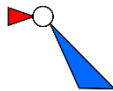


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| bncdoc.id | A12 |
| bncdoc.author | Lawson, Joan |
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| <347/c> | speed must be avoided, nor that the unexpected need offend the eye. A sudden change of éaulement, an unusual turn in-out of legs or arms, or quick jumps up and then down to the floor followed by a roll over or even a somersault can accentuate the particular place that unusual movement has in the whole design. Swift changes in the dimensions covered in any linear design are nowhere more obvious than in Ashton's five abstract ballets and his example is now being followed by David Bintley in his Choros and Consort Lessons. In fact such unusual movements often arouse the audience to gentle laughter as swift changes add a touch of humour as two or more dancers compete to capture the attention of both the audience and their Colleagues. Classical dance patterns In classical ballet the patterns and groupings delineated by the dancers' bodies are usually symmetrical and evenly balanced over the whole stage. This symmetry of design comes with the nature of this style of dance and its historical development. Technically each movement emanates from and is circled round a centre line of balance. Therefore in daily training it is customary for each exercise to be performed to the left and right, forwards and backwards. But even if a choreographer breaks such regularity when setting a classical ballet he usually balances the pattern made on the floor in one enchaînement by another moving in the opposite direction. This balancing of floor patterns is also matched by the rise and fall of the dancers' bodies, heads and arms. It is very noticeable in Petipa's ballets, particularly in all the corps de ballet work of The Sleeping Beauty. Ashton and MacMillan adopt the same practice in their ballets which can be called classical in the court meaning of the term and whenever the music used is composed according to the formulae for classical composition. They do this even though they may break the conventions from time to time. They do it because they know the audience is watching a constantly evolving picture which is being drawn on, over, across and above a flat stage in front of a background. They know they must fill the empty space with movement, whether there is scenery in the background or where the costumes are at their simplest and the background merely a hint of some venue as, for example, in Symphonic Variations or Requiem, or even just shafts of light as in Monotones. It is useful for would-be choreographers to study the historical development of classical style so that they may stage a ballet in a traditional way when it has a story firmly linked to a particular time and place. when the members of the newly founded french academies laid down rules for all artists at |
|  <p>Key: Footprint ConEn1 Footprint ConEn2 Footprint ConEn3</p> | <p>the court of Louis XIV</p> <p>, they had to conform whether they were painters, sculptors or designers of scenery, props and tapestries. The rules stated that artistic works had to be inspired by the ancient Greek arts, be symmetrical, properly proportioned and balanced round a centre. These edicts were particularly important for all concerned in the opera-</p> |

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| | <p>ballets in which the king himself frequently appeared at the climax of the action. To prove his importance and so that his entrance was emphasised all entered in order of precedence. He was thus the focus for all performers as well as spectators. His position is now occupied by the ballerina and her partner or a soloist. It should be noted that a similar order of precedence exists in Ashton's <i>Scènes de Ballet</i> as in Petipa's <i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> which was supposed to be an evocation of a court ballet at the time of Louis XIV. However, when ballets were performed for the public, professional dancers took the place of courtiers and technical innovations had to be made. The dancers now appeared on a stage before a wide audience and the focus of their attention changed to the whole audience or to the most important performers. They had to adapt their movements to cover a larger space which was like a box with one side only being open to public gaze. They had to pay greater attention to the placing of each step and pose within the new framework. Much time was spent in the formulation of rules to lay down the alignments and <i>éaulements</i> which would best display each movement from the audience's point of view. These rules still hold good for choreographers who work in the classical medium and the wise ones never neglect them. If they do, their design loses the calm spaciousness which the style demands, no matter how fast or slow the dance. for example: by making his six dancers appear equally important in <i>Symphonic Variations</i> Ashton was the first to break away from the convention of making a ballerina the focus of attention. (He repeated this idea for the six dancers in <i>Monotones I and II</i>.) Nevertheless his choreographic plan is so designed that each movement of every dancer, whether as an individual or part of the group, is co-ordinated with the others so that it fits correctly into the overall pattern and within the space allotted by stage, wings and backcloth which - in <i>Symphonic Variations</i> - delicately echoes the curving lines of the dance. <i>Swan Lake</i> The classico-romantic ballet of Ivanov and Petipa Right: Odette's arabesque as Swan; below; Odile's arabesque as enchantress (Yvette Chauviré, Erik Bruhn; Merle Park, Rudolf Nureyev) The fact that dancers acquired more space within which to move also meant that all terre</p> |
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