ibid.

6 Haskell, A. Diaghileff : His Artistic and Private Life, page 122.

7 Ibid.

p.190:1 Spencer, C. Op.cit., page 73.

2 Ibid. Description of the colour of the costume also derived from Spencer's description.

p.190:3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 56.

4 Lifar, S. History of the Russian Ballet, page 48.

p.191:1 To be discussed when analysing Le Dieu Bleu in detail.

p.192:1 Spencer includes an illustration by Bakst that was purportedly the design for the set used in Les Orientales. However, this sketch is so similar to Bakst's Schéhérazade setting (executed for the same season) that it is highly unlikely that Spencer is correct in citing it as the Les Orientales décor. Further, having written to Mr. R. Buckle questioning the validity of the use of this set (May 1982), the reply stated "... it was hardly likely".

2 Spencer, C. Op.cit., page 73.

3 Ibid.

4 Lieven, P. Op.cit., page 73.

5 The theory of warm colours which visually move forward as opposed to cool and cold colour which tend to recede.

CHAPTER FIVE - THE 1911 BALLET RUSSE SEASON

In the discussion of the 1910 Ballet Russe season it was observed that in productions such as Schéhérazade and Carnaval, a painterly, aesthetic unity of design concepts was realised.[1] By 1911 Diaghilev stated that

> ... for the modern painter in [scenography] represented what the fresco had been for the painter of the Renaissance, and that this rapid medium suited the temperament of the Russian artist to perfection.[2]

The scenographic format has become a unit, much like that of a painting, all the elements of costume, set and properties were integrated, resulting in critics such as Lieven arguing that the works designed for the Ballet Russe inaugurated a scenographic renaissance.[3]

With the 1911 season, although choreographic and musical ideas continued to develop, for the most part the designs produced were only a refinement of ideas formulated during the 1910 season.

An interesting extension to this continuing development of scenographic articulation were Benois' designs for Petrushka. It was with Petrushka that Benois finally broke with the representational, illusionistic traditions of the St. Petersburg Academy and formulated a style that was his own - a combination of both the St. Petersburg traditions and that of the Moscow Group of artists.[4]

Richard Buckle makes an interesting comment on the nature of the 1911 season. He claims that:

> Diaghilev follows a dead-end to the ballet of local colour and the evocation of past periods or distant lands, and he has a prejudice against stories and drama in ballet. Fokine, brilliantly abetted by Benois and Bakst, had conjured up Versailles and the Romantic era; he had made an Egyptian, a Polovtsian, a Persian and a Russian ballet with the

> help of Bakst, Roerich and Golovin. What had these fairy tales to say to people of a world which was beginning to realise it was "modern"? Better than evoke past eras would surely be to re-interpret them or even to speak of your own. Diaghilev felt the stirring of a new spirit which was moving artists throughout Europe to seek new forms with which to greet a new age.[1]

Although Diaghilev stated these intentions in 1911, it was not until 1913 when he permitted Nijinsky to choreograph Jeux, using a contemporary theme, environment and costumes, that he began to instigate this "new form with which to greet a new age".[2] Nor did the scenographic endeavours of the Ballet Russe express these new ideals in a contemporary painterly manner until L'Après-midi d'un Faune (1912), Goncharova's Le Coq d'Or (1914), and Picasso's designs for Parade in 1917.[3]

The 1911 Season consisted of the presentations of the following new ballets in Monte Carlo, Paris and London: Le Spectre de la Rose on 19 April; part of the opera Sadko on 6 June; Petrushka on 13 June; and Swan Lake on 30 November (which was performed in London only).[4] Diaghilev also presented an entr'acte in his 1911 Paris Season. This was The Battle of Kerzhenez from the Rimsky-Korsakov opera Grand Kitezh.

In 1911 Diaghilev decided to make Monte Carlo his "home base"[6] and this move allowed him more time to negotiate for seasons abroad and to extend the seasons in Paris as he did not have to arrange all details from Russia.

The premières of Le Spectre de la Rose and Narcisse were given in Monte Carlo.[7] Thereafter the company travelled to Rome for the World Exhibition where they performed Le Pavillon d'Armide.[8]

In Paris performances by the Ballet Russe became an annual event; its position had been established and consolidated. It was this firmly established reputation which could explain the invitation to the Ballet Russe in 1911 to take part in the coronation performance at Covent Garden. The programme performed to introduce the company was the "Gobelins tapestry

scene" from Le Pavillon d'Armide, a truncated performance of Swan Lake, Carnaval, and the dances from Prince Igor. Later Le Spectre de la Rose, Les Sylphides, Schéhérazade and Cléopâtre were added to this London programme.[1]

> Diaghilev's Swan Lake presented at Covent Garden in 1911 with Kschessinska and Nijinsky was in two acts, beginning with Act 2, then presenting Act 3 with an epilogue in which Siegfried rushed to the lake for a last meeting with Odette and confrontation with Rothbart. Grigoriev, Diaghilev's regisseur, says in his book on the company that the cuts were made because Diaghilev found some of the choreography dull and repetitive. If so, it must have been the first scene (which repeats nothing) that he found dull, and presumably the Swan ensembles at the beginning of Act 4 repetitive. Anton Dolin told me that the last scene, continuing with no interval, began with only the principals, and the corps de ballet arrived for the end, having by then had time to change their costumes. He also said that he found that production, which he danced later, very satisfying, containing all the best of the ballet in an attractive theatrical form.[2]

It was, however, the first production ever to be seen outside Russia except for one staged in Prague during Tchaikovsky's lifetime.[3] Golovin designed the lake scene which was, according to Buckle

> ... a somewhat milky-watty landscape, pinkish mauve, with the trees in the far round and bare hills beyond the lake, for the Prince's companions Golovin had created subtly elegant "Carpaccio" costumes in velvet and suede, some with short capes. The court scene by Golovin was a medieval Russian palace, mostly golden, with a wide flat arch through which was seen an apse adorned with a coat-of-arms.[4]

There is no need to go into detail about the Swan Lake décor as it was borrowed from The Imperial Theatre and had been designed in 1901.[5] The only interesting features of this ballet's presentation were that its designs were by Golovin and Korovin, the first painters designers from the Abramtsevo colony, as well as the fact that it was Diaghilev who introduced this classic ballet to a wider (European) audience. Swan Lake is a ballet that now holds a prominent position in every major ballet company's repertoire. Thus it may be

surmised that Diaghilev not only acted as an innovator in his presentations of new choreographic forms and scenographic ideals, but was also partly responsible for the introduction of existing imperial Russian ballets to the West (ballets such as Swan Lake in 1911 and The Sleeping Beauty in 1921).[1]

After the London performances the Ballet Russe commenced with their Paris season.

It was during the first programme of the Paris Season that Diaghilev presented the entr'acte from Rimsky-Korsakov's opera Grand Kitezi named The Battle of Kerzhenetz. Diaghilev had a high opinion of the music[2] and commissioned a curtain for the entr'acte from Roerich probably because of his success with the scenery for the Polovetzi scene in Prince Igor (1909). The red and green curtain purported to represent the battle between the Slavs and Mongols.[3] The curtain was later purchased by Russia and supposedly hangs on one of the walls of the Kazansky Railway Station in Moscow.[4] During this programme Le Spectre de la Rose was also presented.[5]

In 1910 Jean Louis Vaudoyer, then still a young and unestablished man of letters, had suggested to Diaghilev the staging of a ballet on the theme of Théophile Gautier's Loin du Bal from which he quoted:

> Je suis le spectre d'une rose
> Que tu portais hier au bal.[6]

In preparing the programme for 1911, Diaghilev required a short one-act work, so a ballet on this theme was created.[7] Weber's music, Invitation à la Danse, was considered by Diaghilev as "admirably suited in period and spirit to the romantic style of Gautier's poem",[8] and being the required length, was used.

The designs for the scenery and the costumes were executed by Bakst. The scenario of the work which faithfully re-enacted the poem told of a girl dressed in white returning

from her first ball, supposedly "dreaming of love".[1] She sat down in the armchair, took a rose from her bosom, smelt it and went to sleep letting the rose fall to the ground. The Spirit of the Rose then leapt in at the window and danced about the room; raised the sleeping girl to her feet and danced with her. He finally returned her to her chair and disappeared out of the window. The girl awoke, found the rose on the floor and pressed it to her heart.[2]

The young girl's bedroom was designed as a simple box set (Figure 106). According to Spencer the colours were mainly blue and white, although in recent revivals of the ballet purportedly derived from Bakst's design, there appears to be more use made of pink, as seen in the film Nijinsky as well as the Festival Ballet production.[3] As can be noted in the photograph of the original production, (Figure 106), there was an alcove flanked left with tulle hangings, five simple pieces of furniture and properties, and two large French windows used for the entrance and exit of "the rose". The box set also contained a ceiling which, together with the walls, was patterned with a flowered wallpaper. Bakst's set was unusual with its wallpaper, curtained bed in an alcove, open French windows, draped table with an urn of flowers, sofa, dressing table, bird-cage and embroidery frame (as seen in the photograph). It appeared more like a setting for a play than a Russian ballet. This type of set was unusual because it must be remembered that ballet settings prior to Le Spectre de la Rose, in order to give the dancers the maximum amount of floor space for movement, were generally uncluttered by furniture and properties. Furniture and properties were obviously used in previous ballets: Le Pavillon d'Armide, for example, made use of an alcove with bed, table and chair, and Carnaval used two Biedermeyer couches. These were, however, isolated examples, and because at most there were only three items on stage they hardly promoted the apparent fullness of environment found in Le Spectre de la Rose.[4] Although the furniture still occupied the outer environs of the

dancing space thus leaving a large floor area virtually uncluttered for the dancers, the impression perceived, as judged from the photograph, is of a fully decorated room area which was unusual for ballet scenography at the time.

Besides this use of furniture and properties the set is decidedly innovative in its concept. The box set format was perhaps derived from the realist theatre tradition in its arrangement of the stage space.[1] As a ballet set it is in direct contrast to other Ballet Russe designs, for example the 1910 production of Schéhérazade. In Le Spectre de la Rose the scenographic presentation is architectonic - a structured although simplified architectural framework. The motifs used are simplified rectangular forms, unusually simple for the period, which can be compared to certain elements used by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The simple uprights, the window forms, even the foot of the bed in the alcove are similar to those employed by Mackintosh in his architectural and furniture designs - for example, his Glasgow Tea Room.[2] The simplicity of the set and furniture[3] possibly acted as a foil for the romantic elements of the music, and also provided an ideal background for the transcendental nature of the rose - a 'dream' inhabiting an 'ordinary' environment. This entire scenographic concept formed a total contrast with the amorphouse and flamboyantly colourful designs Bakst executed for Schéhérazade in 1910. Thus, although the scenography for Le Spectre de la Rose may share some common ground with Carnaval such as the use of Biedermeyer period furniture and costumes, it does provide a totally new awareness of ballet stage design - the structured room as opposed to the stylized use of flats and drapes as found in Carnaval.[4]

A simple white Biedermeyer gown was the costume for the girl, play by Karsavina, with a minimum of flounces and decoration, (Figure 107).[5] In contrast Nijinsky's costume (Figure 107), was different as can be seen if the illustrations are studied - one the sketch design by Bakst, (Figure

108), and the other showing the costumes in a photograph of the pas de deux between Nijinsky and Karsavina, (Figure 107). The rose's costume stresses the asexuality of the Nijinsky character. The androgynous sexual quality of the rose is of interest. A suggestion may be advanced that it was required that the rose represent a sign of the transcendental symbolist image of a rose (the sexual significance being apparent - of the rose having been given to the girl, therefore, in her 'dream', it transcends its being and becomes a personification of her desires). In Bakst's original sketch for the costume, (Figure 108), it is obvious that he had no intention of disguising the maleness of the rose. The sketch shows a man in a body-fitting unitard decorated with stencilled designs. When executed, the shape of the costume became more amorphous camouflaging sex as well as contour. This Bakst achieved by dyeing and sewing to the pink-purple unitard silk petals of pinks, reds and purples which merged into each other and thus camouflaged contour line as well as the sex of the dancer.[1] It is interesting to speculate as to how and why this change in concept occurred. According to the original scenario the rose was the symbol of a love token,[2] therefore Bakst probably designed the costume as a masculine interpretation of the rose. Nijinsky may have had much to do with the negating of the masculine image, especially when studying his as well as his sister's diaries. Here one continually encounters references to "... an asexual creature"[3] or as Nijinsky described his make-up :

> His face was like that of a celestial insect, his eyebrows suggesting some beautiful beetle which one might expect to find closest to the heart of a rose. His mouth was like rose petals.[4]

It is interesting that in this description the third person is used by Nijinsky thus designating the part he was playing as interpretative and not personalized. Still he seemed cognisant of the maleness of the rose referring to the character as he/his. Thus the asexuality of the character

of the rose through its manifestations from Baker's original design intention to execution, did undergo considerable change, yet one doubts whether any sign other than that of a symbol of transcendence of reality was regarded or even thought desirable in the interpretation of this role. (Mysticism, religious significance or even historical reference to what a rose could symbolise does not appear to be relevant to the interpretation required within the context of the work). As Eilstein correctly claims:

> Nijinsky's vivid personification of a peculiar essence in the rose sprite was developed mainly through and by himself ... His face was painted to be as much insectile as floral - certainly not human. His aura was as pervasive, lush, and vague as roses, but without reference to any animal or blossom.[1]

Finally it may be surmised that Vrubel could have been a major source of inspiration to Bakst.[2] The asexual nature of this costume may have derived from a similar representation in Vrubel's works such as his Resurrection painting, (figure 35). A definite aspect of this ballet was that it was symbolist in the representation of the sign of the rose in human form as well as the ideal of the representation and duality of dream and reality. An unusual factor about this ballet was the pas de deux which was in actuality a long solo for the man, the girl joining in only briefly in the course of the ballet. It was the ideal showcase for Nijinsky's talents, and a break from the existing format where a pas de deux usually had equally allotted dancing time for the male and female performers.[3]

The scenography for Le Spectre de la Rose could be termed decorative-expressive for, in its subdued form, it expressed through colour, construction and costume the visualization of the scenario. As a contrast to this ballet Diaghilev included performances of the ballets Eléopâtre and Schéhérazade from the previous seasons in the same programme.[4]

All three works were designed by Bakst and showed his diverse capabilities - techniques that enhanced and echoed the scenarios of the works setting them in an historical location - presenting the audience with a visual unit in which every detail was carefully integrated to form an aesthetic visual whole.

The second programme for the Paris season was to include La Péri.[1] Diaghilev [illegible] to produce La Péri with music by Dukas. Because of Dukas' delay in finishing the score it was replaced by Narcisse.[2] Benois disapproved of the [illegible] Narcisse.[3] Bakst, however, had insisted on [illegible] performance.[4] Echo [illegible] felt it was a totally unsuitable [illegible] ballet for the characters of Echo and Narcissus [illegible] the most static in Greek mythology [illegible] being imprisoned in her cave and Narcissus [illegible] in the contemplation of his own beauty".[5] Benois was proved right and the ballet was one of Diaghilev's [illegible] failures, [illegible] of an attractive score by Nicolai Tcherepnine, beautiful costumes, a set that was [illegible] and the performances of Karsavina and Nijinsky. One of the major reasons for its failure was the [illegible] which dealt with Echo who could only partially [illegible] what Narcissus proposed in dance whilst "he, [illegible] was obligated to state himself into [illegible]".[6]

For [illegible] (Figure [illegible]), Bakst had painted against a blue [illegible] sky [illegible], a green landscape of weeping willows with [illegible] the foreground, and at the back a bridge formed [illegible] of rocks through which a meadow could be seen. The nymph Echo would sometimes move across the bridge on a higher level.[7] Three partially painted, partially sculptured statues of Pomona were located on the right side flats. These are hardly visible, the heads being somewhat more clearly defined.

Besides Echo and Narcissus the stage was at times occupied by [illegible] green furry creatures with horns, long pointed

ears and tails. These represented Bakst's ideal of mythological woodland spirits.[1] The idea, however, of having creatures appear on the stage had already proved a mistake in the production of The Firebird, reducing the mime elements in the ballet to those of pantomime. This appeared equally ridiculous in Le Dieu Bleu (1912).[2] The stage was at times occupied by a party of Boetian peasants who celebrated the rites of Poseidon.[3]

The costume designs for various Nymphs or Bacchantes and Boetians in Narcisse represented a high point in Bakst's Greek costume designs. These costumes were illustrated in bright active poses - unlike those for Hippolytus, (Figure 32) - possibly reflecting the choreography of the ballet.[4] Chitons clung to body contours and himatia flew in contorted arabesques. Bakst never again achieved the dynamism of the studies for the nymphs and Boetians in Narcisse, (Figures 111 and 112). In these watercolour costume sketches there is an apparent fulcrum centred in the groin from which all activity seems to emanate conveying a current of eroticism. The inclusion of under-arm hair on many of the female figures heightened their carnality.[5] The Dionysian frenzy and earthiness of the cyclops, (Figure 110), may have reflected Bakst's assimilation of various ideas of such Russian Symbolist writers as V. Ivanov who asserted that the return to a primitive condition would overcome "the superstructure of rational and individualistic ideas created by Western man and reach the pan-essence of nality".[6]

Bakst may also have been aware of, or influenced by, Nietzsche's philosophical investigation into the spiritual background of Greek tragedy as expressed in The Birth of Tragedy.[7] A discussion of Nietzche's art criticism by L. Shestov had appeared in Mir Iskusstva in 1902.[8] These designs seem to echo Nietzche's concept of Dionysus. They are certainly a far cry from the "cal simplicity and noble grandeur of traditional Winckelmannian Neo-

Classicism".[1] Bakst in his essay of 1909, New Paths of Classicism in Art, expressed a desire to return to that "state of primitivism which existed before society was contaminated by civilization".[2] He felt that art must return to nature and to a mode of vision which he imagined was practised by the early Greeks.[3] The refined, sophisticated and effete interpretations given Greek art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries "had to be abandoned".[4] Bakst's treatment of the figures in costume for Narcisse can be seen as an effort to realise these ideas. Boetian's smocks, (Figure 117), were decorated in bold stripes, coats, circles and checks in colours of honey, lemon, orange and garnet. In conjunction with the energetic twisting figures, bold pattern and colour generates a sense of dynamism and vitality.

These Boetians (peasants) follow Nijinska who portrayed a Baccante or nymph dressed in a flowing chiton decorated with a stylized floral pattern and a shawl at her wrists. (Figure 118).[5] This costume again illustrates Bakst's highly activated figurative representation. Nijinsky as Narcissus wore a white chlamys and a wig of long blond hair. (Figure 119). Karsavina as Echo appeared on the bridge with flowing black hair dressed in purple silk draperies stencilled with silver.[6]

Although the costume designs were some of Bakst's best because of their simplicity, colour and pattern combinations, there were certain elements in the set which disturbed. As Craven recalled :

> Bakst designed very effective bright green scenery and beautiful costumes. His violet and silver costume for Echo (Karsavina) was particularly successful. However, a disagreeable effect was produced on me, seeming trifle, in Narcisse. At the end of the ballet, from the spot where Narcissus had disappeared, there grows through a trapdoor a papier mâché flower. This shabby, ragged imitation Narcissus seems to me to demonstrate the great importance which the smallest details have

> when worked out on the stage. These trifles, as they appear to some people, however few, ruin the general artistic impression of a production. Either the stage is not an art and is allowed a latitude which true art does not desire, or it is an art and must take pains with every detail.[1]

The set is heavy and over-detailed and cumbersome. The point that Lieven makes here is valid because if scenography is to be regarded as an 'art' then every detail in the design must be considered, utilized and aesthetically combined to produce a unified whole. To expand on this point, as far as the designs for Narcissus are concerned, the costumes, with the exception of the one worn by Nijinsky, (Figure 115), were functional and could be considered aesthetic. They also presented an innovative concept in costume design, the use of the tutu and conventional male attire of the pre-1909's was definitely no longer in evidence. Nijinsky's costume, however (judging from the photograph), does appear a little absurd especially as it is all in white as opposed to the other highly patterned and colourful costumes, and presented Nijinsky in a slightly ridiculous archaic, blond Greek styled wig. The costume is based on historical research, yet displays none of the imaginative design of the other costumes used in this production. Bakst was a great costume designer - it is difficult to fault him in this respect - but at times his settings (as in Narcisse) tended to be at variance with his costume designs. This created a dichotomy in his stage presentations. This fault in Bakst's stage pictures tended to result, especially in his design for the Ballet Russe between the years 1911-1914, in a lack of visual integration between set and costumes. It is especially unfortunate that this occurred with a designer like Bakst, who, along with Roerich and Benois, was one of the first designers to revolutionize the painterly stage picture format for ballet.

The production of Narcisse in 1911 was reasonably well received by the critics and general public, yet was neither

a sensational success nor a triumph for Nijinsky, Bakst or Fokine.[1] The ballet did not retain its place in the repertoire for long.[2] The choreography was too static, the set too heavy, a lack of integration between set and costume was apparent, and the plot was too thin. The costumes, however, were wonderful evocations by Bakst of the archaic Greek period.

The ballet Petrushka, which followed Narcisse, was in its final stages of completion when the Ballet Russe performed in Rome during 1911.[3] This ballet which both Buckle and Lieven considered as the culmination of the Mir Iskusstva movement[4] had been designed by Benois in St. Petersburg, the city in which the story was set. The music was composed by Stravinsky. Petrushka was finished and choreographed in Rome. Diaghilev, Benois and Stravinsky considered Petrushka to be the culmination of the Mir Iskusstva's ideals because the designs for this ballet presented an evocation of the Russian cultural image that Diaghilev wished to present to Europe.[5] These ideals were the illusionist presentation within the stage space deriving from the St. Petersburg academic traditions to be seen in The Shrove Tide Fair scenes[6], and the peasant art and ethnic Muscovy influence in the use of the decorative motifs and primary colours as studied at the Abramtsevo colony (particularly noticeable in the scenes involving the puppet cells).[7] A combination of elements from both these art movements was to be seen in the false proscenium arch where the primary colours of ethnic Russian art are used. However, the design of this arch incorporates neo-classical elements such as the window frames as well as peasant design motifs such as the stylized sun in the reveal, (figure 114). In this manner Petrushka transposed Russian folk traditions and legends into a contemporary context.[8] The composer and designer worked out the scenario together and Benois assisted Fokine with aspects of the choreography.[9] Benois'

settings for the first and last scene, (figure 114), evoked the atmosphere of a Russian Butter Week Fair of the nineteenth century.[1] Much of the décor was constructed rather than flatly painted.[2] Benois, however, did not merely offer a staged historical recreation. He bracketed his town square, removing it behind an architectural gateway, acknowledging both its distance and its theatrical presentness in the spectator's space and time. Benois' gateway (or inner proscenium arch separate from the actual theatre proscenium arch) was linked in shape and function to the proscenium arch of the theatre, and yet belonged to the décor, creating something of the aesthetic self-consciousness of Seurat's specially painted framing edges, or the enframing rope in Picasso's almost contemporary Still Life with Chair Caning (1912). It focused attention upon the physical boundary of the work of art, the relationship of that boundary to what it contained as well as the actual world outside.[3]

The curtained puppet theatre, stage centre, projected the idea which the false proscenium had already created, that of a stage within a stage. Here the micro-cosmic drama of the magician's puppets took place while the caterree crowd orbited around them. The false proscenium framed the fairground. People at times looked out of the windows at various levels in this false proscenium arch. With his set for Petrushka Benois had created a box within a box - a world within a world. The effect may have even suggested that the 'real' people in the crowded fair were as much puppets as were the puppet-like dancers behind the curtains of the booth. The principle of removing the action was created by the false proscenium in grey, flat, decorative colour which in turn enclosed a fairly illusionistic set and backdrop. This surrounded the puppet theatre with its own proscenium and curtains. It was the first time that a false proscenium was used in this manner in scenography. The booth contained three puppets in their cells.

These cells were painted in a flat, decorative way.[1] Scenes II and III represented enlargements of Petrushka's and the Moor's cells as seen in miniature in the booths in Scene I. These now occupied the entire stage.

In the second and third scenes depicting the cells of the puppets (Petrushka's cell, (Figure 115), and that of the Moor, (Figure 116)), Benois tilted the axis of his space and presented the corners of the rooms. This angle of view suggested that the cells had been cross-sectioned by the false proscenium arch. The audience saw only a fragment of the cells, and yet this fragment was all there was to see. The décor informed the spectator that he was witnessing a theatrical presentation, and yet the boundary between the artifice on the stage and the reality of the theatre in which the audience was present, was called into question at the same time that it was acknowledged.

The scenography's acknowledgement and emphasis of the conventions of theatrical displacement accompanied a scenario in which the boundary between theatrical premeditation and reality was questioned.[2] Petrushka is a puppet yet he exhibits human emotions. His sawdust body, slaughtered by the Moor, is dragged off by the showman, yet his soul lingers to mock his master.

Stravinsky's mosaic of old tunes and new timbres, Fokine's delineation of the corps as individuals in the crowd scenes of Scenes I and IV, and Benois' vivid resurrection of a past epoch in design were all instrumental in promoting the final ballet presentation as a unified aesthetic statement, a Gesamtkunstwerk.

The ballet began with the front curtain down during a short overture. This curtain was also used in the breaks between scenes. Benois designed many front curtains for his productions of Petrushka over a twenty year period. At Covent Garden a cloth is used showing a view of St. Petersburg. The original cloth Benois designed represented

the Charlatan with a flute, (Figure 117). This sketch shows Benois' drawing of the original curtain as he remembered it in 1936.[1] The black and white wash sketch illustrates Benois' concept of the Charlatan with flute resting on clouds framed by curtains and with a sickle moon behind his head. The idea for this curtain, even in sketch form, is not exciting. This judgement is made because if this design was enlarged to the size required for a front curtain, the sheer scale of this figure would be too overpowering. The Charlatan plays an important part in the production as the deus ex machina but surely this front curtain overstates his importance. This frontcloth was only used during the performance of the 1911 season.[2] It was replaced by Benois the following year with a far more effective curtain, (Figure 118), which showed the night sky above the city of St. Petersburg, swarming with demons. The illustrated watercolour design for the curtain shows demon forms moving in diagonal lines from bottom right to top left against a dark blue sky. The sky with its spiky stars and sickle moon echo the same use of these motifs encountered in the interior of Petrushka's cell. The view of St. Petersburg below with the Admiralty spire on the left is almost identical to that used on the backcloth in Scenes I and IV. This curtain was more successful than the previous one as it formed a strong visual link between the front drop and the settings behind it. When it was raised the audience was confronted with The Shrove Tide Festivities. This occurred within the false proscenium. The fair was "illusionistically"[3] represented by a square off the Admiralty Building in St. Petersburg, (Figure 119).

In Scenes I and IV of Petrushka the French audience were shown a picture, according the scenario of the Russian winter the day before the Lenten fast.[4] The period was the 1820's and Nicholas I, the younger brother of Napoleon's enemy, Alexander, was on the throne. Over

the booths and flags of the Fair rose Sokorov's[1] attenuated golden spire of the Admiralty, beyond which lay the frozen Neva River. On either side of the stage were the Balagni or temporary wooden theatres with their painted signs. The left Balagan had a yellow balcony from which the Old Man or Father of the Fair would dangle his long false beard.[2] Red and grey striped curtains were seen below this balcony, these being "some of the colourful additions Benois added to his otherwise grey setting".[3] To the right of this booth and half hidden behind the puppet theatre, which was centre stage, was a real merry-go-round under a helter-skelter. The booth was curtained with fabric in tones of grey contrasting with the brightly coloured interiors which were shown when these curtains were drawn apart. A sign above the right hand side of the puppet booth showed a devil pitch-forking Petrushka into hell.

In the first scene Fokine organized the crowd so that they would look 'natural' in their movement.[4] That is he tried not to organize the choreography into any special formalized structure. Behind this crowd the sails of a constructed windmill revolved like a big wheel and children rode the carousel. Benois wrote that

> ... this merry-go-round was a genuine ménage de chevaux de bois of the time of Napoleon III which we had contrived to acquire at some fair.[5]

Once the crowd scenes reached their climax with street dancers competing for applause, the Charlatan (played by Cecchetti) appeared from the puppet booth.[6] He was dressed in a cloak with appliquéd symbols and a somewhat papal head-dress, (Figure 120), which hinted, according to Benois, at his moral tyranny over the puppets whom he was able to imbue with life.[7] This watercolour costume sketch along with the sketch of the first front curtain, (Figure 117) shows the costume of the Charlatan as a magician. In the bottom right hand corner of the costume

sketch, (Figure 120), he is represented as he appeared in Scene IV.

Benois designed the main Charlatan costume so that it gave the impression of the fantastic, as opposed to the relatively ordinary wear of the people in the crowd scenes. A watercolour sketch, (Figure 121), shows a woman who formed part of the general crowd scene. She is dressed in the garb of a Russian peasant. This design was based on the types of garment worn by peasants in St. Petersburg.[1] An interesting aspect of this costume is the full skirt with ethnic floral patterning. This was the first time it was encountered in Benois' designs although Bakst and Roerich had previously incorporated ethnic motifs in their work.[2] Another factor observed in this and other costumes designed by Benois for Petrushka was that it was the first time he utilized historically correct modes of dress in a ballet. On looking at his work prior to Petrushka, such as Le Pavillon d'Armide (1909) and Giselle (1910), he usually designed for productions that were of a romantic nature and therefore did not use everyday costumes but rather those of the romanticised past. The Petrushka costumes form a close parallel with those designed by Bakst for La Fée des Poupees, (Figure 35).[3]

Once the Charlatan made his appearance, "subduing the crowd by his terrifying aspect",[4] he drew back the curtains of the booth revealing the three puppets held up by metal supports under their arms. He touched them each in turn with his 'magic' flute. As the pulsing clockwork rhythm in Stravinsky's music broke forth the puppets' legs were galvanized into life and they performed an animated heel toe dance.[5] To the left was the figure of the black-faced turbanned Moor, his emerald green velvet tunic decorated with gold frogging. In the centre was the Ballerina Doll, played by Karsavina, rosy-cheeked with doll's eyelashes (painted on her face), in a fur-edged crimson tam-o-shanter, crimson bodice, white skirt and lace-trimmed pantaloons.

(Figure 122). On the right was Petrushka (Nijinsky) with chalky features

> ...like painted wood, a scarlet and white bonnet, a white-belted smock with floppy Pierrot collar, checkered red and green trousers, helpless black, mittened hands and awkwardly turned-in, black-booted feet, (Figure 123).[1]

In Benois' designs for the costumes of the puppets he utilized the colour theories previously used by Bakst in 1910 in Schéhérazade.[2] This was the use of primary and complementary colours to create the strongest and most vibrant impact and intensity. Thus the red and green colour ranges found in the costumes of the Moor, the Ballerina Doll and Petrushka must have been visually stunning when the booth curtains opened, especially as they contrasted with the mostly grey surrounding scene of The Shrove Tide activities. This use of colour and shape not only brought about an enhancing of the aesthetic stage picture but also contained an emotive ambience, thus creating a strongly decorative-expressive statement.

The rest of Scene I was taken up by the puppets' dance in which it became obvious that Petrushka was in love with the Ballerina Doll. She, however, preferred the richly costumed Moor.[3] Kettle-drums maintained musical continuity during the change to Scene II, (Figure 115). This showed Petrushka's cell or the box in which he was flung by the Old Magician between his performances. The dark blue 'walls' of this cell[4] on which a few spiky stars were painted, were placed at an angle to the audience and had a border of white clouds at the top. The cell was 'guarded' by devils painted on the doors. In colour, a cold blue, "Petrushka's cell presented a vision of an Arctic hell".[5] On the right-hand wall of the cell was a portrait of the Charlatan, the ruler of this domain and its occupant. In the moving of the sets to Paris from Russia the portrait was damaged. As Benois was ill he

could not re-touch it so Diaghilev commissioned Bakst to do the work [1] When Benois saw the result, now more expressive, "he was furious".[2] The portrait, (seen in Figure 115), however, created the right feeling of menace.

Petrushka (the Slav Pierrot)[3] was left alone and danced out his frustration, darting around his prison until the Ballerina Doll entered. She was scared off by his violent movement. To wild fanfares in the music, Petrushka flayed his arms, broke a hole in the 'paper' wall of his cell and fell headlong through it. He hung limply half in and half out of his cell.[4]

Scene III showed the Moor's apartment, (Figure 116). The setting was also angled but its decoration, deliberately contrasted strongly with that used in Petrushka's cell. The walls with stylized green cocoanut palms against a vermilion sky, and white rabbits on the grass beneath, immediately evoke Matisse's interiors of 1908-1910, such as his 1908 painting of The Dinner Table, (Figure 124). This also shows the importance of flat coloured surfaces. In the red version the table is as flat as the wallpaper, and the surface of the work is decorated with floral motifs not unlike those utilized by Benois in the Moor's cell.[5] However, Matisse's subtle space-colour tensions seen in The Dinner Table are not evident in Benois' patterned surfaces in the Moor's cell flats. In a reconstruction of this scene executed by Benois for The Royal Ballet production, (Figure 125), showing the Ballerina Doll (Nerina), Petrushka (Grant), and the Moor (Crosson) in his cell, a direct reference to the original 1911 decorative panels may be observed. However, it is obvious that reductive abstractions have taken place. Decorative motifs are simplified, and colour applied in larger flat areas than those seen in the original sketch, (Figure 116). In Benois' set the use of pattern evokes the work of Matisse, yet the actual motifs employed may be seen to be ultimately dependent on ethnic Russian

designs. The floral motif has as its source the type of [illegible]owe[illegible] used in Russian ethnic carvings such as a detail [illegible] window s[illegible] (Figu[illegible] 21) [illegible]nd the Terem Palace [illegible] wa[illegible] [illegible] (Figu[illegible] 20) Although Benois has abstrac[illegible] [illegible]hese ethnic mo[illegible] [illegible]he general shape and character [illegible] [illegible]owe[illegible] and leave[illegible] [illegible]imila[illegible] Benois was not the only Russ[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]mploy [illegible]hese particular motifs in sceno[illegible]aph[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]netsov had used similar ones in his [illegible]alac[illegible] Ha[illegible] [illegible]sign[illegible] [illegible]o. Sneguroshka in 1882,[1] Roerich in [illegible] Polovtsian Dance[illegible] from Prince Igor (on the prosceniu[illegible] [illegible] as [illegible] Figure 51), and Gonchorova in her designs [illegible] Le Coq d'Or in 1914, (although she abstracted their [illegible] shape to a far greater extent than did Benois).[2]

The Moo[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]corporated real furniture, such as the [illegible]ushioned d[illegible]van whe[illegible] the cushions were patterned, this would probably have led to a furthering of integration, and [illegible]ight underplaying of the separation of the three [illegible]mensional furniture from the flat decorative panels. Again this parallels Matisse's The Dinner Table where

> ... the table is as flat as the wallpaper, and the epergnes with fruit no more solid than the flower motifs which cover tablecloth and wall.[3]

In this colourful cell the Moor's choreographic movements consisted of dancing with knees bent and wide apart, arms always held up as if in childish astonishment.[4] This scene was interrupted by an episode, inserted at Fokine's request, in which the Moor on hearing the milk inside a cocoanut with which he was toying, attacked it with his scimitar.[5] Having failed to make an impression on the cocoanut he then knelt down and worshipped it.[6] One may thus deduce that the painted fruit on the panels represents cocoanuts. The Ballerina Doll entered, with a cornet to her lips and danced a stiff vivandiere.[7] The Moor joined her in a dance which was interrupted by the entrance of Petrushka. The Ballerina Doll staged a provocative faint; the Moor then drove Petrushka out [illegible] hi[illegible] scimitar and seated himself on the divan with

the Ballerina Doll on his knee.[1]

Scene IV reverted to The Shrove Tide Fair. This time the crowd was joined by masked revellers. These masks had elongated necks and represented "the Goat, the Crane and a Devil.[2] The crowd stamped around and did not seem aware that the curtains of the booth were being agitated by the Moor's pursuit of Petrushka. The latter's shriek was heard from the orchestra and he shot from the booth, running on tiptoe, hands clasped between his legs, with the armed Moor in pursuit. The Ballerina had her hands over her ears in terror as Petrushka was struck down. The crowd gathered around to watch his brief death scene. A watchman went to fetch the Magician, who appeared [illegible] hatted this time (as seen in the right-hand corner of Figure 120), from a refreshment stall. There were a few threatening gestures from the crowd. The Magician lifted the limp puppet which had by now replaced Nijinsky, as Petrushka, who had run off to the right under cover of the crowd, and shook it to show that it was nothing but wood and sawdust. The crowd dispersed. The Magician, left alone, passed slowly across to the left of the stage dragging the puppet. Suddenly Petrushka's squeaking fanfare was heard and Nijinsky, as the puppet's ghost, appeared menacingly over the booth with waving arms. The terrified Magician slunk off. The 'ghost' of Petrushka fell forward and hung with swinging arms over the top of the booth.[3]

Benois derived considerable pleasure from the two performances of Petrushka he had seen.[4] Stravinsky, however, always thought that Fokine had arranged the ballet wrongly[5] and that Benois had designed the wrong sort of costume for the Charlatan and the Moor.[6] At the time Fokine never really appreciated the music.[7] Benois, on the other hand, considered the first production of this ballet to be perfect[8] (including his own sets and costumes). He designed sets and costumes for five subsequent productions (in Leningrad, Copenhagen, Paris, Milan and London), each with

slight changes from the original.

The ballet Petrushka was a great success especially with regard to Benois' sets an' costumes. He achieved an aesthetic unity and an integrated stage picture. The whole production had a greater cohesion than any of his previous scenographic endeavours. The designs illustrated here only have to be compared with Benois' earlier works for the Ballet Russe such as Le Pavillon d'Armide (1909 nd Giselle (1910), to see that in Petrushka there is both -vation and a greater quality of pictorial integration than previously encountered in his work. Although a unity and functionality was achieved in the earlier ballets, they were too reliant on modes of presentation that were derived from the past and did not incorporate anything as innovative as his design for this ballet. In none of his previous works had Benois used the type of colouring found in Petrushka. The set design for the cell scenes is also unique in his oeuvre because of his boldness, simplicity and clarity, the rooms being simply structured by two angled planes.

With this ballet Benois had progressed from the eclectic designs he had previously executed, and adopted a new style in his scenographic presentation. His costume designs, although based on historical study, were readapted so that they formed a unity with the sets. This change in Benois' costume designs can clearly be seen in all the costumes he designed for Petrushka. For instance, the Ballerina Doll's costume is no longer based on the short projecting tutu of the pre-1900 era. With its long skirt and pantaloons, it is designed to fit in with the style of the rest of the costumes in the ballet: it is no longer the conventional ballet attire for the ballerina, but rather a costume which is designed to suit the character played by the ballerina.

It is important to note that Petrushka succeeded as a successful Gesamtkonstwerk. This can be noted in the way in which the cells echoed psychological states of their inhabitants. The withdrawn, miserable, Petrushka is

confined in a cell that is cold, dark and bleak, whereas the exuberant Moor occupied a vivid, garish, tropical paradise. Further Fokine had choreographed movements for the characters which stressed their individual natures - Petrushka with his turned-in feet and jerky arm movements, the Moor stamping about with movements which were bold, crude, decisive and executed with turned-out feet, and the Ballerina Doll with her movements executed in staccato point work.[1] The costumes, especially as seen in the Royal Ballet production of 1958, (Figure 125,, also illustrate how Benois' design concepts for set and costumes were integrated in their use of colour - both with the set and with the character portrayed by the dancers - the Moor being richly dressed in black, gold and green, Petrushka in his jagged Pierrot blouse and gold and red checkered trousers, the Ballerina Doll in her decorated tutu and frilly bloomers.[2] Finally, Stravinsky's music delineated each of the major characters thematically, thus formulating instantly recognizable leitmotifs for Petrushka, the Moor, the Ballerina Doll, the Charlatan, as well as for the general crowd scenes. Considering these aspects it is clear that the ballet Petrushka was conceived as a totally unified production. The ballet could be considered decorative-expressive because the settings and costumes corresponded to the scenario in their design and colour usage. This is particularly evident in the two cell scenes so contrary to one another in colour. Finally, Petrushka may be seen to be a symbolist ballet in that one finds a correspondence in the actions of the puppets who are imbued with a life force of their own, existing in a world parallel to the 'real' world of the Shrove Tide Festivities.

From this ballet onwards Benois' scenography developed along the path which Petrushka had initiated. He always retained a certain structuring of depth in his décor, particularly on backcloths. His later colour usage was to retain the values and subtlety of colour and shape

combination that were found in his designs for Petrushka, with one exception - his design for Le Rossignol in 1914.[1]

Another production of the 1911 Season was part of the Opera Sadko by Rimsky-Korsakov (only the submarine act was presented).[2] It was a spectacle with exotic music which Parisian audiences had come to expect from the Russians.[3] Boris Anisfield dressed his chorus to look like green sea-monsters who performed Fokine's choreographical undulation to the music.[4] The roles of Sadko and the Sea-King were sung by the tenor Issatchenko and the baritone Azanolejez.[5] This act from the opera was presented four times during the 1911 season.[6] It would seem, from a recorded illustration, that Bakst designed at least one sea-monster costume, (Figure 126). There is, however, no evidence to establish conclusively that this costume was ever made, or used in the opera.[7] The design is interesting because it reflects, as did his costume designs for The Firebird in 1910, Bakst's interest in early Russian icons and ethnic art and the work of Klimt. The contorted angular composition of the figure, the elongated hands and their placing on the body, the sharp angles formed by the legs and elbows were similar to his designs for The Firebird.[8]

At the end of the 1911 Season the design principles employed by the artists at work for the Ballet Russe had furthered the ideals of a painterly, unified stage picture. Bakst in his designs for Le Spectre de la Rose had used more subdued colour than in his previous scenographic endeavours. In this ballet the décor and costumes followed the pattern Bakst had established in 1910 with his designs for Ca.naval. However, in Le Spectre de la Rose greater detail is to be seen, and greater concern with the mood and ambience of the ballet's scenario is reflected in the set and costumes. The other works Bakst designed during this season, notably Narcisse, were less successful. In Narcisse Bakst's design concept was well realised in most of the costumes, yet the set was less successful as it seemed far too heavy for the

pastoral nature of this work. The unity achieved in the designs for Schéhérazade, where costume and set were amalgamated to form a pictorial whole, was not achieved in Narcisse. Here decorative Greek style costumes were uncomfortably juxtaposed against the over-heavy treatment of the willow trees on the backdrop. The costume Bakst designed for [illegible] was not dissimilar to The Firebird costumes, and although some eclecticism is to be seen in Bakst's works, he transformed his sources to produce exciting, innovative statements.

Benois' scenography for the 1911 Season shows a development and a progression from his earlier, more academic set and costume designs. The designs executed by Benois in 1909 and 1910 (Le Pavillon d'Armide, Les Sylphides and Giselle) were firmly based on tradition. This is still in evidence with Petrushka, but these designs are somewhat more innovative, showing some links with contemporary European art as well as parallels with Russian art (for example, the work of Mussatov, Vrubel, and ethnic Russian art sources). In Petrushka Benois achieved a stage picture which could be described as aesthetic, unified and innovative.

Whilst the 1911 Season showed a development in Benois' scenography, Bakst presented little that was new. His costume designs, however, were no longer "simply instructions for the costume maker",[1] for they indicated the type of movement employed by the choreographer, as well as reflecting Bakst's philosophical attitude to Classical Greece.

CHAPTER FIVE : FOOTNOTES

p.203:1 As opposed to the pre-1900's ballet design concepts wher although there were a few designs that did give a feeling for 'period' and 'place', the unity of concept, was for the most part absent, i.e. that of set and costume forming an aesthetic, integrated unit (as discussed in the Introduction and Chapter One).

2 Haskell, A. The Ballet Russe, page 95.

3 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 23. confirming Bakst's comment concerning his sets as paintings in which the figures moved.

4 Found in the works of artists such as Mallavin, Vrubel and Mussatov, as discussed in Chapter Two.

p.204:1 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 162.

2 Ibid.

3 Although Jeux was planned in a contemporary set, this was still executed by Bakst in a manner which was similar to his earlier scenographic exercises. As will be discussed when analysing Jeux in detail.

4 Kirstein, L. Nijinsky Dancing, page 26.

5 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 72.

6 Ibid.

7 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 63.

8 Ibid.

p.205:1 Sorrel, W. The Dance Through the Ages, page 141.

2 Percival, J. What happened in Swan Lake? page 25: Dance and Dancers, October 1982.

3 Ibid.

4 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 210.

5 Ibid. Another reason is that illustrations of these décors cannot be traced. Having written to the Victoria and Albert Museum (April 1980) and the Monte Carlo Theatre Museum (May 1980), the replies received were that these settings, as well as their sketches, have probably been destroyed - all that remains are photographs of the dancers, reproduced in Kochno's Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes, pages 38-39.

p.206:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 343, called by Diaghilev The Sleeping Princess. (NOT The Sleeping Beauty).

2 Grigoriev, S. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 89.

3 Ibid.

4 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 163. Having written to The Hermitage Museum (November 1979) as well as the Russian Arts Council in Moscow (December 1979) no return correspondence in connection with the validity of the existence of this curtain has been received.

5 Le Spectre de la Rose had been premièred in Monte Carlo earlier.

6 Lievnn, P. Op.cit., page 72. "I am the spirit of the rose that you carried to the ball". (Translation J. Ralston).

7 Ibid.

8 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 80.

p.207:1 Spencer, C. Ibid, page 83.

2 Spencer, C. Ibid, scenario summarized from Spencer's account.

3 A supposition for this change could be that if pink is added to the décor it would form a stronger unity with the colour used in the rose's costume. This was the aesthetic reason given when I worked on the Festival Ballet version of the ballet. However, arguments against this colour introduction could also be used - such ideas as those of the rose being a symbol - an intrusion into the supposedly real environment, which one surmises was Bakst's original intention when he designed a décor which was different in colour to that of the rose's costume, linking more strongly with the girl's dress.

4 The use of furniture in Le Pavillon d'Armide and Carnaval has been analysed when these ballets were discussed in the historical context of their first performances.

p.208:1 As previously noted when discussing the realist theatre tradition, pages 18-35.

2 It must be remembered that Mackintosh was often featured in Mir Iskusstva with special reference to his architectural and furniture designs, thus Bakst could have been using his work as reference. Mackintosh's influence has been discussed when dealing with the influences on Mir Iskusstva in Chapter Two.

p.208:3 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 84, claims correctly that the furniture and costumes in Carnaval were of the bois clair Biedermeyer period.

4 In Carnaval a room was suggested by stylized flats with a heavy painted dado, see pages 172-175 for discussion on the ballet.

5 The costume is a simplified version of the Biedermeyer period. Bakst took basic shape and outline of costumes of the period. This can be seen if Black and Garland's History of Fashion, page 252, is studied in comparison to Figure 107.

A further observation can be made in that in some photographs of Karsavina in this role she appears to be wearing a patterned 'overgown'. The question as to whether this addition was used during performances is not clearly answered by consultation of various sources and persons. For example, R. Buckle in reply to the question of the use of this overgown answered: "I'm not certain it was ever used in performance" (November 1982).

p.209:1 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 82.

2 Beaumont, C. Five centuries of Ballet Design, page 72.

3 Nijinsky, B. Early Memoirs, page 93.

4 Nijinsky, R. Diaries, page 112.

p.210:1 Kirstein, L. Nijinsky Dancing, page 113.

2 Vrubel's work and the interest displayed by the Mir Iskusstva group in his paintings is discussed on pages 66-70.
Also Bakst had already acknowledged Vrubel's influence on his Schéhérazade scenography, as noted when analysing the scenography for this ballet.

3 Sorrel, W. The Dance through the Ages, page 192.

4 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 173.

p.211:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Stravinsky, I. Chronicle of My Life, page 89.

4 Mayer, C. Bakst, page 22.

5 Benois, A. Op.cit.

6 Kirstein, L. Op.cit., page 123.

7 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 87. Echo only repeated the last steps shown to her by Narcissus but never joining him in a pas de deux.

p.212:1 Ibid.

2 As will be shown when analysing the Le Dieu Bleu scenography.

3 Spencer, C. Op.cit., page 88.

4 Author's observation - as no record remains of the choreography. Yet the style of Bakst's sketches and their dynamism is such that they must have been influenced by the choreography or vice versa (not that Fokine would ever admit to it).

5 Bakst had already included underarm hair in his representations of Odalisques, (Figure 71), for Schéhérazade, probably for the same reasons - to heighten the carnality.

6 Mayer, C. Bakst, pages 10-15.

7 Spencer, C. Bakst, page 37. Published 1872 and read widely in Russian.

8 Mir Iskusstva volume III (1902), pages 18-24.

p.213:1 Osborne, H. The Oxford Companion to Art, page 768.

2 Bakst, L. New Paths of Classicism in Art (1909. In translation the article could also be titled New Thoughts on Classical Art).

3 Ibid. Bakst's ideals paralleled Nietzche's thoughts on classical art.

4 Ibid.

5 Buckle, R. Diaghilev, page 84.

6 Ibid. Unfortunately no definite illustration is available of Karsavina's costume. I have contacted Richard Buckle (January 1981) as well as Sotheby's (February 1981) and in replies from both parties no sketch or photograph of this costume can be traced.

p.214:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, pages 155-156.

Kirstein, L. Nijinsky, page 123.

p.215:1 Ibid.

2 Ibid, page 182.

3 Ibid.

4 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 133. Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 159.

5 McQuillan, M. Painters and the Ballet, page 81.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid

p.215:8 Stravinsky, I. Conversations with Igor Stravinsky, page 89.

9 Fokine, A. Protiv Techniya, page 63.

p.216:1 Ibid.

2 McQuillan, M. Op.cit., page 82.

3 One is not claiming that Benois consciously paralleled this theatrical device to the pictorial devices of Seurat or Picasso - only that it made the first overt gesture of using the proscenium arch as a decorative, functional element.

p.217:1 Kirstein, L. Nijinsky Dancing, page 113 - a suggestion of the colours used in the set may be seen in Figure 119.

2 Taking Aurier's definition as stated in Chapter One into account, as well as noting that the boundary between the 'theatrical' and 'reality' was a major tennet of the symbolist theatre tradition.

p.218:1 Lieven, P. The Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 61.

2 Ibid., page 63.

3 Illusionism - pertaining to a representational manner employed in scenography, as discussed in Chapter One.

4 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 126.

p.219:1 Sobolev was a Russian architect.

2 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 84.

3 Ibid.

4 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 72.

5 Benois, A. Memoirs, page 164.

6 Buckle, R. Op.cit. - entire scenario summarized from Buckle's description.

7 Benois, A. Op.cit.

p.220:1 As can be noted if contemporary sketches in Onassis' In the Russian Style are compared to this design, pages 178-200.

Ethnic motif usage has been thoroughly annotated and analysed in the scenography of Prince Igor, by Roerich, as well as Bakst's designs for Schéhérazade and Cléopâtre.

1 If a comparison is made between Bakst's designs for Le Fée des Poupees, (Figure 35), and Benois' costume designs for Petrushka, (Figures 121 and 120), the similarity of source materials may be noted.

p.220:4 Buckle, R. Nijinsky, page 87.

5 Ibid - scenario summarized from Buckle's account.

p.221:1 Lieven, P. Op.cit., pages 130-153. Details and description from the scenario, summarized from Lieven's writing.

2 Bakst's colour theories are discussed in Chapter Three, pages 122-126.

3 Lieven, P. Op cit. Costumed in a manner reminiscent of Bakst's exotic designs for ballets such as Schéhérazade - in green, black and gold. (See Figure 69).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

p.222:1 Kochno, B. Diaghilev and The Ballet Russe, page 48.

2 Ibid.

3 Lieven, P. Birth of the Ballet Russe, page 135. Claims "the traditional Russian Guignol Petrushka was different from the Petrushka of the ballet. He was a gay and dashing roisterer who was always having adventures. Yet the Petrushka of the ballet is still the Slav Pierrot". The Royal Ballet production uses a similar reconstruction of the choreography and scenario (as used in the original production).

4 Ibid. Scenario summarized from Lieven's account.

5 Levey, M. Western Art, page 313. An interesting supposition is that although it is possible that Benois was influenced by Matisse the reverse could also be applied, especially if Matisse's Still Life with Aubergines (1912, Lyon Museum) is compared with the Moor's cell scene.

p.223:1 In Petrushka a comparison is made with the floral motifs used on the Terem Palace stairway, (Figure 20). However, the window-sill detail, (Figure 21), and the floral pattern on the Terem Palace stair column are also very similar.

2 When the Le Coq d'Or scenography is analysed the aspect of abstraction of motifs will be illustrated in detail.

3 Levey M. Western Art, page 313.

4 Fokine, A. Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 112.

5 Ibid., page 113.

6 Ibid.

7 The Ballerina Doll's choreographic movement echoing her character, as discussed on page 226.

R.224:1 Beaumont, C. The Diaghilev Ballet, page 97

Kochno, B Diaghilev and the Ballet Russe page

Fokine A Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 111

Benois Reminiscences page 335

Stravinsky Memories, pages 33-34

Ibid

Fokine A Op.cit., page 184.

Benois, A Reminiscences, page 337.

Fokine A Memoirs of a Ballet Master, page 112.

The integration of set and costumes for Petrushka has been discussed earlier in the analysis dealing with the ballet

The designs for Le Rossignol will be discussed when dealing with this ballet in Chapter Eight.

Crisp, C and Clark, M. Design for Ballet, pages 231-232

As stated in Chapter Three when discussing the Firebird, page 147. Parisian audiences expected Diaghilev's productions to be du vrai Russe.

Legat, P Ballet Russe, page 143.

Ibid.

Ibid., page 144.

Having written to Mr. C. Spencer who published this illustration, the reply received (March 1982) was that there was no recorded evidence that this costume was for the 1911 production (as the work is dated 1917) - it must have been designed for a later production and not for this work as recorded by Levison, A. In The Story of Bakst's Life, page 54.

The three designs executed by Bakst for The Firebird (the Prince, the lead Princess and the Firebird) have been discussed on pages 185-188. In these costumes it has been noted that Bakst, as in his Sea Monster costume used a distorted figure representation as well as the sources from which this type of distortion was obtained - mainly those of Russian icons, Russian ethnic art, and some of the works of Gustav Klimt (especially his Water Serpents, (Figure 90).

228:1 Clarke, M. and Crisp, C. Design for Ballet, page 110.

CHAPTER SIX : THE 1912 BALLET RUSSE SEASON

In 1912 the Ballet Russe presented seven new works in Paris: on 13 May Le Dieu Bleu, music by Hahn, choreography by Fokine and designs by Bakst; Thamar on 20 May music by Balakirev, choreography by Fokine, designs by Bakst; L'Après-midi d'un Faune on 29 May, music by Debussy, choreography by Nijinsky, designs by Bakst; and on the 5th June Daphnis and Chloë, music by Ravel, choreography by Fokine, designs by Bakst.[1]

1912 was the year when the French composers Reynaldo Hahn, Debussy and Ravel first composed music for the Ballet Russe. It was also the year that Nijinsky made his debut as a choreographer, which resulted in Fokine leaving the Ballet Russe.[2] Bakst designed all the new works presented by the Ballet Russe during the 1912 season. They were in the style in which Bakst excelled, especially noticeable in his designs for L'Après-midi d'un Faune. However, at times Bakst's use of pattern and colour is, if anything, over exuberant. This may be seen in a work like Le Dieu Bleu.

In 1912 Diaghilev wanted to present the Ballet Russe in St. Petersburg but the theatre, the Narodny Dom, was burnt to the ground on 20 January of that year, so the Ballet Russe season was cancelled.[3] Diaghilev had signed on Mata Hari for whom he wished to create the role of Goddess in Le Dieu Bleu.[4] Because of this contract Diaghilev managed to substitute this proposed Russian season with bookings in Dresden, Vienna and Budapest.[5]

In January 1911 Emile Jacques Dalcroze, the inventor of Eurythmics and friend of Appia, gave a demonstration with the aid of his pupils in St. Petersburg.[6] This was no doubt the occasion when Diaghilev and Nijinsky became interested in his choreographic system. While in Dresden

Diaghilev and Nijinsky visited Dalcroze's School of Eurythmics in the suburb of Hellerau.[1] This provided inspiration for Nijinsky who subsequently explored new dance modes which were incorporated in L'Après-midi d'un Faune.[2] For this ballet Dalcroze's influence on Nijinsky's choreography was crucial. Point shoes and a certain classical style of vocabulary would no longer be as important as it had been prior to the performance of L'Après-midi d'un Faune. The concept of Modern Dance, as opposed to Ballet was initiated a new interpretive style was evolved. There had, of course, been incidences of the Dance being used in performance prior to 1912, especially by exponents such as Isadora Duncan and Löis Fuller.[3] Even in some of Fokine's works there were elements of Dance as opposed to the classical steps characteristic of ballet.[4] However, L'Après-midi d'un Faune was unique for the entire choreography was based on the Dance.

In Nijinsky's choreography the human figure was dehumanized. The dancers were to be part of an over-all composition - the moving elements in a 'painting' devised by Nijinsky and Bakst. When Fokine heard of Nijinsky's choreographic debut with L'Après-midi d'un Faune he was furious.[5] This was exacerbated when Fokine realised his ballet Daphnis and Chloë, which he had hoped would embody all his ideals of Classical Greece was to take second place to Nijinsky's Greek ballet, L'Après-midi d'un Faune.[6] Daphnis and Chloë had meant so much to Fokine,[7] not least because he considered himself as its originator having planned a scenario on the subject as early as 1904.[8] Ravel had taken so long over the composition[9] that Narcisse, also a Greek subject, had replaced Daphnis and Chloë which was to have been produced during the 1911 Season. Fokine falsely maintained that Bakst had used his Daphnis and Chloë décor for Narcisse,[10] thus ruining the effect of the postponed and, to him more important work.[11] It is at least true that there are statues of gods as well as a flock of sheep in both designs. Yet on studying these designs, (Figures 109 and 142), it may be seen that they

are totally different.[1] Because of Fokine's busy schedule choreographing Le Dieu Bleu, Daphnis and Chloë was to be prepared last and presented only in the final programme, shortly before the end of the Paris season. After a long and bitter discussion with Diaghilev, Fokine decided to resign as soon as Daphnis and Chloë had been produced.[2]

On the opening night, 13 May 1912, at the Châtelet Théâtre the programme included The Firebird, Le Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor and the new ballet by Cocteau Le Dieu Bleu.[3]

In the scenario for Le Dieu Bleu Cocteau did not incorporate that "modernity of spirit and transfiguration of the everyday"[4] which typified his work. The scenario told of a Young Man studying to be a priest who was imprisoned because of his love for a Temple Dancer. The Temple Dancer and the Young Man were then condemned to death in a snake pit. The two lovers were eventually saved by the "blue" god (Nijinsky) and the "gold" goddess (Mata Hari).[5] The music was by Reynaldo Hahn

> ... the most witty and poetical composer of songs which embodied the very spirit of boulevards and drawing-rooms of Paris.[6]

His score for the ballet was, however, unsuccessful for in writing for an Oriental drama, "the music turned out to be derivative and reminiscent of a mixture of Massenet and Delibes".[7]

According to Buckle, Fokine's choreographic invention and the performance of his dancers were "bound to be hampered by the pseudo-Hindu-Siamese idiom".[8] Bakst's scenography, however, must have been overpowering, (Figure 127). The sketch for the set showed a sacred place in a cleft between two vast cliffs - the steep cliff to the left was in shadow and between it and the sun-streaked orange mountain on the right of the stage, the sky descended into an azure V, at the base of which could be seen a distant horned pagoda. The right-hand side of the backcloth represented painted

sculptural heads that protruded from a painted rock formation.

These sculptural heads were derived from the colossal sculptures at Angor Watt in Cambodia.[1] These heads emerged from painted foliage from which sprung, to the right in exaggerated perspective, two poles from which monstrous snakes hung in looped forms. The fault with this set was that it was overpowering in scale. This is especially evident when examining Bakst's watercolour of the proposed set, (Figure 127). The human figures painted to scale in this illustration are totally dwarfed by the huge orange rock forms. The set showed the excesses of which Bakst was capable. Besides this overpowering use of scale in the décor, further elements that illustrate a dichotomy in visual unity are to be found - such as the use of the Cambodian influence in the (painted) carved heads on the centre right, the Indian sculptural form at the side of the doorway on the left and the distant horned pagoda of Chinese or Japanese origins in the centre. All these elements are Eastern and purport to promote the exotic location of the ballet, yet they are derived from vastly different cultural sources. Added to this the costumes were based on a mixture of Indian and Persian dress.[2] The stage picture presented lacked a unity of historical and geographical source materials, although they may have supported the ideal of a Gesamtkunstwerk in that they were suited to the melodramatic scenario and pseudo-oriental music.

This vast scale is even more unacceptable because of the pure saturated colour Bakst used. The blue sky contrasts too strongly with the orange cliffs and the brilliant green shrubbery. The costumes were predominantly white with appliquéd patches, lozenges, zig-zags in magenta, yellow and green. There had

> ... never been such an elaboration of gold and pearl embroidery, such luxuriously twined or towering turbans, hung as they were with yards of pleated gauze or festooned with beads and pearls.[3]

The Temple Dancers' costume, (Figure 128), is described in the Sotheby's Catalogue :

> The basic garment is a transparent skirt over pants, with transparent elbow-length sleeves. The upper part of this costume incorporates pagoda wing shoulder pads, a high pearl neckband, joined to a colossal winged turban; all embroidered in mother-of-pearl shells and including an enamelled triangular waist-band.[1]

The transparent sleeves were made from moiré silk with lozenges of silver, blue and ochre braid with shell embroidery; the skirt split at the centre and was cut as a circle of transparent silk bordered with blue triangular braid and shells, with the front triangular panel of silk decorated with rectangles of shell embroidery.[2] Under the skirt the dancer wore trousers which were seen through the transparent silk skirt and were decorated from knee to waist with diamond appliquéd design motifs in blue, black and brown. From knee to ankle these trousers were made from translucent silk decorated with drop-pearls.[3] Pearls were also used in strings connecting the large winged turban to the high collar.[4]

It can be seen from this illustration that besides the exotic design of the costume, the materials used in its construction were of an expensive nature taking no cognisance of cost nor the effect that could be achieved on stage by using substitute materials of a cheaper quality.

Nijinsky's costume as the Blue God, (Figure 129), though actually green in the illustration consisted of a

> ... short-sleeved skirted Oriental costume in yellow watered silk, appliquéd with a printed cotton in violet, blue and white, also with white satin; with bands of green velvet studded with green stones, embroidered in green, blue, yellow, black and gold, pink and white stones around the hem of the skirt. Yellow woollen pantaloons with an embroidered white border. Head-dress of gold gauze on a wire base, with pearls and an embroidered rose.[5]

All other costumes for Le Dieu Bleu were of an equally exotic

nature. The Girl, played by Karsavina, (Figure 130), was again dressed in silk - transparent for the sleeve veils, opaque for the cut-out bodice, underskirt and trousers. The overskirt was wired for a stiffened silhouette, as can be seen in this illustration. This skirt sprang from the hips. The design motifs of chevrons and lozenge shapes were appliquéd on "a pearl-studded blue background".[1] Pearls were again used for the neckband, on the turban head-dress, the arm bracelets and the decorative elements on the bodice.

Even the relatively minor characters in the ballet, such as the Priest and the Danse Sacrée, (Figures 131 and 132), were as exotically and expensively costumed. In these illustrations the full cut of the garment again utilized the stiffened overskirt format. This stiffened costume outline had been used by Bakst in Schéhérazade.[2] Yet in the costumes for Le Dieu Bleu they are more exaggerated and it may be surmised that it would be extremely difficult to dance in them. They are hardly functional. No matter how original in concept and beautiful in presentation, the very nature and activity of the dance or ballet would have been hindered rather than helped by these opulent and very full costumes. When combined with the overpowering setting these costumes would have presented a stage picture that must have been too opulent. However, even if the scenography formed a Gesamtkunstwerk with the other elements of the ballet the designs were not successful. They also seemed to have pandered to the more decadent aspects of the symbolist movement without taking into consideration the subtler ambiguities used by Bakst in his earlier works (such as Carnaval and even Schéhérazade). The ballet was moderately successful even though, or perhaps because it was so excessive. As Kirstein claims:

> Le Dieu Bleu was conceived as still another exotic frame capitalising on the oriental, it appeared just when this vein of audience appeal had been exhausted. However, the pageantry of India, the splendours of the British Raj permeated the sets. Because of this the work, although not great,

would play triumphantly at Covent Garden.[1]

The second half of the season was Thamar. The scenario for Thamar described the story of the nymphomaniac queen of Georgia (played by Karsavina) who awaited passing travellers whom she would seduce and then kill.[2] The music was by Balakirev and contained many Georgian rhythms which Fokine utilized in Caucasian dances.[3] Only one photograph of the costumes and Bakst's design for the set appear to remain.[4] It must be stressed that certain ballets performed by the Ballet Russe between 1912 and 1914 appear to have little recorded information concerning their performances or presentations. This lack of information is due to a dearth of pictorial as well as written accounts of the works.

The set Bakst designed, (Figure 111), was the interior of a tiered tower with red, green and mauve walls rising in perspective. Bakst's décor for Thamar was the Georgian equivalent of the remarkable Persian harem that he created for Schéhérazade. Bakst again relied on the intensity of the colours he employed to create a décor that would be opulent and powerful. The strength of the fiery red brick walls created "a hot-house atmosphere which was the visual equivalent to the passionate malevolence of the story".[5] Indeed Bakst felt that the colours of the décor should express the emotions evoked by the music and dance.[6]

Explaining his use of various graduated tones and hues to express the different emotional states in Thamar, Bakst elaborated on his ideas regarding the expressive role of colour, first formulated in his production of Schéhérazade in 1910.[7]

> I have often noticed that in each colour of the prism there exists a graduation which sometimes expressed fruitfulness and chastity, sometimes sensuality and even bestiality, sometimes pride, sometimes despair. This can be felt and given over to the public by the effect one makes of the various shadings ... There are reds which assassinate and there are reds which are triumphal ...

> The painter who knows how to make use of this, the director of the orchestra who can put with one movement of the baton all this in motion, without crossing them, who can let flow the thousand tones from the end of his stick without making a mistake, can draw from the spectator the exact emotion he wants him to feel.[1]

Colour was for Bakst an essential decorative-expressive dramatic element through which he could symbolise themes that created a visual equivalent of the drama.

The decor for Thamar contains the trade mark of Bakst's designs - it was monumental and incorporated exotic decorative elements. The two side walls obviously acted as the legs to the set. The sheer size of the set may be gauged from the seated figure against the right-hand wall. The floor was covered with a green floor cloth with a painted carpet.[2] It would seem that Bakst attempted to counteract the angularity of the rising walls by introducing circular wall patterns. The strong contrast of red and green on the floor-cloth may well also have served to counteract the strong vertical emphasis of the set. The mostly green floor-cloth echoed the back green wall. On this back wall was painted a rising zig-zag pattern which denoted a climbing staircase to an upper door.[3] Because of the extreme distortion of this staircase it is an oddity in an otherwise fairly illusionistic set.

It is not possible to ascertain whether the costumes would have created a foil sufficiently powerful enough to counteract the dominance of the set. Only one black and white photograph of Karsavina and Bolm has been traced. This photograph illustrates that the costumes, (Figure 134), are typical of Bakst's designs - especially that for the male lead (Bolm) with its richly embossed overskirt with lozenge pattern appliqué. These costumes purport to be of Georgian origin[4] ye judging from this photograph, although some Georgian elements may be apparent, they are not unlike those Bakst designed for Le Dieu Bleu in their general outline and pattern. According to Lieven :

> Thamar had the greatest success in 1912. It was given thirty-four times during the year. The success of Thamar, however, is not to be explained by its artistic (décor, costumes and choreography) importance. The one and only thing in it which is of real value is Balakriev's music.[1]

Thus Lieven rightly criticised the apparert faults of the ballet, yet claimed that,

> Thamar kept its place in the repertoire for many years, even although there was nothing new, no special brilliant inspiration in it - that is until Goncharova redesigned it in the mid 1920's.[2]

In comparison to Bakst's designs Goncharova's set, (Figure 135), is much more exciting. It is more powerful in its starkness than that executed by Bakst because of her use of reductive abstraction in the motifs (the constructed castle, legs and borders, and the painted backcloth depicting a mountain landscape). Her set also appears more visually integrated than that designed by Bakst.

The most successful ballet presented during the 1912 season was L'Après-midi d'un Faune. The strength of the ballet lies in the fact that it presented a unified, decorative-expressive statement. Furthermore Bakst's designs for this ballet were excellent examples of his capabilities as a scenographer. Not only did his designs further the ideals of the painterly school of scenographers but brought them into closer proximity with the ideals of the plastic school of scenography.[3]

The musical score for this work was Debussy's Prelude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune, inspired by Mallarme's poem and composed nearly twenty years before.[4] The ballet was conceived in 1911 but not performed until the following year. According to Buckle, the reasons for this were that

> ... with Fokine's and Tchereprine's Narcisse on the stocks, there was already one new ballet on a Greek subject to be presented; but the chief reason that L'Après-midi d'un Faune was postponed was Diaghilev's

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> and Nijinsky's fear that Fokine would walk out (for jealous reasons) without completing his ballets necessary for their next season.

Bakst had been working with Nijinsky during 1911 on L'Après-midi d'un Faune on the idea of the Greek frieze.[2] Fokine had choreographed ballets without bravura steps,[3] but in this ballet created by Nijinsky there was to be nothing but a type of walking which was revolutionary for the time. There was one jump but this was done with the torso full on to the audience and the head, arms and legs in profile.[4] This type of movement was partly the Dalcroze influence on Nijinsky's choreography.

The scenario was simple, telling of seven nymphs dancing in a friezelike procession. They were interrupted by a Faune, frightening them away, taking a scarf which one had dropped and then simulating copulation on it. This final movement of the ballet caused consternation and outcry as it was considered to be beyond the bounds of propriety.[5] Historians disagree about the exact nature of Nijinsky's final erotic movements, which were slightly modified after the first performance.[6] Grigoriev makes it clear that this erotic movement was shown at the last rehearsals exactly as given at the première and Diaghilev, although warned that it was shocking, refused to have it changed.[7] Lieven suggested[8] that 'the movement' was an accident on the first night caused by the breaking of one of a bunch of glass grapes attached to Nijinsky's tights.[9] This is nonsense as a spray of leaves covering the genital zone was attached to Nijinsky's tights. There were no glass grapes on the costume, (see Figures 136 and 137).

Parisian audiences were familiar with the music of L'Après-midi d'un Faune and Diaghilev and his colleagues expected that some critics and members of the public would resent an attempt at dancing to the familiar score. Nijinsky's revolutionary choreography, which some people claimed was not dancing at all[10] led to further anxiety as Diaghilev

expected a hostile reaction to this as well.[1] The reaction to the ballet was, in fact, even more severely critical than was expected. Musicians objected to the use of this music in the ballet because, as Kirstein states

> ... Nijinsky was not constrained by conventional conceptions of movements which would be suitable for accompanying distinguished music ... If anything, in using a score as a dynamic soundtrack or aural tapestry, Nijinsky worked contrarily, finding excitement in gaps between the music's languors and the rigours of sharply accented turns and reversed processional files. Debussy's sonorities flowed in waves. Nijinsky's tableaux were disparate, lodged in contrary broken inscriptions of punctual shift and backtrack.[2]

Balletomanes objected to the revolutionary choreography because

> ... although many stylistic antecedents could be listed for Faune, not alone from Fokine but also from Petipa and Alexander Gorsky, who had used "Egyptian" profiling, Nijinsky's choreography was a genuine rupture in essential concepts. He was inventing a new alphabet that could be used to develop many new languages. In addition, he exposed a novel psychological sensibility, freighted with cool sensuality and intimately connected with the psychological experience of ordinary people when they were divested of gentility in their covert behaviour. Aesthetically Faune presented a new dialectic of contrasts : movement against music, static actions against symphonic turbulence, extreme angularity of decoration against luscious curvature. The structuring of the steps was self-contained, coherent, applicable only to the ballet's brief duration and limiting space.[3]

Finally most of the audience were shocked by the lack of propriety, especially displayed in the ballet's final moment.[4] However, despite critical condemnation the ballet eventually received the acclaim it deserved and is still popular as a performance piece today.[5]

The ballet presents the most singular example of Bakst composing his scenography, orienting his lines, building his forms, and choosing motifs and colours for his costumes [illegible] movement. In the ballet the scene would

present a perfect visual unity for that frame in the continually moving painting that Bakst equated with theatre design.[1] Although Bakst believed that all the divergent elements of a ballet (the décor and costumes, music and choreography) should be integrated to create a unified Gesamtkunstwerk, he also realised that ballet made particular demands on the décor,[2] especially the creation of a free space for dancing.

In L'Après-midi d'un Faune the backdrop is the dominant feature. Elaborating upon the theories of scene-in-relief as expounded by such scenic designers as Appia or Peter Behrens (1869-1940),[3] Bakst attempted to put the dancers in relief by detaching them from the conventional framework of an illusionistic décor, (see Figure 138). Nijinsky's choreography kept the dancers on a two-dimensional plane so that their linear movements performed in front of the backdrop's painted landscape made them appear to be in relief - especially as they were lit from the wings.

Although Bakst attempted to translate the so-called impressionism of Debussy's score for L'Après-midi d'un Faune into its visual complement,[5] Nijinsky was not satisfied with the scenery because it failed for him to "form a harmonious part with the music or the dancing".[6] The set, (Figure 138), was a much less literal representation of a landscape than his designs for Narcisse, (Figure 109), or Daphnis and Chloë, (Figure 142). Bakst designed a mottled, speckled, deliquescent composition in greys, russets and greens. The set epitomised the successful use of the painted cloth consisting of simplified shapes in large painted areas which left the bottom third of the cloth virtually unpainted. The advantage of this format was to highlight the moving figures without the background becoming intrusive. In this décor more than in any other of Bakst's work, an evocation of the paintings of the Nabi's is encountered. For instance in Bakst's scenography there is an overall flatness of design motifs.[8] Similarly some depth is

achieved through the piling up of planes, one above the other; however, there is no recession into space seen in Bakst's backcloth for this work.[1]

In the foreground of Bakst's sketch for L'Après-midi d'un Faune, (Figure 138), the Faune's rock is to be seen. This rock or rostrum is the only constructed three-dimensional element on the stage. Behind and to the right, above the rock and scale-size figures of the dancing nymphs, are a waterfall and lake which are represented as a flat rising area of brown slashed with darker brown and yellow. In Bakst's backcloth the foliage of the trees is represented as flat coloured areas. These motifs are arranged to form patterns which contrast and balance one another through their colouring and placement. The rhythms of yellow, for instance, are clearly discernible. The reiteration of colour across the surface of the backcloth facilitates pictorial integration. Such pictorial features find their precedent in Nabi paintings[2] and are hardly revolutionary in the context of Art History. As far as stagecraft for the commercial stage is concerned, however, they are innovative. No commercial theatrical enterprise had, by 1912, employed this manner of pictorial representation in ballet scenography or for that matter in any of the other genres of "popular" entertainment. (In the area of the Art Theatre productions it must, however, be remembered that artists were already experimenting with abstraction in scenography, for example Kandinsky's Sounds of 1911).

The performance area in L'Après-midi d'un Faune was deliberately restricted to a narrow strip in front of the backcloth. All the required action of the ballet took place in the narrow zone between the backcloth, set forward on the line of the second of the four wings, and the curtain line. Within this space the dancers' movement in parallel lines "consisted more of walking in parallel grooves than of dancing".[3] Bakst incorporated a floor-cloth, black in the foreground until it reached the Faune's rock and green in the area behind this rostrum.[4]

The lighting was so planned[1] as to further enhance the effect of flatness created by the choreographic movement and scenography.

Bakst designed the costumes to contrast with the backcloth, as Kirstein states:

> The metaphoric implications of the choreography were enforced by Bakst's preference for an archaic Greece in his pleated dresses, specifying an epoch before sophistry differentiated natural and contrived expression, when dancing was still ritual celebration rather than festive diversion ... in this manner a contrast was created between the costumes (with their reliance on a fixed historical period) and the abstracted set and choreographic format.[3]

The nymphs wore long pleated tunics of white muslin, stencilled in blue or rust-red with stripes, wave-like lines, leaves or checkered borders.[4] In the preliminary water-colour designs for the nymph's costumes, (Figures 140 and 141), the design motifs can be seen to have been incorporated in the long Greek chiton. However, if these sketches are compared with the photograph showing the actual performance, (Figure 137), it is noted that Bakst modified the cut of the costumes leaving the arms free. Nevertheless the designs within the costumes remained constant. In comparison to Bakst's Greek costume designs for Narcisse, (Figures 110 and 112), the costumes for L'Après-midi d'un Faune are less dynamic in their sketched format - these being rather static. The nymph's feet were bare and made up with white, the toes being rouged.[5] On their heads they wore tight fitting wigs of golden rope which fell in long strands not unlike the frescoes and sculptures showing Cretean Goddesses or ladies of the court.[6] They wore very little make-up. Bakst painted their eyes "whitish-pink, like those of a pigeon".[7]

Nijinsky's costume as the Faune, (Figure 136), consisted of cream-coloured all-over tights painted with dark brown splotches "like the skin of a calf".[8] As can be noted in Bakst's sketch the Faune had a small tail and green

vine leaves around his midriff. He wore a woven cap of golden hair like the nymphs but with two gold horns lying flat on either side so that they formed a kind of circlet. All these design elements can be seen in the photograph of the original production, (Figure 135). In the costume illustration, (Figure 136), as compared with that of the photograph, (Figure 137), it can be noticed that the design when executed was very similar to Bakst's original concept. Nijinsky's costume for L'Après-midi d'un Faune was enhanced by the effect created by his make-up:

> His facial make-up utterly changed the apparent structure of his face. He underlined the obliquity of his eyes, and this brought out and gave a slumberous expression. His mouth, chiselled by nature, he made heavier - here also was an infinite languour and a bestial line. His face, with its high cheek-bones, lent itself admirably to the transformation. His ears he elongated with flesh-coloured wax and made them pointed like those of a horse. He did not imitate, he merely brought out the impression of a clever animal which might almost be human.[1]

The costumes blended perfectly with the concept of the set, the one in perfect harmony with the other projecting the idea of an Attic idyll. Bakst's scenography for this work created a designed ideal that was symbolic in its representation and it was visually exciting. This was due to his use of the backcloth as an abstracted landscape in which the symbols had to be deciphered by the audience. Bakst's scenography for L'Après-midi d'un Faune paralleled the ideals of the Symbolist designer[2] in that the audience could no longer play a passive role but rather - because they were required to interpret elements within the scenography - they became active participants.[3] Because of this L'Après-midi d'un Faune is one of Bakst's most successful decorative-expressive endeavours.

L'Après-midi d'un Faune can thus be taken as a good example of Bakst's work which answered the ideal of a unified scenographic statement, because the work included

the following :

> It was a decorative-expressive statement;
>
> In its scenographic form it related to certain contemporary European art trends.
>
> The ballet incorporated the Hellenistic revival overlaid with a Nietzchian philosophical stance regarding ancient Greece which referred back to the interest displayed by Mir Iskusstva.
>
> Bakst created a functional performing area as well as a functional set and costumes.
>
> The ballet also included an abstracted plastic structure in the form of the Faune's rock which allied it to the work of the plastic school of scenographers. Further, because of the ideal of presenting the performers in relief, Bakst had designed the lower portion of the backcloth using relatively simple shapes, thus creating Appia's ideal of massgebend (the performer being highlighted in the environment of the set).

Edward Gordon Craig in fact summed up L'Après-midi d'un Faune as

> ... a symbolic stage picture which reinforced the action, scenario and imaginative quality of the production.[1]

A week after the première of L'Après-midi d'un Faune the first performance of Fokine's Daphnis and Chloë was to be given on the 5th June 1912.[2] However, because of "much unpleasantness" between Diaghilev and Fokine the ballet was postponed until the 8th June.[3]

Fokine's Daphnis and Chloë was a more complex work than Nijinsky's L'Après-midi d'un Faune, employing not only the whole company and an orchestra of at least eighty but also a chorus.[4] It was in three scenes and lasted nearly ½ hour.[5] Nijinsky's L'Après-midi d'un Faune had eight dancers in one set and the dance drama lasted for twelve minutes.[6]

Diaghilev favoured L'Après-midi d'un Faune but was not as enthusiastic about Daphnis and Chloë. Daphnis and Chloë was only presented thice during the Paris season.[7] The reason for this is that Diaghilev was averse to the

ballet because, apart from the fact that Ravel would not allow the smallest cuts in the music, and besides the expense of the chorus, it was the first work he presented (excepting the old classical ballets and Le Pavillon d'Armide) which was in any way linked with traditional ballet. The action did not take place within the time it took to perform the ballet, nor even within twenty-four hours as did the other ballets Diaghilev presented. The scene changed from a sacred grove to a pirate's camp and back again, and purported to depict at least four days of action.[1] Diaghilev liked a ballet to have as little story as possible, preferring merely to create a "symbolist mood or an atmosphere".[2] The story of Daphnis and Chloë with its rival lovers, dance competition, onslaught and rape by pirates, captivity of Chloë and her rescue and restoration to her beloved Daphnis, must have seemed in his eyes too much like the old fairy-tale ballets to which the Ballet Russe was opposed. In the old ballets the hero went hunting for his swan bride, or broke through thickets of thorns to revive his sleeping beauty. The feeble Daphnis (Nijinsky), however, only lay in a swoon until the raped Chloë (Karsavina) was returned to him. The middle scene involved Chloë in the dance drama and depicted her rape by the pirates. Daphnis was not included in this scene at all.[3] Although a re-worked version of this ballet still remains in some ballet companies' repertoires,[4] the work as a whole was not critically or artistically well received in 1912.[5] The reasons for this are clearly stated by Lieven:

> The work was not a success. The reasons for this were that it was done in a hurry and the ballet was compressed. Very little of the original tale remained in Fokine's scenario. The procession in honour of Pan, the kidnapping of Chloë, and her rescue by the mysterious shadow, were all that remained of the tale.
>
> Daphnis and Chloë was written by the Greek Longus in the third century A.D. It is a pastoral in the pseudo-classic vein - in the style of the French eighteenth century pasturals. A very unconvincing

> innocence is blended with the sensuality of an experienced libertine in this work, which certainly belongs to a decadent period, possesses no authentic classicism, and is permeated throughout with sentimentality ... In short Daphnis and Chloë arouses little interest in any sphere of the performing arts.[1]

Because of the general negative reaction to the ballet, as well as its limited number of performances, there is very little critical or pictorial evidence remaining, thus making it difficult to evaluate its presentation artistically. Baker's watercolour sketches for the sets for Scenes I, II and III and one costume illustration[2] are all that remain. It seems that only a few new costumes were designed for this work. As Lieven states:

> ... during the preparations for Daphnis and Chloë, Fokine was not given either enough time for rehearsals or the necessary new costumes.[3]

A further consideration as to the critical framework used in discussing a work of this nature (with the few surviving comments and illustrations) is that the watercolour sketches for the sets can only be evaluated as designers' and no comparison can be made as to how they sustained when constructed, as photographic records of the set are non-existent.[4]

The watercolour sketch for Scenes I and III, (figure 163), by Bakst depicted a sacred grove.[5] In sketch form this represented a green hollow (obviously the dancing area) in a rocky landscape (mostly one suggests on the painted backcloth) with cypress trees. Judging from the sketch these appear to be free-standing, hung units which serve-lish a vertical axis across the stage. Hidden in the trees to the left are the statues of three nymphs, archaic in style, but with arms improbably extended before them. The rocks beneath them, possibly constructed three-dimensional set pieces, are strewn with garlands and other votive offerings. On a distant hill looms a little shrine painted to represent a Greek temple in the Doric style, against a

lake with reflected clouds not dissimilar in its painted appearance to Mussatov's The Reservoir, (Figure 30), and a further bank of rocks and foliage at the top of the backcloth. It seems that in this backcloth Bakst was again attempting to flatten out the landscape presentation as he had in L'Après-midi d'un Faune. However, in the Daphnis and Chloë watercolour sketch for Scene I this is not successfully achieved because the scene is presented as an illusionistically painted backcloth and the piling up of landscape elements such as the lake and further bank does not work as it appears to conflict with the more illusionistic design elements. This is especially noticeable if the temple's perspective is studied. The vanishing point of this structure is on a downward axis which conflicts with the rising scale of the lake and bank behind it. This type of landscape representation could possibly only alienate the audience's perception of the scenographic content and not present an active participation mode as had the more abstract cloth for L'Après-midi d'un Faune. In addition the style in which the sketch of the set is presented is much more academic in its rendition of motifs than was the L'Après-midi d'un Faune décor. This style of presentation also appears to conflict with Bakst's rendition of Scene II from the same ballet, (Figure 143). If the Scene II sketch is compared with the Scenes I and III sketch, (Figure 143), then it may be noted that Scene II is much more loosely painted employing a conventional representation of depth without resorting to a piling up of planes (as occurs in Scenes I and III). Therefore if the sets for Daphnis and Chloë were faithfully constructed after Bakst's watercolour sketches there would be a lack of visual unity between the two scenes - Scene I with its attempt to flatten out the stage-picture format, yet using illusionistic means of presentation and Scene II with its looser paint textures and conventional spatial representation.

In its watercolour sketch format the second scene showed a

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