

Basic Characteristics and Body Aesthetics Analysis of Modern Dance

Du Chen

National Academy of Dance of Rome, Rome, 00153, Italy

Abstract: *Modern dance has a profound influence on the exploration and practice of body aesthetics, which embodies the dancer's personality and emotion in many ways, such as movement expression, music coordination, stage performance, emotional narrative, body language and improvisation. Through these ways, dancers can integrate their emotions and personalities into their dance performances, so that the audience can better understand and feel the artistic charm of dance. The value and significance of modern dance are also reflected in many aspects, such as free expression of emotions, innovation and exploration, better physical and mental health, greater aesthetic concepts, and wider social influence. As a unique art form, modern dance provides people with rich spiritual and cultural experience, which is worthy of our in-depth appreciation and exploration.*

Keywords: *modern dance; basic characteristics; body aesthetics*

1. Introduction

As an important genre of dance art in the 20th century, modern dance has had a profound impact on the dance world with its unique artistic expressions and aesthetic concepts ^[1]. It not only challenges the norms and restrictions of traditional dance, but also reflects new understanding and expression in terms of body aesthetics. The basic characteristics of modern dance can be analyzed from many aspects, and its significant features include opposing the mechanical, stagnant and rigid performance of traditional classical ballet and pursuing the aesthetic value of greater freedom and individuality. In modern dance, dancers express their emotions through body movements and freely express their real emotions, which also reflects modern dance's focus on individual emotions. In addition, modern dance does not stick to fixed dance movements and forms, but pays more attention to the expression and connotation of emotions. Its creation and performance are also more influenced by modern society and culture, and closely related to the living condition and aesthetic demand of modern people. The following is an analysis of the basic characteristics of modern dance and body aesthetics.

2. The origin and development of modern dance

The origin of modern dance can be traced back to the West in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when classical ballet began to decline and the traditions and stereotypes of dance movements made the dance lose its vividness and taste. Against this background, some artists and dancers began to seek to break through the boundaries of tradition and explore new forms of dance and expression. The founders of modern dance include Isadora Duncan, Rudolf Laban and St. Denis, etc ^[2]. Through their respective dance practices and theoretical explorations, they have made significant contributions to the establishment and development of modern dance. As one of the pioneers of modern dance, Duncan eschewed the constraints of corsets and ballet slippers and chose to dance in a free-flowing tunic and bare feet. She believed that dance should express the human spirit and emotions, rather than being limited to traditional techniques and forms. Duncan's dance works are mostly inspired by nature and ancient Greek culture, emphasizing natural rhythms and free expressions. Laban, on the other hand, conducted a comprehensive discussion and research on modern dance movement, and put forward the "twelve elements of dance movements" ^[3], including space, time, rhythm, fluency, power and beauty, etc., which provide important theoretical support for the training and performance of modern dance movements. Laban's dance works focus on the free expression of the body and the transmission of emotions, and his theory and practice have had a profound impact on the development of modern dance. St. Denis's contribution to modern dance is mainly the use of oriental dance forms. She extensively extracted the stylistic features of dances from Egypt, Greece, Arabia and Thailand, forming a modern dance with

oriental characteristics^[4]. Her dance works focus on the bending and twisting of the body, emphasizing muscle tension and expression. Her practice has injected new elements into modern dance and promoted the integration and development of different cultures and dance forms. In conclusion, the origin and development of modern dance is a long and diversified process, which is influenced and promoted by many factors. During the development of modern dance, dancers from different countries and regions are exploring modern dance forms suitable for their own cultures and aesthetics, forming a rich variety of modern dance styles and genres. In the creation and performance of modern dance, individualization and freedom have become the core features, providing artists with unlimited creativity and performance space. With the progress of society and cultural changes, modern dance will continue to develop and grow, constantly showing new creativity and expressions.

3. The basic characteristics of modern dance

3.1 Authentic expression of emotions

Modern dance emphasizes the free expression of individual emotions, which is not confined to the norms and forms of traditional dance, and is closer to the life experience and inner world of modern people. One of the most significant features of modern dance is the ability to freely express real emotions. Compared with traditional dance, modern dance does not stick to the norms and forms, and emphasizes more on the expression of individual emotions. Through elements such as dancers' body movements, rhythms and postures, modern dance can deeply explore and present the inner world of people and reach the emotional resonance of the audience. This ability to express emotions makes modern dance an art form with strong infectious power^[5].

3.2 Diverse dance forms

The dance forms of modern dance are diversified and unconventional, which can be flexibly applied according to different themes and emotional needs, including different ways like abstract, concrete and improvised expressions. The technical training of modern dance is also more diversified and personalized, which is no longer limited to the traditional training methods. Dancers can choose their own training methods and techniques according to their own needs and styles. Moreover, the choreography of modern dance is more personalized and unique, which no longer follows the traditional structure and pattern. Choreographers create unique dance works and show unique artistic styles through free creation and combination. At the same time, modern dance has a close connection and combination with other art forms, such as drama, music, painting and so on. This combination enriches the expression and connotation of the dance and brings the audience a richer artistic experience. In addition, modern dance is not only an art form, but also a kind of movement with the characteristics of physical and mental unity^[6]. Through systematic training and practice, dancers can exercise flexibility and coordination of the body, enhance muscle strength and endurance, improve cardiorespiratory function and body metabolism, and the physical and mental dedication and spiritual expression in the process of dance also help to relieve stress, adjust the mind, and promote mental health.

3.3 Advanced creative concepts

The creative concepts of modern dance emphasize the exploration and expression of the meaning of individual life, the concern for modern society and human nature, as well as the values of diversity, inclusiveness and innovation. Therefore, another important characteristic of modern dance lies in its spirit of innovation and exploration. This dance form is not restricted by traditional norms, and dancers can create freely according to their own understanding and emotional experience, exploring new dance movements, rhythms and forms. This spirit of exploration and innovation promotes the progress of dance art, brings a new artistic experience to the audience, and enriches the expression and connotation of dance art^[7].

3.4 Strong music and stage presence

The music and stage presentation of modern dance are also diversified, which can be combined with different types of music and stage effects to strengthen the expression of dance. Moreover, modern dance focuses on audience participation and interaction, and enhances the infectious power and influence of the dance through communication and resonance with the audience. This interactivity makes the audience

no longer a bystander, but a part of the dance performance. The watching and learning of modern dance can enhance people's aesthetic concepts. Through the appreciation of modern dance works, the audience can be exposed to different artistic styles and ways of expression, and broaden the aesthetic vision. At the same time, modern dance emphasizes the free and true expression of individual emotions, which helps to cultivate the audience's concern and understanding of the meaning of individual life and inner emotions. The improvement of this aesthetic concepts helps to enrich people's spiritual world and cultural literacy.

3.5 Great social impacts

For one thing, modern dance is also characterized by cross-cultural integration, which can draw on and absorb elements from different cultures and art forms to enrich the expression and connotation of dance. Modern dance also has a wide range of social influence. For another, as an art form, modern dance can reflect and explore social issues and values, and trigger the audience's thoughts and resonance. Through dance works, dancers can express their concern and criticism of social phenomena, and convey positive values and human attitudes. At the same time, the popularization and development of modern dance can also help to improve the public's artistic literacy and knowledge, and promote social and cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

4. Body aesthetics analysis of modern dance

4.1 Natural rhythms of the body

Modern dance emphasizes the natural rhythm of the body, and dancers express their inner emotions and vitality through free and fluent movements. This natural rhythm breaks the norms and restrictions of traditional dance, making dance closer to nature and humanity. The movements of modern dance are not restricted by traditional norms, and the dancers can perform freely according to their own understanding and creativity. Through unique movements and gestures, dancers can express their personalities and show their inner emotions.

4.2 Unity of the dancer's mind and body

Modern dance pursues the unity of the dancer's body and mind and emphasizes the mutual influence and integration of body and mind. Through inner feelings and emotions, dancers use their bodies as a tool of expression to achieve the realm of unity of body and mind. Many works of modern dance are characterized by emotional narratives, in which dancers express a story or theme through dance by combining their emotions with the storyline. This approach enables the audience to understand the emotional world of the dancers more deeply and feel the profound connotation of the dance. In addition, modern dance integrates dance with the attitude of life and expresses personal understanding and attitude towards life through dance. This integration makes the dance more realistic and socially valuable, causing the audience to think and reflect on life.

4.3 Innovation and freedom of dance movements

Modern dance pursues innovation and freedom in movements, and dancers are not restricted by traditional dance norms and give play to their personal creativity and imagination. This innovation and freedom make modern dance movements varied and unique. Modern dance encourages dancers to give play to their creativity, improvisation and presentation in performance. This improvisation enables dancers to express their emotions and personalities in a more authentic way, making the dance performance more lively and vivid.

4.4 Direct emotional expressions

Modern dance expresses emotions directly through body language and conveys the feelings and experiences of the inner world to the audience. This directness allows the audience to understand the emotional world of the dancers more deeply, producing empathy and emotional communication. Meanwhile, modern dance is usually accompanied by contemporary or original music, which often has strong emotional color and can stimulate the emotional resonance of the dancers. By cooperating with the music, the dancers transform the emotion of the music into the language of dance, so as to express

their own emotions.

4.5 Interaction between body and space

Modern dance has a profound understanding and exploration of the interaction between the body and space, and the dancers interact and dialog with the stage space through their movements and gestures. This interaction enriches the expression of dance and brings a unique visual experience to the audience. Meanwhile, modern dance focuses on the shape and display of the dancer's body, and through training and practice, the body reaches a perfect state. This pursuit of body aesthetics not only shows the elegance and strength of the dancers, but also provides the audience with the enjoyment of beauty. Moreover, the stage performance of modern dance has various forms, and the dancers can utilize lighting, scenery, props and other elements to create a specific atmosphere and context. Through the interaction with the stage environment, dancers can better show their personality and integrate their emotions into the dance performance.

4.6 Multiple interpretations of body language

The body language of modern dance has the possibility of multiple interpretations, and the same movement can express different emotions and meanings. Multiple interpretations make modern dance more open and diversified, providing the audience with more space for imagination and understanding. Meanwhile, modern dance emphasizes the contrast between the strength and weakness of the body, and expresses the ups and downs and conflicts of emotions through the change of strength of movements. This kind of strength and weakness contrast makes the dance more tense and expressive, and brings strong visual impact to the audience. Moreover, dancers can convey emotions through body gestures, movements and expressions. Through the unique body language, dancers can show their own personality and make the dance performance more characteristic and charming ^[8].

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, modern dance is a dance form full of vitality and creativity, whose basic characteristics include freedom of emotional expressions, diversity of dance forms, modernity of creative concepts, diversity of music and stage presentation, and openness of cross-cultural integration. These characteristics make modern dance better meet the aesthetic needs and spiritual pursuit of modern people. With its unique dance language, free improvisation and body aesthetics, modern dance shows a different kind of artistic charm. It not only expands the artistic expression of dance, but also provides us with a new aesthetic experience. Through in-depth study and exploration of the basic characteristics and body aesthetics of modern dance, we can better understand this art form and provide helpful insights for its future development.

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