

Complete name of the student essay sample

[Art & Culture](#), [Dance](#)



Complete Name of the Professor

Overview of the Romantic Ballet

Historically, the nineteenth century ballet is perhaps the landmark in the history of dance. This is the product and culmination of the innovations and discoveries in the later part of eighteenth century which then brought together the different elements in ballet. This has been crystallized and formed of what is a classical ballet of today. The Romantic ballet period occurred mainly in Paris London. Romantic ballet has different characteristics and qualities.

The Romantic ballet, was to the dance world, a nineteenth century phenomenon. It brings a different and a whole new era of dance as it was full of other worldly creatures, white tulle as well as romantic love. Also in Romantic ballet, the ballerina has achieved a heightened status and in fact became the focal point when it comes choreography. Romantic ballerinas' movement style was one which is characterized by soft, rounded arms, in the upper body, a forward tilt and when it comes to leg movements, it is more elaborate. During this period, there was a decline in the male dancers and that they were just use as a support in holding the ballerina whilst on pointe. Another important feature in Romantic ballet is the costume - a shorter Victorian dresses, Belle Tutu. These tutus are representations of the fashion trends during this period wherein they are intended for the presentations where it was cut short, right beyond ankles' length so the audience are able to catch sight of the movements of the feet. Also pointe work was utilized for the reason that the realistic story line and using pointe work would make it appear far from reality and fairy-like.

Although romantic ballet may seem to focus on the characteristic of ballerina and her elevated status, what is more relevant in this era is the cultural elements being mirrored with it. What influenced the themes of ballets during this era was the ideas of Romanticism which originally came from art and literature. Ideas for these ballets include the struggle between man and nature and the society and supernatural realm (Simpson n. p).

Although 1830s and 1840s were a time of growth and great industrial development in France and where socialism was rapidly spreading, this is also the era where revolutions took place. Although not much in France, revolutions were far more rampant in Britain, where workers sought reform within the system.

These revolutions and reform movement provided more political and social power to bourgeoisie. It was also during this era that Romanticism arose as a reaction to an excessive rationalism of the Enlightenment. This was the consequence of the French revolution's rejection of the aristocratic social and political norms.

Romanticism transformed the society's poetry, drama, painting, sculpture as well as ballet. All these were deeply connected with the social and political condition during this time. Arts and literature echo the fears, hopes and aspirations of the people.

The same is true with the themes reflected in the ballets created at this time. The themes dealt with issues of good versus evil, man versus nature and society versus supernatural. An example of this is ballerina Marie Taglioni in the ballet *La Sylphide*, a supernatural creature of the winds and woods. A mortal man wants her to become a real woman by employing a

magic scarf but on the process, only made her loose her wings and strength. It is a story of an impossible love between human and those in the spiritual realm (Bedinghaus n. p.). Another popular piece is Giselle. It told a story of a peasant girl who wants to protect the one she loves from a group of evil spirits.

Romantic ballet is also known for its advancement in stage lighting. Stage lighting was no longer by candlelight. Instead what was used during this era was gas lighting. Employing this would allow some creative effects on the stage by allowing dim lights for certain parts of the performance and highlighting some parts like the appearance of supernatural beings. They used gaslights to also make it look like the moon which is linked to supernatural beings as used in fairytale stories.

In addition, the combination of romantic tutu and the pointe shoe, wires were being used by directors to make it seem like ballerinas were flying in the air. And when it comes to the development of the technique of dancing on points, it increased the importance of the dancers or ballerinas. Although it was still very basic, there was that effect of lightness and gentleness as if the performer is floating above the stage.

Since nineteenth century was marked as an era of Romanticism - an artistic and intellectual movement, it would not be hard to understand and interconnect how the different art forms inform and influence each other.

The works of literature, painting, architecture, sculpture, music, dance and ballet stressed strong emotion, imagination, freedom, rebellion against social conventions and many more. Their themes are common which would include: deepened appreciation of the beauties of nature, emphasis on

imagination, obsessive interest in folk culture, a turning in upon the self and an examination of human personalities and potentialities (Brians n. p.).

What is noteworthy is the fact that Romanticism and the elements that it contributed to make it phenomenon are still existing within society and is the very reason why the ballets produced during this period still has a great influence today and have become classical norms.

Work Cited Page

Bedinghaus, T. (tarih yok). Famous Ballets. July 08, 2015 About: http://dance.about.com/od/reviewsandrecommendation1/a/La_Sylphide.htm

Brians, P. (2004, October 01). Romanticism. July 08, 2015 Washington State University: http://public.wsu.edu/~brians/hum_303/romanticism.html

Simpson, C. (tarih yok). Dance 100: Ballet. July 08, 2015 Emilyboss. Weebly: <http://emilyboss.weebly.com/romantic-ballet.html>