

KOLAROVSKA GMIRJA, VIKTORIJA: MUSIC EDUCATION OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF BALLET PEDAGOGY AT THE SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE, FACULTY OF MUSIC

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Absztrakt

Balettpedagógia alapszakos hallgatók zeneoktatása a Szkopjei Szent Cirill és Metód Egyetem Zeneművészeti Karán

Szkopjei Szent Cirill és Metód Egyetem Zeneművészeti Karán a balettpedagógia szak, a 2010/2011-es akadémiai évben indult, klasszikus balett és kortáránc szakirányon. A képzési programok előkészítése során kiemelt figyelmet fordítottak a zenei tantárgyak leendő táncosok és táncoktatók képzésébe való bevonására. A tanulmányok első évében a zenei alapozás a Zeneelmélet kötelező tárgy kereteiben történik. A továbbiakban a hallgatóknak lehetőségük nyílik a zenetörténetet és zeneelméletet, a népzénet bemutató fakultatív tantárgyak választására. E tanulmányok keretében a zenét tágabb kulturális kontextusban, a zene- és táncművészet összefüggéseinek aspektusából ismerhetik meg.

#zeneikepzes #balettpedagogiaszkopje #zeneikarszkopje #kotelezoesvalaszthatotargyak #zeneelmelet

Абстракт

Музыкальное образование студентов бакалавриата балетной педагогики на факультете музыкального искусства Университета им. Св. Кирилла и Мефодия в Скопье

Обучение балетной педагогике (классический балет и современный танец) на факультете музыкального искусства Университета им. Св. Кирилла и Мефодия в Скопье началось в 2010/2011 учебном году. В процессе подготовки учебных программ особое внимание уделялось вопросу включённости музыкально-теоретических и исторических дисциплин в комплексное обучение будущих профессиональных танцоров и педагогов балета и современного танца. На первом курсе студенты получают базовое музыкальное образование, изучая обязательный предмет *Теория музыки*. Затем у студентов появляется возможность расширить свои знания путём самостоятельного выбора предметов из области музыкальной теории, истории и эстетики, а также музыкального фольклора, что способствует осознанию более широкого культурного контекста и взаимосвязи между музыкальным и танцевальным искусствами.

#musiceducation #balletpedagogyskopje #facultyofmusicoskopje #mandatoryandoptionalsubjects #theoryofmusic

Music education is an integral part of the overall educational process in educational institutions in the field of dance art and pedagogy. The relation between music and dance, the role of music in creating the structure and content of the dance work - miniature or large form - requires dancers, choreographers, pedagogues knowledge of music, its expressive elements, structural and stylistic features, as well as the manifestation of certain musical abilities (aural skills, sense of rhythm, emotional responses to music, musical memory). By practicing dance the motor nature of music and the musical experience that causes unconscious and conscious reactions through body movements is realized, which researchers treat as a basis for learning music further: "The two fundamental

readinesses, the wellsprings of music, are the abilities to move and to sing”.¹ Many prominent choreographers have excellent music skills, extensive knowledge in the field of music theory and history, read scores and play musical instruments.² The choreographic plans and remarks can show how much the associative perception of music has developed in many of them. For example, in the programs of Marius Petipa for the ballets “The Sleeping Beauty” and “The Nutcracker” we find the features of music such as “magnificent”, “mysterious”, “caressing music”, “iridescent”, “poetic”, “music that comes like rippling streams” and many other refined epithets and descriptions.³ Therefore, in the educational institutions in the field of dance, different music subjects are studied in one way or another, adapting to the needs and specifics of the professional activity of the dance artists, choreographers and pedagogues.⁴

Summary of dance education in Macedonia

In Macedonia there is tradition of classical ballet education, which was established after the Second World War (late 1940s - early 1950s), right after the establishment of Macedonian statehood within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Since 1970s, the State Music and Ballet Education Centre (SMBEC) “Ilija Nikolovski-Luj” in Skopje has been operating, as the leading institution for primary and secondary education of future music and ballet artists.⁵ The SMBEC secondary education students in addition to the general education subjects and the subjects from the professional profile, study the subject of piano in order to acquire basic skills of playing an instrument and through the process of playing sheet music to be acquainted with the components of music literacy and music literature. In 2000s, SMBEC opened departments for modern ballet and for traditional music and dance.⁶ Since 1990s, a number of private studies has begun to function in the field of classical ballet, as well as other dance genres, which enroll students of different ages and with different preparation. This creates diverse and heterogeneous image of potential future dancers who want to continue their professional education at higher education levels.

¹ Gordon, Edwin E. *The Aural / Visual Experience of Music Literacy. Reading and Writing Music Notation*. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2004, 9.

² Безуглая, Галина Александровна. *Музыкальный анализ в работе педагога-хореографа*. Санкт-Петербург: Издательство “Лань”, Издательство “Планета музыки”, 2015, 159-163.

³ Шавердян, Александр Исаакович, ред. *Чайковский и театр: статьи и материалы*. Москва; Ленинград: Искусство, 1940, 245-263.

⁴ As representative example can serve one of the world's leading institutions for ballet education - The Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet in St. Petersburg, which unites all three levels of education (primary, secondary and higher). The curricula at these levels can clearly show how music education is conceived, i.e. what type of music subjects are included in the curriculum as mandatory and optional and how they correspond to the basic professional determination of the future ballet artists.

⁵ Филиповска, Снежана. *Историја на балетот*. Скопје: Универзитет „Св. Кирил и Методиј“ во Скопје, 2013, 335-348.

⁶ The students at the Modern Ballet Department also study piano, while students at the Traditional Music and Dance Department study more musical subjects due to the dual nature of their professional profile - both music and dance.

Music education in the higher education of dancers

The higher education of the dancers in Macedonia started in 2010 / 2011 academic year at the Faculty of Music within the oldest state university: the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje with the opening of the study programs in ballet pedagogy (classical ballet and contemporary dance) for period of 4 years. The very fact that these programs are open at the Faculty of Music speaks about the intention of the close connection of these artistic fields present in primary and secondary ballet education to continue in higher education.

Even in the process of preparing the new study programs, special attention was paid to the inclusion of music subjects in the education of future dance artists and pedagogues, which would enable the shaping of their comprehensive professional profile: the selection of subjects, development of the syllabus, ratio of mandatory and optional subjects, and so on.

The basic music education of ballet pedagogy students at the Faculty of Music is acquired with the mandatory subject *Theory of music*, which is studied for two semesters in the first year in 2 hours per week. The syllabus is designed specifically for these students, given the specifics of their professional profile and the needs for musical knowledge: orientation in musical notation, mastery of musical terminology, aural recognition of musical phenomena, gaining a sense of form and style.

Students' profile and musical background

Graduate students in secondary ballet education are enrolled in the studies of both programs – classical ballet and contemporary dance. As we have already said, they studied the subject of piano and gained certain theoretical knowledge about the elements of musical literacy and the habits of reading musical notation. However, students who are not specialized in ballet education and whose musical preparation is part of the general education program for secondary education, can also enroll in the studies in ballet pedagogy – contemporary dance. Certain students from both programs have additional music education (primary music school, private lessons and other forms of education), but as an exception not as a rule.⁷ In that sense, all groups of the subject are heterogeneous in composition and prior knowledge.

Subject content

Traditionally, the subject Theory of music is the basis for thorough musical literacy and acquisition of knowledge about the most important elements of the musical language and the expressive elements of music. The so-called “elementary theory of music”, which is taught in primary music schools, becomes the basis on which the whole complex of music-theoretical disciplines is further studied: harmony, counterpoint, musical forms. Within the study program for ballet pedagogy, the

⁷ For example, on the artistic aspects of teacher education, see (with English abstracts): Pinczésné Palásthy, Ildikó, Fülekiné Joó, Anikó, Molnár-Tamus, Viktória, and Szabóné Fodor, Adrienne. "A jövő tanítói és a művészetek." *OXIPO: interdiszciplináris e-folyóirat* 3, no. 2 (2021): 25-44. Pinczésné Palásthy, Ildikó, Fülekiné Joó, Anikó, Molnár-Tamus, Viktória, and Szabóné Fodor, Adrienne. 2021. "A Művészeti Nevelés és a Tanítóképzés." In *Szaktudományi És Pedagógiai Tanulmányok a Világjáró Idején* edited by Karlovitz, János Tibor, 111–118.

subject *Theory of music* retains its role of introduction to the art of music through its constructive elements: musical tone, its properties, characteristics, and the principles of pitch and rhythmic organization. In addition to the contents that are essential for the subject, the program includes contents in the field of musical forms and musical styles, which puts the expressive elements of music in a broader historical context.

These content directions are actualized through the study of scales and intervals, different types of meter, including regular and irregular meters, elements of polyrhythm and polymeter, general knowledge for voices and musical instruments, types and designations of tempo, dynamics, articulation. The elements of the musical syntax and the principles of building the musical form are further studied.

Teaching methods and techniques

Teaching music theory to students whose professional background is not in the field of music and prior knowledge is often very limited and not systematized, requires careful consideration of teaching methods and techniques, classroom activities and musical examples used for aural and visual recognition of the contents being studied.

Extensive years of experience in teaching *Theory of music* by the author of this work, confirms the necessity and effectiveness of practical activities for mastering all subject contents. In addition to the standard writing exercises, piano exercises are actively used in the classes. The keyboard image helps students build variety of scales, intervals, and play familiar simple tunes by ear. The exercises for writing such melodies arouse constant interest in which students manage to discover the meter, note value, scale degree, the melodic motion and other components necessary for writing the exercises, to learn the basic principles of development – exact / varied repetition and contrast. The exercises for transposition of the already written melodies contribute to the practical understanding of the term and the role of the musical scale. Such exercises based on the method of comparison of the already known material with its modified variants adapted to the essential characteristics of the new teaching content, always give positive effects on its mastering and understanding.

In order to master the contents in the field of music theory, hearing of musical examples is of special importance with which those contents are introduced and illustrated with appropriate attention, tasks and comments. If possible, examples for listening that are familiar to students are selected i.e. familiar songs, fragments of classical ballet music and popular classical music. The constant intention is to illustrate the teaching contents and concepts with examples of ballet music known to the students. It is also important to create clear picture of the musical features of certain dance genres that students study as character or historical dances: triple meter in waltz, dotted rhythm in polonaise and mazurka, syncopation in polka, and many various dance examples. The opportunity is also used to expand their musical experience by including new musical works, which, according to the teacher, may cause aesthetic sensation, although the students do not know them. During the work, the teacher forms his / her own collection of striking and characteristic musical

examples that serve to strengthen the auditory images related to the theoretical phenomena and concepts that are studied.

Combining theoretical content, practical activities, hearing experience and visual recognition of musical language elements allows students to understand and value the art of music better, i.e. to reach the “appreciation through understanding”.⁸

Teacher competencies

When working with this specific group of students whose prior knowledge of the art of music and its theoretical basis are not always systematically shaped, the teacher should build methodical approach that will give students sense of self-confidence and positive perspective for mastering the subject content no matter how complicated it is at first glance. As already mentioned, the musical examples, which enable the students to build on their previous experience and activate the hearing of the phenomena that are studied from theoretical point of view are crucial. The principle of “for / towards music through music” becomes guide in almost all classes.

In addition to the professional competencies related to theoretical teaching, the teacher should play the piano well, having extensive and diverse repertoire of works from different genres and eras that can serve, as examples of certain theoretical phenomena and concepts. The teacher also should know how to improvise, vary and adjust the music to compare and distinguish the necessary features, quickly to orient during the class and respond to emerging needs for demonstrate musical examples that were not planned. Experience shows that the “live” performance of the teacher leaves special impression on the students, bringing them closer to music and creating artistic dimension of the class. The reactions of the students are always positive as in these moments they feel the teacher as “art colleague” who rules and demonstrates mastery in his / her profession.

Online teaching during pandemic

Same as other educational institutions, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and the Faculty of Music as an integral part had to adapt to the conditions of online teaching through different learning platforms. Of course, the absence of direct contact with students complicates the teaching process, but the possibilities of video conferencing platforms still give the “presence effect”, i.e. community in the virtual “classroom” in which the usual teaching activities take place and the program contents are mastered smoothly. Part of the planned time in the winter semester of the academic year 2020/21 was provided for kind of “extracurricular activities” dedicated to the celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth by following the ballet performances of his music and discussion for choreographic approach. In addition to being acquainted with the biographical data and the work of the composer, as well as the principles of musical forms and genres of works, served as the basis and inspiration for ballet creation.

⁸ Gordon, Edwin E. *Learning Sequences in Music. Skill, Content and Patterns. A Music Learning Theory*. 2003 Edition. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2003, 31-33.

Conclusion

It is understandable that the conditions of the Faculty of Music cannot be compared with educational institutions in the countries with long artistic and educational tradition in the field of dance. With the relatively small number of students and the expensive cost of art studies, the tendency to optimize the number of courses is inevitable. On the other hand, the implementation of the educational needs is realized by expanding the course contents, which give the students a starting point and opportunity for further in-depth study of specialized elective courses in the field of history, theory and aesthetics of music, as well as music folklore. The classroom activities for the mandatory and optional subjects, as well as the participation in joint performance projects with the students from the music programs contribute to the understanding of the wider cultural context and the correlation between the music and dance art necessary for the successful professional action of the future dancers, choreographers and pedagogues.

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