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Reconsidering «The Triadic Ballet»: Contributions and influences behind its concept

AOKI, Kanae

Kyoto City University of Arts

«The Triadic Ballet», first performed in 1922 in Stuttgart, is known as the definitive work by Oskar Schlemmer (1888-1943). Its striking geometric costumes have left his name to posterity. But the discussions and contributions of two dancers are not widely known.

In 1923, Albert Burger (1884-1970) and Elsa Hötzl (1886-1966) who were dancers in «The Triadic Ballet» claimed rights to some of the costumes. That is to say, «The Triadic Ballet» was not simply Schlemmer's product. This process of collaboration warrants consideration in truly understanding the work.

Schlemmer started to develop his theatrical concepts in 1912, which were impacted by Arnold Schoenberg's 'crazy' «Pierrot Lunaire». And then, Emile Jacques-Dalcroze's Eurythmics, in which music and rhythm decide the movement, effected Schlemmer's physical concept. Burger and Hötzl had learned this new dance in Hellerau and brought that influence with them when they returned to Stuttgart. Yet Schlemmer developed his own idea which was derived from Schlemmer's own work in painting. Like paintings that use line, shape and form, he believed dance should also be based on the shape and form of the body in costume: namely, the alteration of the human body by costumes.

In different perspective, however, it would appear that Schlemmer tried to find his own ideas to preserve the position as the creator of the ballet. Costume was the very field where Schlemmer could be most effective on the work, and thereby «The Triadic Ballet» could be attributed to Schlemmer.

The Cinematic Quality in Machinery and Modern Art — Focusing on Le Corbusier and Psychoanalysis in Masakazu Nakai's Film Theory —

IJUIN, Takayuki

Shimane University

In *Towards an Architecture* (1923), Le Corbusier (1887-1965) uses the expression “eyes which do not see”, by which he criticizes his contemporaries. Masakazu Nakai (1900-1952), who advocated new aesthetics that deal with film from the end of 1920s, thought Le Corbusier’s “the eyes which do not see” as a cinematic term, like Béla Balázs’s “Der sichtbare Mensch” and Dziga Vertov’s “Kino-Eye”, in his essay *Structure of Mechanical Beauty* (1929).

This means that Nakai treated Le Corbusier as an avant-garde film-maker and considered Le Corbusier’s “a fresh eye” that is opposite to “eyes which do not see” as the camera’s eye. That is to say, Nakai connected the Le Corbusier’s machine aesthetics with the film theory, and took cinema for the model of modern art.

Like Vertov and Balázs, photographers and film-makers in 1920s-30s were aware that the vision of cameras could give us access to an objective vision freed from our subjectivity imposed by pictorial codes. This effect of the raw real unveiled by photography and film is often mentioned in many studies of photography and film, such as the Walter Benjamin’s notion of “the shock effect” based on Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis and Roland Barthes’s notion of “punctum” based on Jacques Lacan’s “gaze” in his theory of psychoanalysis. Nakai also theorized about the relation between the silver screen, us, and “the gaze”.

Following this line of thinking, it might be that under Le Corbusier’s “a fresh eye” his architecture or the machine that he loved gazes us. Then the relation between Le Corbusier’s architecture and us simulates the relation between rear-screen projection and us. This structure of cinema would be what Nakai found in Le Corbusier’s machine aesthetics of modern art.

Acceptance of Western Influence by Yori Saito and the Stein collection - Based on 'My Personal Commentary on the New Trend in Paintings'

UNO, Hitomi

Kyoto Institute of Technology

The oil painter, Yori Saito, published the first art review titled 'My Personal Commentary on the New Trend in Paintings' in February 1902. This is the first art review which referred to Matisse and Cezanne in Japan. The characteristic of Western art influence on Saito's works and its importance have not been discussed thoroughly so far. The author cast new light on the review focusing the Stein Collection which Saito had an opportunity to see in France.

This commentary has been often considered, in the previous studies, as the vanguard of personalism based on the passage 'because a painting is the personal quality of the painter'. Certainly this passage contains the assertion that importance has to be placed on personal quality which is similar to the 'Shirakaba' school of thought. By pointing out the similarity between the traditional Japanese paintings and forms of Cezanne and Matisse, it is supposed that he, as an actual painter himself, might have taken that as a lead to create oil paintings which were unique to Japan. His mission that 'Japan has to create its own style of oil paintings' must have been born from his experience in learning painting in France and being exposed to the works of Cezanne and Matisse.

That is why he consistently stuck to the approach of commenting on paintings from the viewpoint of forms, against the prevailing climate of the personalism led by the 'Shirakaba' school, leading the way to the introduction of developmental history theory using examples from Cezanne to Matisse.

A Study on Spatial Composition by Charles Rennie Mackintosh

— “Space within Space” in Interior Decoration —

KAWAGUCHI, Yoshiko

Kyoto Institute of Technology

Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) was a Scottish architect and designer. In this study, I would like to clarify Mackintosh's techniques of interior decoration by interpreting his spatial composition as a construction of 'space within space'. In the Victorian era, a small enclosed space such as an inglenook or a cosy corner was generally preferred. Such a space effectively highlighted what was known as 'a good taste', a superior idea of domestic comfort. Further, Mackintosh's design of the space within space — space enclosed with a screen or as an alcove —, might have existed as an important aspect for displaying the owner's taste and personality usually in reception rooms in domestic works, or in tea rooms.

In this study, I would like to examine Mackintosh's works and classify his methods of building a space within space into the following three categories. (1) enclosing a particular space with free-standing/built-in screens, (2) creating a room within room by means of an alcove, and (3) creating a particular spatial perception by planning human movement and their vision. The method described in (3) should be the inclusive manner of psychologically characterizing the space within space that was already physically created using the methods described in (1) and (2). Based on the above examination, the technique involved in Mackintosh's interior decoration could be understood in terms of the composition of space within space, each of which was physically and psychologically enclosed as to enable people to easily and effectively display their taste and tasteful behaviour.

Study on the Spatial Composition of Frank Lloyd Wright's "Textile Block" Houses

SUEKANE, Shingo

Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Graduate School of Engineering, Kobe University

Frank Lloyd Wright is well known as one of the masters of Modern Architecture like Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe. Wright started his career as an architect in Chicago in 1890s and designed a lot of architectures in his almost 70 years life as an architect. From 1910s to mid 1930s, Wright was inevitably faced, so called "lost years". In this period, his works were so decreased and their location is mainly limited in Japan and Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles, Wright designed 4 "Textile Block" houses, such as Millard house, Storer house, Freeman House, and Ennis house. "Textile Block" house is constructed with geometrically ornamented concrete blocks. This study focuses on the spatial composition of "Textile Block" houses and intends to derive their characters.

Analysis deals with materials, modular system and arrangements with axis, composition of plans, spatial composition of living rooms, and composition of overall volumes, and the characters of the spatial composition of these houses are derived as follows; modular system 16 inch is strictly adopted, arrangements of axis are adopted and are gradually complex, location and view is the key to plan and overall composition, and sequences from outside to living rooms are basically tile and dark space around entrance and wide and bright space of living rooms.

The results of analysis proceed to compare with the spatial composition of Wright's "Prairie House" and "Usonian House", and the spatial composition of "Textile Block" houses can be identified as transitional one from "Prairie House" to "Usonian House".

Christopher Dresser and Art Botany: A Comparison between His Design Ideals and Plant Morphology of Goethe

TAKEUCHI, Yuko

Osaka University

Christopher Dresser (1834-1904) was a botanist, designer and theorist in Victorian Britain. He studied plant morphology, and was awarded a doctorate by the University of Jena. Meanwhile, he lectured about 'artistic botany' at the governmental schools of design. Thus he unified the scientific and aesthetic ideas in art botany. Afterwards he failed to gain the chair of botany at the University of London and therefore decided to be a designer.

The purpose of this paper is to explore what he learned from Goethe's works in art botany. Several past studies point out that his design ideals were inspired by Goethe's writings, for they referred to the 'vital force' of Goethe's phraseology. However, little attention has been given to the comparison between the works of Goethe and Dresser.

In this paper, I will examine the essentials of *The Metamorphosis of Plant* by Goethe, and then discuss the similar and conflicting ideas between Dresser and Goethe in detail. In summary, my paper demonstrate that Dresser's principal design motto 'power' manifested the 'vital force' of the plant. This clearly shows that his design ideals were influenced by Goethe's works.

Acceptance of the illustrations of Tartars into the medieval and modern ages drawings:

Introduction of an illustration of Tartars hunting (Private Collection) and analysis of its characteristics

NAMIKI Seishi

Kyoto Institute of Technology

This document is intended to show how the Japanese painters in 16th century started to draw the theme known as “Illustrations of Tartars” and how it has been inherited and accumulated.

Illustrations of Tartar people were often seen on large size paintings such as Fusuma (sliding door) paintings and Byobu paintings (folding screen) between the 16th and 17th centuries. There are some research papers and individual description for some of these illustrations. However, it is not fully understood when and how this theme began to be drawn by the artists and how it has been integrated and passed on.

In this paper, I first introduced an illustration of Tartars (Private Collection) and analyzed its style. As a result, I found this illustration was a part of a Fusuma painting drawn by Kano Soshu (1551/52 – 1601/02), which was turned into a Byobu.

Regarding the process of an acceptance of the illustrations of Tartar people, I showed the conclusion describing that they seemed to be first brought to Japan in the 15th century in the picture scrolls form as a new painting theme, then expanded to Fusuma, Byobu with paintings mounted on it, and then large size Byobu. Based on these findings, I pointed out that this illustration can be determined to be a primary Fusuma painting with color on gold leafed paper.

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