

# CHARACTER DANCE GENRE IN THE CREATIVE WORK OF BALLET MASTER M. PETIPA AND BALLET ART EDUCATION

Katrīne Martinsone-Škapare

University of Latvia, Latvia

## ABSTRACT

This research delves into the historical development of the character dance genre in ballet education. By analyzing ballet literature from Latvia and Europe published over the past decade, the study aims to create a theoretical outline of character dance history. This will provide a wider understanding of the genre and serve as a professional teaching tool for academic dance performers and pedagogues. The research focuses on French ballet master M. Petipa's contribution to the development of ballet art, particularly his character dance "writing" as a means of enriching the choreographical language of classical ballet. The study also examines the interpretation of foreign dance elements and movement composition in classical dance. The enduring value of M. Petipa's classical ballet works, including Pharaoh's Daughter, Don Quixote, Bayadere, The Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker, Swans' Lake, and Raymonda, are reviewed in the study. The research identifies essential pedagogical principles for the development of ballet education, including the consideration of character dance genre. Ultimately, this study will provide a methodical learning material of a historical period for the professional growth of character dance ballet performers and to preserve M. Petipa's legacy in classical ballet culture.

**Keywords:** *ballet education, character dance, classical ballet, divertissements, M. Petipa.*

## Introduction

The focus of this research is the historical development of the character dance genre in ballet education. Character dance is a fundamental aspect of classical ballet training for professional dancers. Unfortunately, some enthusiasts and professionals mistakenly classify it as non-national stage dance. This article aims to provide a clear definition of character dance and its current status. The research draws from recent scientific articles, professional ballet literature, and classical ballet works. We analyzed examples from the "Golden Ballet Age" of French ballet master M. Petipa's creative work, drawing on content from articles and books. Petipa's works are a permanent cultural treasure in ballet theaters worldwide. Preserving classical ballet heritage is a crucial issue each year.

The professional development of the next generation of ballet artists depends on the latest, scientifically-based educational content program. It is essential to provide professional and visual materials for a complete understanding of the character dance genre, with classical ballet examples.

## Methodology

After conducting a thorough search for current literature on character dance, it became clear that there was not a lot of material available on this specific topic. To address this, I decided to broaden my search to include materials related to classical ballet that referenced character dance. My research included a review of articles published in Central Europe and Latvia Summar from 2013 onwards, as well as the most current dance literature in Latvia. I utilized databases such as Web of Science, JSTOR, Taylor & Francis, Oxford Academic, and Cambridge Core to gather information for my analysis. To narrow down my results, I set specific search criteria to look for publicly available articles published in Europe and Latvia since 2013, using keywords such as M. Petipa, classical ballet, and character dance. This search yielded 47 results, 9 of which provided in-depth discussions on the development of ballet and M. Petipa's work as a ballet master and author of classical ballets, with mentions of two or more ballets.

In general, the articles (Table 1) provide a broad and generalized insight into the development of dance history and the first performance of the opera ballet "Galant's Europe", the meaning of the mentioned situation dances. Dance innovation and divertissement structure, speaking of *d'action* – action dance and character dance (Dartois-Lapeyre, McGowan, 2015). Great emphasis was placed on the development of the plot of the ballet in the articles, (Spalva, 2015). The creation of the ballet choreographic system notation (N. Sergeev), thanks to which M. Petipa's ballet heritage has been preserved in the original choreography even today (Guthrie, 2015). The topic of one article was copyrights in the works of choreographers. Giving the example of the 1858 ballet "Corsair" whose copyrights today would be challenged and called plagiarism by modifying another's work (Yeoh, 2013). M. Petipa's *Pas d'action* ballets were analyzed: The Sleeping Beauty, Giselle (chor: Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot), Pahita (chor: Mazilier), Corsair, Pharaoh's Daughter, Bayadère, Raymond (Fullington, 2017). M. Petipa's collaboration with the Italian virtuoso ballet artist E. Checetti at the St. Petersburg Ballet Theater, emphasizing the bright performance of the leading roles. Preparation of professional ballet dancers in the structure of a ballet training class, preserving the virtuosity and traditions of Italian ballet performance (Murray, 2017). Most of the articles analyze the context of the national dance, the flourishing of the Spanish dance form in the works of M. Petipa, mentioning the ballet Don Quixote as one of the examples (Maltsev, et al., 2020, Bonnin-Arias, Arostegui, Colomer-Sánchez, 2021 Joyce, 2016).

**Table 1** Author

Author	Year	Scientific article
Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre, Margaret M. McGowan	2015	A Multi-Layered Analysis of Dancing in Eighteenth-Century French Opera
Kate Guthrie	2015	Awakening “Sleeping Beauty”: the creation of national ballet in Britain
Rita Spalva	2015	Ballet art Reforms During the Enlightenment
Francis Yeoh	2013	Choreographers’ moral right of integrity
Doug Fullington	2017	Finding the Balance: Pantomime and Dance in Ratmansky’s New/Old Sleeping Beauty
Melonie Buchanan Murray	2017	Maestro: Enrico Cecchetti and Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes
Anton V. Maltsev, Dmitriy K. Rudachenko, Svetlana A. Rusinova, Fatima Mayumi Tolenaida Sakamoto de Miasnikov	2020	System approach as a methodological basis in research on teaching ballet art
Patricia Bonnin-Arias, Juan Arturo Rubio Arostegui, Ana Colomer-Sánchez	2021	Spanish ballet school: nationalism, the weakness of bourgeois culture and heteronomy in the artistic field in Spain in the nineteenth century
Dan Joyce	2016	The Original Nutcracker Ballet: A Hidden Allegory by Margaret Fleming-Markarian

Nadine Meisner’s book can be highlighted as one of the latest (2019) and most accessible materials “Marius Petipa: the emperor’s ballet master”. This provides an opportunity to explore the life of M. Petipa, spanning from childhood to old age. In the creative and professional growth of a ballet master in a systematized sequence. M. Petipa Ballet soul paths in search of perfection. This work gave the widest insight into the creation of the ballet behind the scenes, cooperation with composers, choice of dancers and wishes of ballet lovers.

The most current books in Latvia provide a broad insight into the development of ballet in Europe (Spalva, 2013. Spalva, 2018) and Latvia, which gives ballet culture a chance to enrich knowledge (Čeže, Leimane, Treice, 2022). It is regrettable that we do not have available more extensive literature on the character dance genre.

The character dance genre, as a means of expressing national identity, has come to the fore in Russia (Meisner, 2019) when paying tribute to M. Petipa’s 200th anniversary in 2018. As a result, scientific articles, theses and discussions on the significance of M. Petipa’s “Golden Age” creative heritage have been prepared today (Чернышова-Мельник, 2022). Content analysis was used for subjective interpretation of M. Petipa’s ballet data analysis materials (Mārtinsons, K., Pipere, A., et al., 2021).

## Results

### **Character dance (Deutsch: Charaktertanz, Français: Danse de caractère, Русский: характерный танец) a dance genre in classical ballet**

Character dance is contrasted with noble or academic dance and associated with different nationalities or people character portrayals in dance. Historically, character dances

were considered a part of classical ballet, and the pure dance form is only seen in ballet performances. Character dance manifests special beauty in the dance style, the character of the dance in combination with the expressiveness of music. Character dances include not only the technical side of the performance, the dancer's ability to convey a folk dance, but also gives the opportunity to reveal the personality of the performer, to express one's feelings and richness of emotional soul, as well as interest in the dance life of other nations (Martinsone-Škapare, 2018).

The genre of character dance, theoretical knowledge of movement elements, stages of historical development are learned at "National Arts High School" Riga Ballet School in Latvia. Obtaining the professional qualification of a ballet artist. The curriculum for the character dance genre is very comprehensive and lasts for 4 years (8 sems.). More attention is paid to the academic performance of character dance movements in the first semesters of training. Creating students' understanding of the nature, manner and style of movement. Aspiring ballet artists are introduced to the academic performance of movements, which includes a large amount of essential knowledge. For example, the movements and names of classical dance form the alphabet of ballet art, which is also used in character dance for learning. The names of classical dance (even today) are derived from the French language. The names of character dance movements have sometimes kept their vernacular roots and their translation is impossible, so in several cases the authentic names of other nations are preserved. Character dance movements have developed naturally and essentially because the classical dance was also historically formed from the elements of the folk dance. The slow, flowing movements of character dances are closer to classical dance, but the fast movements are mostly characteristic of character dances (Martinsone-Škapare, 2018).

In character dances, the movements of the hands create the impression of spaciousness, the movements of the feet are supplemented with extended ones (*en dehors*) and inverted (*en dedans*). Both of these techniques are used in dance stage etudes. The freedom of the body in the choice of movements preserves the rules of classical dance. In classical dance, the principle of "stretched toes" is also preserved in character dance, but not so strictly in shape. Many movements of character dance are made without straightening the knees, so as not to lose the characteristic of the movement along with the appeal of the dance character. The five leg positions of classical dance are preserved, only without the inherent leg expansion. Complementing the foot positions with two inverted and five parallel (Лопухов, Ширяев, Бочаров, 1939).

The classic squat – *plié* is used in a slightly more complicated way in the character dance. The use of *plié* in the character dance is wider and richer. The classical dance rule – "slow half fingers" – *relevé* performance is not observed. Contrary to classical dance, character dances emphasize *plié* extension. The big squat – *grand-plié* is the basic movement for the deep squat of the characteristic dance. In classical dance *plié* and *relevé* is performed calmly and flexibly, but in character dances these movements are performed quickly, emphasizing the character of the dance rapidity. In a methodically well-formed character dance lesson, the calm and flexible *plié* and *relevé* always connects with the rapid *plié*.

Let's not dwell especially on the classic – open (*effacee*) and closed (*croisee*) postures, which are characteristic for each movement and there is no need to emphasize their role in character dance. We can conclude from historical sources the special passion of several ballet masters in using a certain pose, for example the frequently used pose – *croisee*.

Body position with *epaulement* is more common in character dances than in classical dance. The dancer's body, like the dancer's head, is given more freedom in character dance than in classical dance. In character dance you can tilt your head back and forth or change the direction from one to the other with a rapid movement from one side to the other side, use head movement for fast turns. Pronounced and characteristic head movements are typical for the dances of Uzbeks, Armenians and many eastern peoples (Лопухов, Ширяев, Бочаров, 1939, Martinsone-Škapare, 2018).

In character dance, the principles and rules of body and hand movement remain the same as in classical dance. (Elements: *plié*, *battement tendu*, *battement tendu jeté*, *rond de jambe par terre*, *flic-flac*, *diferent footworks*, *pas tortille*, *retiré*, *battement fondu*, *battement développé*, *grand battement jeté*.)

The dancer should pay special attention to the back, which characterizes the performance manner of nation. In character dance we come across the concept of “unstraightened or unstretched body” which is denied and not used in classical dance. In the daily life of character dance, we come across poses, movements that ignore classical dances canons (Martinsone-Škapare, 2018).

The technical possibilities of character dances are wide. Leg movements are not just limits creating an image. It takes the functioning of the body in the complex and interesting process. That's why the combinations of movements are more and more often created, supplemented with new hand, head and body movements in character dance. The body posture plays a big role in dance, which allows us to judge the character, belonging and stylistic of a particular dance direction.

The evolution of the character dance genre was born in moments when the dancer's body and hands began to search for a lot more natural expression and states. In the first characters, they tried to create an image, but the legs continued mechanically repeat classical movements (Лопухов А, Ширяев, Бочаров, 1939, Martinsone-Škapare, 2018, Lee, 2002).

Classical dance often uses “high half toes”, but in character dances everyday use both “high” and “low” half toes, when the heel is only slightly raised from the floor. In rare cases we see dances with technically complex movements on the fingers, for example, in the Caucasian national dances, performed by men. Character dance brought a special touch to the ballet's imagery, contributing to the performance contrasts and, therefore, dramatic saturation (Spalva, 2018).

## **Ballet master M. Petipa ballets**

The creator of this work has included Table 2-Table 8, which display notable examples of character dances in classical ballet. This table serves as a helpful tool for explaining

the concept of character dance and can also be used for visual aid in teaching. Renowned for his selection of vibrant and dazzling ballet works, French ballet master M. Petipa's productions showcase the virtuosity of character dance and feature magnificent choreography of its characters and imagery. The technical demands of these ballets require dancers with a high level of training and excellent pedagogical experience to properly transfer their knowledge. Based on practical skills of the dance genre, Petipa's ballets create an exceptional spectacle on stage.

### La Fille du pharaon, The Pharaoh's Daughter

The theme of Egypt is beautifully portrayed in the ballet Pharaoh's Daughter, as English Lord Wilson dreams of the exotic land. The ballet dancer's movements are highlighted with dominant oriental motifs, showcasing stylized Egyptian and Tibetan gestures. The dance also incorporates elegant fragments with fans and stylized oriental hand movements, enhancing the overall experience. The second act "Grand Pas of Rivers, Streams, and Sources" (*Grand Pas des fleuves, ruisseaux, et sources*) variation with national – dance motifs (Meisner, 2019).

**Table 2** The Pharaoh's Daughter

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>La Fille du pharaon, The Pharaoh's Daughter</b> Ballet in three acts and nine scenes, with a prologue and epilogue
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1862</b> , 30th January [O.S. 18th January] Imperial Bolshoi Kamenny Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa</b>
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Cesare Pugni <b>Libretto</b> by Jules Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Marius Petipa <b>Decor</b> by Heinrich Wagner (Prologue, scene 1; Act 1, scene 1; Act 2, scene 2, Act 3, scene 1) and Andrei Roller (Prologue, scene 2; Act 1, scene 2; Act 2, scene 1; Act 3, scenes 2 and 3) <b>Costumes</b> by Philippe Calver and Alexei Stoliarov
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Carolina Rosati (Princess Aspacia), Marius Petipa (Lord Wilson/Taor), Timofei Stukolkin (John Bull/Passifont), Nikolai Golts (Pharaoh)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 2. Divertissements: the Tiber in the style of a <i>tarantella</i> ; the Huang-he or Yellos River "Chinese girl"; the Rhine, steady steps of the Austrian <i>Länder</i> ; the Thames, a <i>pizzicato</i> dance; the Guadalquivir, echoing a <i>bolero</i> ; the Neva the rhythms of a <i>trepak</i>

### Don Quixote

In the ballet Don Quixote, Spanish temperament and coloring are revealed in the movements. In character dance lessons, great emphasis is placed on Spanish hand positions, hand positions and their transitions (*port de bras*). For an extended walk on the *demi plié*, for the dexterity of the feet – elements of *zapoteado* strikes, *pas de basque*, *balansé*, *glissade*, *sissonne pas de bourrée*.

**Table 3** Don Quixote

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>Don Quixote</b> Ballet in four acts and eight scenes	Ballet in five acts and eleven scenes
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1869</b> , 26th December [O.S. 14th December] Imperial Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow	<b>1871</b> , 21st November [O.S. 9th November] Imperial Bolshoi Kamenny Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa</b>	Revised version
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Ludwig Minkus <b>Libretto</b> by Marius Petipa, after Cervantes <b>Decor</b> by Pavel Isakov (Act 1, scenes 1 and 2), Ivan Shengin (Act 2, scene 3, Act 3, scene 5 and Act 4, Scene 8) and Fedor Shenian (Act 2, scene 4; Act 3, scenes 6 and 7)	
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Wilhelm Vanner (Don Quixote), Anna Sobeshchanskaya (Kitri), Sergei Sokolov (Basilio),	Timofei Stukolkin (Don Quixote), Alexandra Vergina (Kitri/Dulcinea), Lev Ivanov (Basil)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Spain. Virtuoso imitation of Spanish and Gypsy movements and styles ( <i>seguidilla, morena zingara</i> )	

## La Bayadère

The oriental charm of Royal India unfolds with the conclusion of a pure classical dance in the view of the Kingdom of Shadows in the ballet “La Bayadère”. The character dance genre is in the performance of characters (dance character) and movements in this ballet.

**Table 4** La Bayadère

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>La Bayadère</b> Ballet in four acts and seven scenes, with apotheosis
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1877</b> , 4th February [O.S. 23rd January] Imperial Bolshoi Kamenny Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa</b>
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Ludwig Minkus <b>Libretto</b> by Marius Petipa and Sergei Khudekov <b>Decor</b> by Mikhail Bocharov (Act 1, scene 1), Matvei Shishkov (Act 1, scene 2 and Act 2), Ivan Andreyev (Act 3, scenes 1 and 3), Heinrich Wagner (Act 3, scene 2) and Andrei Roller (Act 4 and apotheosis) <b>Costumes</b> by Ivan Panov
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Ekaterina Vazem (Nikiya), Lev Ivanov (Solor), Maria Gorshenkova (Gamzatti), Nikolai Golts (Great Brahmin), Christian Johansson (Rajah Dugmanta)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 2. Grand Divertissements: <i>Danse des esclaves, Valse éventails,</i> <i>Valse des perroquets, Danse pour quatre bayadères, Danse manu,</i> <i>Pas indien</i>



## La Belle au bois dormant, The Sleeping Beauty

In the ballet “The Sleeping Beauty,” fairy-tale characters are portrayed through the European cultural traditions of the Baroque period. The Polish polonaise, a style of academic Polish dance, is also incorporated into the performance. During the learning process, dancers are taught proper hand positions and movements, including wavy hand movements., “keys”, *pas balancé*, *cabriole*, *pas boité*, *pas golubec*, *pas balancé*, *pas de bourree*.

**Table 5** The Sleeping Beauty

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>La Belle au bois dormant, The Sleeping Beauty</b> Ballet-féerie in three acts, with a prologue
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1890</b> , 15th January [O.S. 3rd January] Imperial Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa</b>
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky <b>Libretto</b> by Ivan Vsevolozhsky, after Charles Perrault <b>Decor</b> by Heinrich Levogt (Prologue), Mikhail Bocharov (Act II, Scene 1; with Ivan Andreyev, Act I), Konstantin Ivanov (Act II, Scene2) and Matvei Shishkov (Act III and Apotheosis) <b>Costumes</b> by Ivan Vsevolozhsky
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Carlotta Brianza (Aurora), Pavel Gerdt (Prince Desiré), Marie Petipa (Lilac Fairy), Enrico Cecchetti (Carabosse/ The Bluebird), Varvara Nikitina (Princess Florine)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 3. Polish polonaise

## Casse-Noisette, The Nutcracker

The interaction of European culture with “guests from far corners of the world” takes place in the Nutcracker ballet”. The divertissement in classical ballet usually consists of a suite of character dances (Spalva, 2013). Divertissements: Spanish Hot Chocolate, Arabian Coffee, Chinese Tea, Russian Candy Cane is an integral dance fragment in the curriculum of the final year of the character dance genre.

**Table 6** The Nutcracker

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>Casse-Noisette, The Nutcracker</b> Ballet-féerie in two acts and three scenes
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1892</b> , 18th December [O.S. 6th December] Imperial Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov</b>
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky <b>Libretto</b> by Marius Petipa, after E. T. A. Hoffmann <b>Decor</b> by Konstantin Ivanov and Mikhail Bocharov <b>Costumes</b> by Ivan Vsevolozhsky and Evgenii Ponomarev
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Antonietta Dell’Era (Sugar Plum Fairy), Pavel Gerdt (Prince Coqueluche), Sergei Legat (Nutcracker), Timofei Stukolkin (Drosselmeyer), Georgii Kiaksht (Harlequin), Olga Preobrazhenskaya (Columbine)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 2. Divertissements: Spanish Hot Chocolate, Arabian Coffee, Chinese Tea, Russian Candy Cane



## Le Lac des Cygnes, Swan Lake

Ballet Swan Lake reveals the character of the image, the symbolic meaning of the movement, the contrast of colours, the glorification of academic dance. Example: dynamic development in the ballet was achieved with a suite of character dances – Spanish, Venetian – *tarantella*, Hungarian *czardash* and Polish *mazurka*. The nationalities of the mentioned dances are learned throughout all stages of study.

**Table 7** Swan Lake

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>Le Lac des Cygnes, Swan Lake</b> Ballet fantastique in three acts and four scenes
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1877</b> 4th March [O.S. 20th February] Imperial Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow <b>1895</b> <b>Première of Petipa and Ivanov's revival</b> 27th January [O.S. 15th January] Imperial Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Julius Reisinger</b> <b>Marius Petipa</b> (Act I, Scene 1; Act II) <b>Lev Ivanov</b> (Act I, Scene 2; Act III)
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky <b>Libretto</b> by Vladimir Begichev, edited by Modeste Tchaikovsky <b>Decor</b> by Ivan Andreyev (Act 1, scene 1), Mikhail Bocharov (Act 1, scene 2, Act 3, Apotheosis) and Heinrich Levogt (Act 2) <b>Costumes</b> by Evgeni Ponomarev
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Pierina Legnani (Odette/Odile), Pavel Gerdt (Siegfried), Alexei Bulgakov (Rothbart)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 2. Spanish Dance, Hungarian Czardas, Neapolitan dance, Poland Mazurka

## Raymonda

Ballet Raymonde discovers French Provence with visiting Saracens from the Iberian Peninsula. Ethnographic color and folklore dances. On the one hand, the Christian Latin civilization, on the other, the Eastern Muslim culture, and on the third, Eastern Europe – Hungary. This conflict of dramaturgy can be seen in the genres of character dance and classical dance in the ballet (Spalva, 2013). The elements of the Hungarian academic character dance genre, sequences of movements and performance of mannerisms are learned throughout the course of study.

**Table 8** Raymonda

<b>Ballet</b>	<b>Raymonda</b> Grand ballet in three acts and four scenes
<b>World Premiere</b>	<b>1898</b> , 19th January [O.S. 7th January] Imperial Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg
<b>Choreography</b>	<b>Marius Petipa</b>
<b>Music, Libretto, Decor, Costumes</b>	<b>Music</b> by Alexander Glazunov <b>Libretto</b> by Countess Lydia Pashkova <b>Decor</b> by Oreste Allegri, Pyotr Lambin and Konstantin Ivanov <b>Costumes</b> by Ivan Vsevolozhsky and Evgenii Ponomarev
<b>Principal dancers</b>	Pierina Legnani (Raymonda), Pavel Gerdt (Abderrakhman), Sergei Legat (Jean de Brienne), Olga Preobrazhenskaya (Henriette), Klavdia Kulichevskaya (Clémence), Nikolai Legat (Béranger), Georgii Kiaksht (Bernard)
<b>Character dances/ Divertissements</b>	Act 2. Dance of the Saracens Act 3. Grand pas Hungarian

For example: Act 2 Dance of the Saracens. The classical dance – *pas de basque* (Basque step) is used in the creation of the dance. The classical structure of the *pas de basque* is slightly altered, as the leg movements are not as extensive. The movements of hands, head and body do not follow the classical canons: the body is bent forward, the back is bent or slouched back, moving the shoulders forward in turn. One hand of the performer is raised above the head with the palm turned upwards, while the other hand is slightly moved back. The movement of the hands from one position to another is not performed by principles of classical dance.

After the *pas de basque* in the dance, the dancer performs a *pas de bourree* (unexpected change of legs “at a gallop”) on the spot. The nature of the movement is completely changed: the feet are placed parallel to each other and the *pas de bourree* is performed in the profile. These small details were introduced not by M. Petipa, but by the performers themselves, who adapted these movements to the requirements of time and “convenience” of performance. Hence the process of transformation or “rewriting” of the dance continues throughout the life of the scene.

## Discussion

The enduring legacy of French ballet master Marius Petipa is being honored by the ballet community on his 205th anniversary. His timeless works continue to captivate audiences and will undoubtedly remain popular for years to come. The Latvian National Opera and Ballet Theater’s upcoming 2022/2023 season is a testament to his enduring influence, featuring beloved productions such as *Swan Lake*, *La Bayadère*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, *Corsair*, and *The Nutcracker*. Despite the passing of time, the value of classical ballet heritage remains as strong as ever in European and world theaters.

Character dance is an important genre often included in ballet performances alongside classical dance. The works of M. Petipa, scientific articles, and ballet literature clearly demonstrate its presence and definition in ballet culture. It is essential to pass on this value to future generations of ballet dancers, nurturing and upholding traditions. In addition to character dance, it is vital to continue exploring other aspects of ballet education such as the pedagogical conceptual model of character dance in ballet education, education for dance team managers and choreographers, and the interaction of character dance in non-national stage dance choreography. Learning the elements and methods of creating a dance composition are the primary didactic tasks of the character dance genre. There is still much to learn and improve in this genre, and it offers valuable lessons.

## Conclusion

In order to preserve the heritage of classical ballet traditions, the character dance genre coexists in the ballet performance. It is an integral part of ballet culture and education, for the professional development of ballet dancers.

However, in classical ballet, the character dance is forced to depart from the authenticity of the folk dance, thus unifying the national style, subjecting it to certain ballet requirements. For more insight into the teaching methodology, it would be necessary to analyze other scientific articles, books (of a wider time frame, including a wider geographical amplitudes) and presentation of conclusions. In character dance ballet education, artistic individuality is revealed from several aspects, on the one side, the interpretation of the choreographer's idea, on the other side, the dancer's personality, image and emotions, and on the third side, the emotional fulfillment of the ballet viewer.

## REFERENCES

- Bonnin-Arias, P., Arostegui, J. A. R., Colomer-Sanchez, A. (2021). Spanish ballet school: nationalism, the weakness of bourgeois culture and heteronomy in the artistic field in Spain in the nineteenth century. Retrieved from <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/full-record/WOS:000679591700001>
- Čeže, M., Leimane, L., Treice, I. (2022). Gadsimts vai viens mirklis? Latvijas baleta 100 [A century or a moment? Latvian Ballet's 100th] Rīga.
- Dartois-Lapeyre, F., Mcgowan, M. M. (2015). A Multi-Layered Analysis of Dancing in Eighteenth-Century French Opera. Retrieved from <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/full-record/WOS:000364914500003>
- Fullington, D. (2017). Finding the Balance: Pantomime and Dance in Ratmanský's New/Old Sleeping Beauty. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/41134212/New\\_Life\\_for\\_Character\\_and\\_Story\\_in\\_Ratmanskys\\_SleepingBeauty\\_a\\_single\\_chapter\\_of\\_a\\_title\\_in\\_Oxford\\_Handbooks\\_Online\\_for\\_personal\\_use\\_for\\_details\\_see\\_Privacy\\_Policy\\_and\\_Legal\\_Notice](https://www.academia.edu/41134212/New_Life_for_Character_and_Story_in_Ratmanskys_SleepingBeauty_a_single_chapter_of_a_title_in_Oxford_Handbooks_Online_for_personal_use_for_details_see_Privacy_Policy_and_Legal_Notice)
- Guthrie, K. (2015). Awakening "Sleeping beauty": the creation of national ballet in Britain. Retrieved from <https://academicoupcom.datubazes.lanet.lv/ml/article/96/3/418/1180340?searchresult=1>
- Joyce, D. (2016). The Original Nutcracker Ballet: A Hidden Allegory by Margaret Fleming-Markarian. Retrieved from <https://www-tandfonline-com.datubazes.lanet.lv/doi/full/10.1080/10588167.2016.1235920>
- Lee, K. (2002). Ballet in Western Culture: A History of Its Origins and Evolution. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

- Maltsev, A. V., Rudachenko, D. K., Rusinova, S. A., Miasnikov, F. (2020). System approach as a methodological basis in research on teaching ballet art. Retrieved from <https://revistainclusiones.org/index.php/inclu/article/view/1678>
- Martinsone-Škapare, K. (2018). Raksturdejas [Character dance]. Retrieved from <https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/4826-raksturdeja>
- Mārtinsone, K., Pipere, A., et al. (2021). Zinātniskās darbības metodoloģija: starpdisciplināra perspektīva [Methodology of scientific activity; interdisciplinary perspective]. Rīga: Rīgas Stradiņa universitāte.
- Meisner's, N. (2019). Marius Petipa: the emperor's ballet master, Oxford University Press
- Murray, M. B. (2017). Maestro: Enrico Cecchetti and Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Retrieved from <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/fullrecord/WOS:000404589400002>
- Spalva, R. (2013). Klasiskā deja un balets Eiropas kultūrā [Classical dance and ballet in European culture]. Rīga: Zinātne.
- Spalva, R. (2015). Ballet art Reforms During the Enlightenment. Retrieved from <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/full-record/WOS:000380611400042>
- Spalva, R. (2018). Dejas kompozīcija [Dance composition]. Rīga: Zinātne.
- Yeoh, F. (2013). Choreographers' moral right of integrity. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275283366\\_Choreographers'\\_moral\\_right\\_of\\_integrity](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275283366_Choreographers'_moral_right_of_integrity)
- Лопухов, А., Ширяев, А., Бочаров, А. (1939). Основы характерного танца [Fundamentals of Character Dance]. Л.-М. Искусство.
- Чернышова-Мельник, Н. (2022). Мариус Петипа: В плену у Терпсихоры [Marius Petipa: Captured by Terpsichore]. Москва: Новое литературное обозрение.

### About Author

The author of this passage is **Katrīne Martinsone-Škapare**. She graduated from Riga Choreography High School and is a professional ballet dancer. She obtained both a professional bachelor's and master's degree in Choreography from Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLMA). Her professional experience has allowed her to work at Riga Academy of Pedagogy and Management and JVLMA for many years. Since 2006, she has been teaching classical dance and non-national stage dance at the Latvian Academy of Culture Latvian College of Culture.