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SCENIC TRANSFORMATION AND THE UKRAINIAN AVANT-GARDE

John E. Bowlt

У статті висвітлено радикальні зміни в сценічному й образотворчому мистецтві Києва, Харкова та Одеси наприкінці 1910-х і впродовж 20-х років XX ст., що знаменували собою становлення і розвиток українського авангарду.
Ключові слова: театр, сценічне та образотворче мистецтво, авангард, художні групи, Україна.

В статье освещены радикальные изменения в сценическом и изобразительном искусстве Киева, Харькова и Одессы в конце 1910-х и на протяжении 20-х годов XX в., которые знаменовали собой становление и развитие украинского авангарда.
Ключові слова: театр, сценическое и изобразительное искусство, авангард, художественные группы, Украина.

The article casts light upon radical shifts within the theatrics and fine arts of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa in the late 1910s through 1920s, which signified the formation and progress of the Ukrainian avant-garde.
Keywords: theatre, theatrics and fine arts, avant-garde, artistic groups, Ukraine.

In the wake of the October Revolution, Ukraine of the late 1910s and 1920s was a site of political turmoil, demographic shift, and physical change. But it was also a cauldron of cultural inventiveness and renewal in the literary, visual, and performing arts, witness to which was the elaboration of radical poetical groups such as the League of Seven, the flurry of new art exhibitions in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa, and the impressive number of talented painters and sculptors who, if later on were often recognized for their achievements more readily abroad, nevertheless, were born and nurtured in Ukraine: Mykola Akimov, Natan Altman, Mykhaylo Andriyenko, Borys Aronson, Volodymyr Baranov-Rossiné, Davyd and Volodymyr Burliuks, Sonia Delaunay, Marko Epshtein, Vasyl Yermylov, Oleksandra Ekster, Fedir Fedorovskyi, Petro Haladzhev, Oleksandr Khvostenko-Khvostov, Borys Kosarev, Mykhaylo Larionov, Simon Lissim, Kazymyr Malevych, Semeon Mandel, Vadym Meller, Solomon Nikritin, Anatol Petrytskyi, Isaak Rabynovych, Nisson Shyfryn, Yosyp Shkolnyk, Illia Shlepianov, and Oleksandr Tyshler. Particularly, the works of Ekster, Khvostenko-Khvostov, Meller, Petrytskyi, and Kosarev indicate the richness and diversity of Ukraine's visual and theatrical advancement during the 1910s and 1920s.

Often studio painters by training, many of these artists also tried their hand at stage design, transferring the new concepts of Neo-Primitivism, Cubo-Futurism, Suprematism, and Constructivism to sets and costumes and, thereby, reinforcing the efforts of innovative impresarios, directors, and actors to refresh the traditions of the Ukrainian theater and at the same time to place it within an international context. Of course, to some it might have seemed inappropriate to be fostering a new, Ukrainian theatre just as national boundaries were being undermined by the move towards a global Communism. Even if Ukrainian language and history continued to play primary roles in the cultural effervescence, when all is said and done, it is the international and not ethnical nature of the form and content or, rather, of the visual devices which distinguish Ukraine's theatrical renaissance: Constructivist reduction to spare geometrical figures (cf. Mylytsia Symashkevych's costumes for *Gas* of 1923 and Kostiantyn Yeleva's for *The Rapids Pound* of 1927) and syncopated, jazzy colors (cf. Epshtein's for *Aristocrats* of 1927–1928 and Petrytskyi's for *Viy* of 1925), not to mention, of course, the proletarian appeal of didactic plays with their common ideological denominators such as *Sky on Fire* and *Hello on Radiowave 477!.*

Primary witnesses to this "transnational" renaissance were the Franko Theater, the First State Shevchenko Theater, the Hnat Mykhaylychenko Theater, and the Opera and Ballet Theater in Kyiv; the Theater of Opera and Ballet and the State Red Factory Theater in Kharkiv; and, of course, the Berezil Theater operating in Kyiv and then Kharkiv respectively.

Their combined activities constituted a rich and versatile repertoire which encompassed not only new and provocative plays such as *Jimmie Higgins* (designed by Symashkevych) and *Mazepa* (Meller), but also the classics such as Friedrich Schiller's *Fiesco's Conspiracy at Genoa* (Shyfryn) and Puccini's *Princess Turandot* (Petrytskyi). Within a wider perspective, artists were often commissioned to use more public "performance spaces" such as walls, fences, hoardings, and parades to illustrate or dramatize political dicta, i. e., to explore a theatrical genre whereby the "drama" was acted out in word and image on the streets and squares. Petrytskyi's mural projects for the House of Interludes of 1917 and 1920 seem to be a part of this "monumental propaganda"; Oleksandr Bohomazov helped decorate agit-transport, including trains; Yermylov, of course, with his visual stenography for UKROSTA (Ukrainian Telegraph News Agency), was perhaps the leading contributor to the new kind of politicized artistic projection [9, с. 100; 14, іл. 216; 16].

Clearly, many aspiring artists, young and reformative, viewed this kind of theatrical engagement not only as an instrument of experimentation, but also, in those inclement times, as a source of income inasmuch as the political commissions generating the monumental propaganda ensured considerable artistic license as well as welcome honoraria thanks to government subvention. Not surprisingly, then, we find that the most diverse factions of the Ukrainian avant-garde, from Matviy Drak to Yeleva, from Epshtein to Petrytskyi, from Favst Lopatynskyi to Symashkevych, from Oleksandra Ekster to Vasyl Krychevskyi, were involved in "theatrical design" in its broadest sense, including the agit-art of the street and square, flags and banners, parades and clothing, placards and posters. For some, even the book as a narrative set within a narrow space, dependent upon both listener and viewer, and progressing sequentially via a narrative, was an extension of theatre. Not surprisingly, some of Ukraine's foremost stage designers, not least, Andriyenko and Ekster, also turned their attention to covers, illustrations and vignettes for publications [10].

In many ways, theatrical initiatives in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa paralleled similar actions in Moscow – for example, if Meller designed the production of George Kaiser's *Gas* at the Berezil in 1923, Yuriy Annenkov had done the same the year before in Petrograd, and if Petrytskyi was designing *Princess Turandot* for the State Theater in Kharkiv in 1928, Ihnatiy Nivinskyi had done the same for the Vakhtangov Theater in Moscow in 1923. *Red Poppy, Love of Three Oranges, Machine Wreckers,* and *Prince Ihor (Igor)* were among many other dynamic projects or productions which graced both northern and southern stages during the same decade, although, as the Berezil productions of *Machine Wreckers* (designed by Lopatynskyi and Symashkevych), *Sadie* (Meller), and *They Made Fools of Themselves* (Shkliaiev and Symashkevych) demonstrate, the Ukrainian artists often reimagined contemporary styles in unusual and unsettling ways.

Les Kurbas's transference of his Berezil Theater to Kharkiv in 1926 was indicative of the remarkable upsurge of avant-garde activity there in the mid- and late 1920s. While Moscow and Leningrad were coming under increasing pressure to adapt their cultures to a more conservative taste, Kharkiv still held out as a progressive center, providing a forum for the Association of Contemporary Artists of Ukraine, organizing exhibitions of the new art, and publishing important journals such as *Nova Generatsiyia* (1927–1930) and *Avanhard* (1929) [1]. In particular, the Berezil Theater won acclaim not only for its bold and often shocking visual resolutions, but also for its emotional, if not, physical, assaults on the audience. As Ihor Ciszkewycz has noted: "Kurbas felt the actor should create a memorable transformation on the stage in order that the audience be shocked and in the end, profoundly influenced by it. This transformation technique could be abstract, psychological, stylized, rhythmical, symbolic, metaphysical and numerous other types. These transformations even occurred in music, drama and stage decor" [19; for information on the artistic environment of the Berezil Theater, see: 6; 7; 21].

The Berezil Theater can be regarded at once as performance workshop, technical laboratory, and art studio which attracted radical actors and designers such as Khvostenko-Khvostov, Lopatynskyi, Meller, Petrytskyi, Shyfryn, Valen-

tyn Shkliaiev, and Symashkevych, who, if recognizant of Western styles such as Cubism or Russian ones such as Suprematism, often perfected their own stylistic language as designers for the Berezil.

To a considerable extent, the primary catalyst to this development and a lasting influence on young Ukrainian artists was Ekster, being one of the few artists of the avant-garde who could transcend the confines of the pictorial surface and organize forms in their interaction with space. Ekster's awareness of this dialogue was evident in her collaborations with Oleksandr Tayirov at his Chamber Theater in Moscow (when she also worked closely with Vira Mukhina), e. g., the productions of *Thamira Khytharedes* (1916), *Salomé* (1917), and then her later endeavors such as *Romeo and Juliet* (1921), and the *Death of Tarelkin* (1921, projected, but not produced, by the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theater). When Yakiv Tugendkhold observed of *Thamira Khytharedes* that Tayirov and Ekster had managed to "make an organic connection between the moving actors and the objects at rest" [13, c. 72], he was already indicating the direction which Ekster would follow, for she replaced the conventions of the *Stilbühne* with a kinetic resolution in which the actors and scenery played equal roles. Ekster's concentration on the "rhythmically organized space" [5, c. 70] pointed forward to her costume designs for Bronislava Nizhynska's Choreographic Studio, École de Mouvement [School of Movement], in Kyiv (and then the Théâtre Choréographique in England and Paris) [17], to her Constructivist designs for the movie *Aelita* (1924), and to her set of marionettes of 1926.

In the dynamic medium of film, where focus and sequence change constantly, formal contrast is transmitted by a rapid variability of light, and light itself plays a constructive role, Ekster perhaps attained the high point of her scenic career, even if her fascination with light was well evident in the stage designs of 1916–1917 where she relied on saturated lighting for effect. During the 1920s Ekster incorporated the properties of translucency and reflectivity into her system, even anticipating Serhiy Diahiliev's production of *La Chatte* in 1927 with its transparent designs by Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner. Ekster never ceased to experiment with stage design, applying her ideas to drama, the ballet, revues, and modern dance and in 1925 even invented "epidermic costumes" for a ballet project in which the dancers were painted, not dressed. As her one-time student, Oleksandr Tyshler, reminisced: "In her hands, a simple paper lampshade turned into a work of art" [1, c. 43]. Apart from Tyshler, Ekster's primary disciples were Aronson, Meller, Rabynovych, Shyfryn, Pavlo Chelishchev – and Petrytskyi. While a student in Moscow in the 1910s, Petrytskyi was confronted with the avant-garde experiments of Kazymyr Malevych, the colored geometries of Suprematism leaving an especially deep imprint on his development. Returning to Ukraine after his Moscow schooling, Petrytskyi turned his attention to Ekster's decorative work, and her immediate influence can be traced in the cubistic resolutions of his stage designs for *In the Work House, In the Land of Slavery* and *In the Catacombs* for the First State Shevchenko Theater in Kyiv in 1921 as well as for Kasyan Holeyzovskyi's *Eccentric Dances* at the Chamber Ballet in Moscow the following year.

As historian Dmytro Horbachov affirms, under Ekster's influence Khvostenko-Khvostov also moved to a "volumetrical, constructive design, something that transformed the scenic space" [4, c. 9], a quality manifest in the emphatic colors and geometric tautness of his designs for the production of Reinhold Glière's *Red Poppy* at the Kyiv State Opera in 1928. Sometimes Khvostenko-Khvostov's sets were remarkably abstract, e. g., for *Die Walküre* of 1929 [for reproductions of two of Khvostenko-Khvostov's set designs for *Die Walküre* see: 4, c. 53–54], although many consider his most experimental costumes and sets to be those for the unrealized production of Serhiy Prokofyev's operatic adaptation of Carlo Gozzi's comedy, *A Love for Three Oranges,* which the Berezil Theater prepared in 1926–1927, but did not, unfortunately, produce.

A prominent supporter of the avant-garde spirit at the Berezil between 1923 and 1929, Meller also revealed a strong debt to Ekster in his designs for at least five productions – *Gas*, *Sadie, Golden Guts, The Mikado,* and *Hello on Radiowave 477!* Along with Petrytskyi, Meller

developed his conception of the new art according to rigorous formal analysis, devoid of the often messianic and transcendental dimensions which accompanied the researches of older colleagues such as Vasyl Kandinskyi and Malevych. Subordinating color to a "melody of lines", Meller used his designs as an instrument for emphasizing the "expression of the turns of the head, the rhythm of the folds and scarves <…> the dynamic of the dance" [8, c. 39]. Subsequently, he adjusted his clear, geometric structures to a more florid and narrative esthetic as in *Carnival* (which Mykola Tereshchenko produced for the Art of Action Group at the Hnat Mykhaylychenko Theater, Kyiv, in 1923) and *The Mikado* (which Valeriy Inkizhynov produced at the Berezil in 1927).

Unlike Petrytskyi or, for that matter, Khvostenko-Khvostov, however, Meller came to his boldest renderings through a brief, but fertile, collaboration with Nizhynska on experiments at her dance studio in Kyiv in 1919–1920 such as *Assyrian Ballet, Masks, Fear,* and especially *Mephisto Valse,* a plotless composition with abstract choreography, in which Meller's designs "[merely] served as a visual analogy of Nizhynska's ballet style" [2]. Productions such as *Mephisto Valse,* often little more than improvisations, incorporated the methods of the *danse plastique,* eurhythmics, and even gymnastics into choreographical compositions, although, because of the disruption of the Civil War, the designs by Meller (and by Ekster) were not always executed and Nizhynska herself often made the tunics for her own performances [for reproductions of some of Meller's costume designs for the Nizhynska productions, see: 15, p. 215–221].

Nizhynska's School of Movement, one of the most dynamic centers for the Ukrainian avant-garde, sponsored experiments in both Classical and modern dance, and some of the numbers – such as *Mephisto Valse* – were offered simply as pretexts for creative experiment in movement and design rather than as narratives to be illustrated. This brief, but fruitful episode in Kyiv prepared Nizhynska for her more celebrated choreographic interpretations in the early 1920s, especially for Diahiliev in Paris, such as *Le Renard, Mavra,* and *Les Noces*. Perhaps remembering her Kyiv experience, Nizhynska described the latter production with particular zeal: "*Les Noces* opened up a new path in choreography for me: promoting the corps de ballet to a primary artistic level. I did not want there to be a dominant performer (soloist) in this spectacle. I wanted all the dancers to fuse in one movement and to create a whole. In my choreography the mass of the ensemble was meant to "speak" – able to create just as many choreographic nuances as the orchestra mass does musical ones" [11].

With Feliya Dubrovska as the principal dancer and Nataliya Honcharova as the designer, *Les Noces* scored a great success in Paris, even if the London showing of 1926 brought forth much negative comment [3].

The Nizhynska-Ekster-Meller collaboration was brief and intense, but the School of Movement, was not the only laboratory of artistic forms in Kyiv. A number of the Ukrainian avant-gardists, while aware of Nizhynska's experiments, worked for other enterprises, a case in point being Petrytskyi, a leading exponent of the Ukrainian interpretation of Constructivism in stage design. Beginning in 1918, he decorated ballets, operas, and dramas for numerous theaters in Ukraine and Russia and was quickly recognized as an original practitioner and theorist. He declared in *Nova Generatsiyia*: "The artist builds the theatrical costume like a functional object embodying this or that idea of the general stage design. The artist balances this object within the general composition and creates an organic link between object of the design, the actor and the costume by means of the mechanics of the action. The costume should also be built from the inside out" [12, c. 41–42].

Of particular importance to Petrytskyi's early development as a stage designer was his collaboration with the ballet dancer Mykhaylo Mordkin in Kyiv in 1918 [for the reproduction of one of Petrytskyi's costume designs for Mordkin's *Spanish Dance* of 1918, see: 4, ill. 61]. Along with Mykola Foregger, Holeyzovskyi, Lavrentiy Novikov, and Volodymyr Riabtsev, Mordkin did much to change the conventions of classical ballet in Moscow, Kyiv and, after 1923, the year of his emigration, in New York. Mordkin also worked for the Chamber Theater, Moscow, instructing Alisa Koonen for

her Dance of the Seven Veils in the Chamber Theater production of *Salomé* in 1917 – thereby establishing close contact with Ekster. Thanks to Mordkin, Petrytskyi gained valuable knowledge and experience of the ballet and theater worlds, and it was logical that Petrytskyi accepted Mordkin's invitation to design the New York production of *Nur and Anitra* in 1923 (not realized). After Mordkin's departure, Petrytskyi continued to collaborate with experimental choreographers, contributing designs to Mykhaylo Moisieyev's productions of *Le Corsaire* in 1926 and *Taras Bulba* in 1928 in Kharkiv, where "the main thing is movement, speed. And Petrytskyi has expressed this "speed" thesis in his designs where – not without irony – he has elucidated the energetic scheme of the dance. But he was not satisfied with schemes. The artist was skeptical of those who, by the term "contemporary", understand a break with the culture of the past… Using new visual media and elements of bygone styles in many of his productions, the artist has restored the living physiognomy of the past to the stage" [3, c. 10].

After opening in the fall of 1925, the Kharkiv Opera Theater soon became a prestigious center for artistic experiment, thanks to the presence there of Foregger, Holeyzovskyi, Moisieyev, and Petrytskyi. Coming to the Kharkiv Opera after working for Holeyzovskyi at the Moscow Chamber Ballet and then designing the production of Mykola Hohol's *Viy* at the Ivan Franko Theater (also in Kharkiv), Petrytskyi consolidated his position as a leader of the Ukrainian avant-garde. Although a Constructivist by inclination, Petrytskyi adjusted easily to the needs of a given spectacle and was willing to use ornament and "illusion" if the production so dictated. Consequently, he had no qualms in evoking the historical ambiance for operas such as *Prince Ihor (Igor)* (Odesa, 1926) and *Taras Bulba* (Kyiv, 1927; Kharkiv, 1928) and he did this while still emphasizing the formal qualities of the piece. He wrote in 1930: "You must <…> construct the costume from inside, and be guided not just by nice appearances, but also by your relationship to it as a form that is supplementary to the image created by the actor – as one of the components interconnected to the logical mechanics of the whole" [12, c. 42].

Like Khvostenko-Khvostov and Petrytskyi, Kosarev was also intent upon cleansing stage design of both Realist imitation and superfluous ornament. Although he worked for many theatre directors in the 1920s and 1930s, Kosarev developed a personal, synthetic style, accenting bright colour, geometric clarity, and folkloric motifs as, for example, in *Ali-Nur*, Mykhaylo Kossovskyi's dramatic adaptation of Oscar Wilde's story *The Star-child* which Serhiy Pronskyi produced at the Fairytale Theatre, Kharkiv, in 1922, with music by Isaak Dunayevskyi, choreography by Borys Plietniev and designs by Akimov and Kosarev.

Bearing in mind the new, proletarian audience, Kosarev also imported devices from the circus and music-hall (cf. his designs for *Chasing Two Hares* of 1929), including caricature, hyperbole, and the "illogical" combination of diverse elements, a mix which coincided with his interest in collage and montage and with what might be called linguistic polyphony: after all, his proclamation in the avant-garde Kharkiv album *Sem' plius tri* [Seven plus three], co-signed with Yermylov, announced that it was being printed "in all languages of the world" [18, p. 29]. Kosarev was also a professional photographer, experimenting with the camera as a recording apparatus not only of the urban fabric of Kharkiv, Odesa, and Lviv (in Western Ukraine), but also of the installation and interaction of his own sets and costumes on stage, including the patently ideological collaborations such as *Marko in Hell* which he designed for the State Red Factory Theater in Kharkiv in 1928.

As with Russian, German, and Italian culture of the 1930s, the spirit of the Ukrainian avant-garde was weakened, if not, extinguished by ideological exigency, often resulting in transference of loyalties, adjustment to political pressure, and loss of individual initiative. Some designers such as Khovstenko-Khvostov, Kosarev, Meller, and Petrytskyi stayed on in Ukraine, continuing to work for the state theaters and to produce entertaining, if no longer provocative, costumes, sets, and props. In a few cases, the fluency of experiment went underground to reemerge in the 1980s with a new generation of Ukrainian stage designers who, once again, raised the

banner of theatrical innovation. Last but not least, the diaspora of the 1920s carried the ideas of the Ukrainian avant-garde to France, Germany, Canada, and the USA: Andriyenko, Aronson, Ekster, Lissim, and Chelishchev, to mention a few, developed their ideas in emigration, often fulfilling prestigious commissions for companies such as Diahiliev's *Ballets Russes* and Mykyta Baliyev's *Chauve-Souris*, even if the flavor of indigenous Ukrainian culture now yielded to the gloss of European and American styles such as Art Deco and Surrealism. In any case, it should be stressed that, although such artists spent their formative years in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, and other Ukrainian cities, they often reached artistic maturity while working for the stage precisely in Europe and the Americas. In this way, they served as global ambassadors of the new Ukrainian culture, aware of their folklore and mythology, but embracing contemporary Western styles and applying them to costumes and sets for theaters worldwide – the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, the Strelna Theater in Istanbul, the Blaue Vogel in Berlin, the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre in Paris, the Gran Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona, and many other venues for drama, ballet, opera, cabaret, and cinema. After all, some of the most celebrated stage productions of the 20th century were designed by Ukrainian artists outside of Ukraine, from *Cleopatra* (Delaunay, 1918) and *El Tsar Saltan* (Lissim, 1924) to *Ode* (Chelishchev, 1928) and *The Great American Goof* (Aronson, 1940). Citizens of the world, yet offspring of a single territory, Ukrainian artists, therefore, approached theater as a universal language, ever refurbishing its lexicon and syntax, ever amplifying its resonance.

Endnotes

[1] Odesa and Kyiv also saw the establishment of important journals promoting the new theater, for example, the weekly *Teatr* in Odesa (1919) and *Teatr* in Kyiv (1921–1923), the latter published by the Theater Section of the Subdepartment of Arts of the People's Education Secretariat.

[2] Letter from Dmytro Horbachov to John E. Bowlt dated 2 August, 1999.

[3] See the statement by H. G. Wells condemning the "deliberate dullness of the London critics" [20, p. 190].

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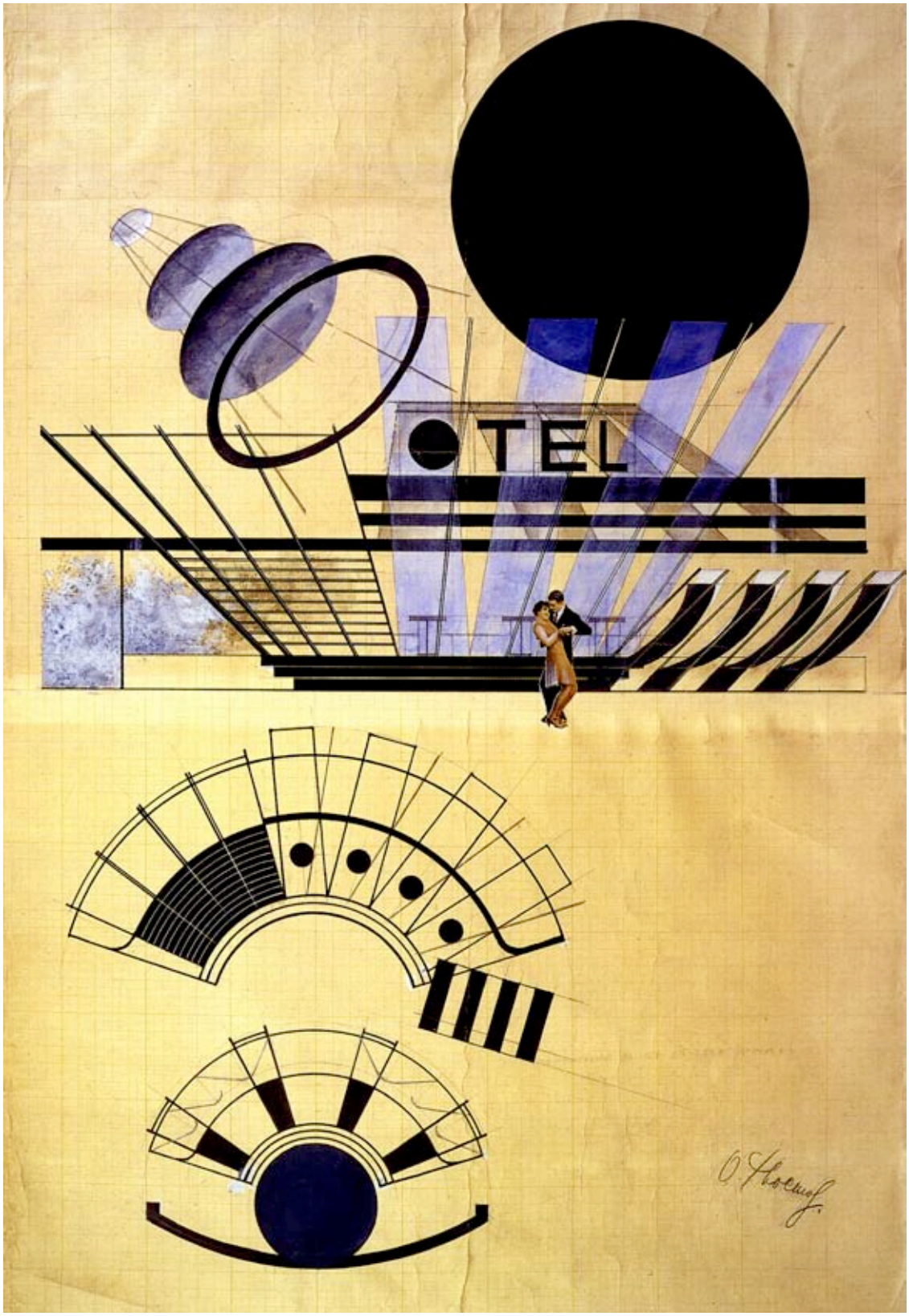
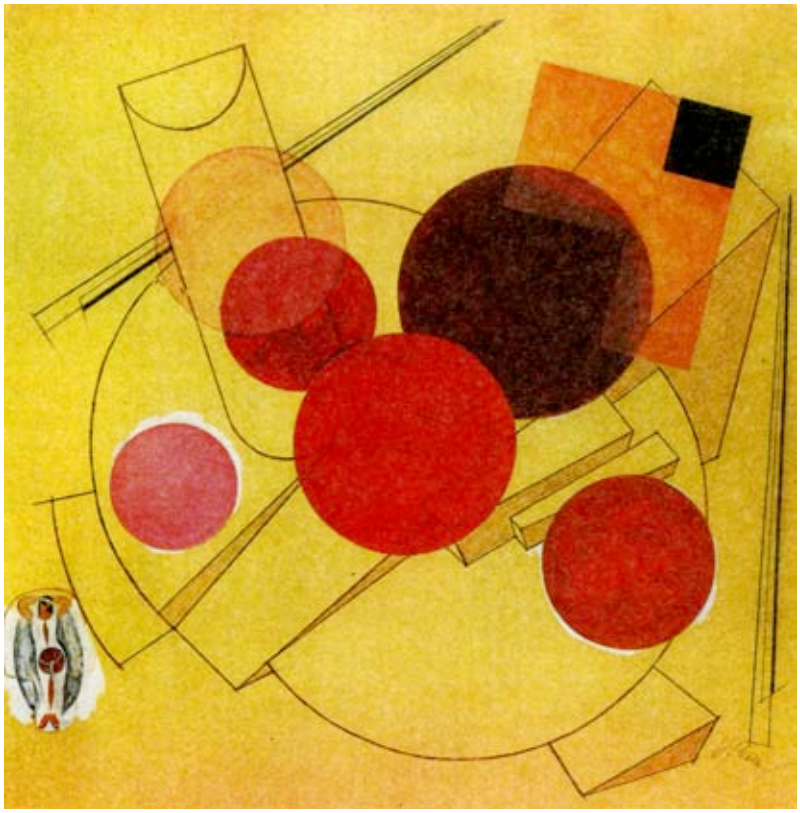
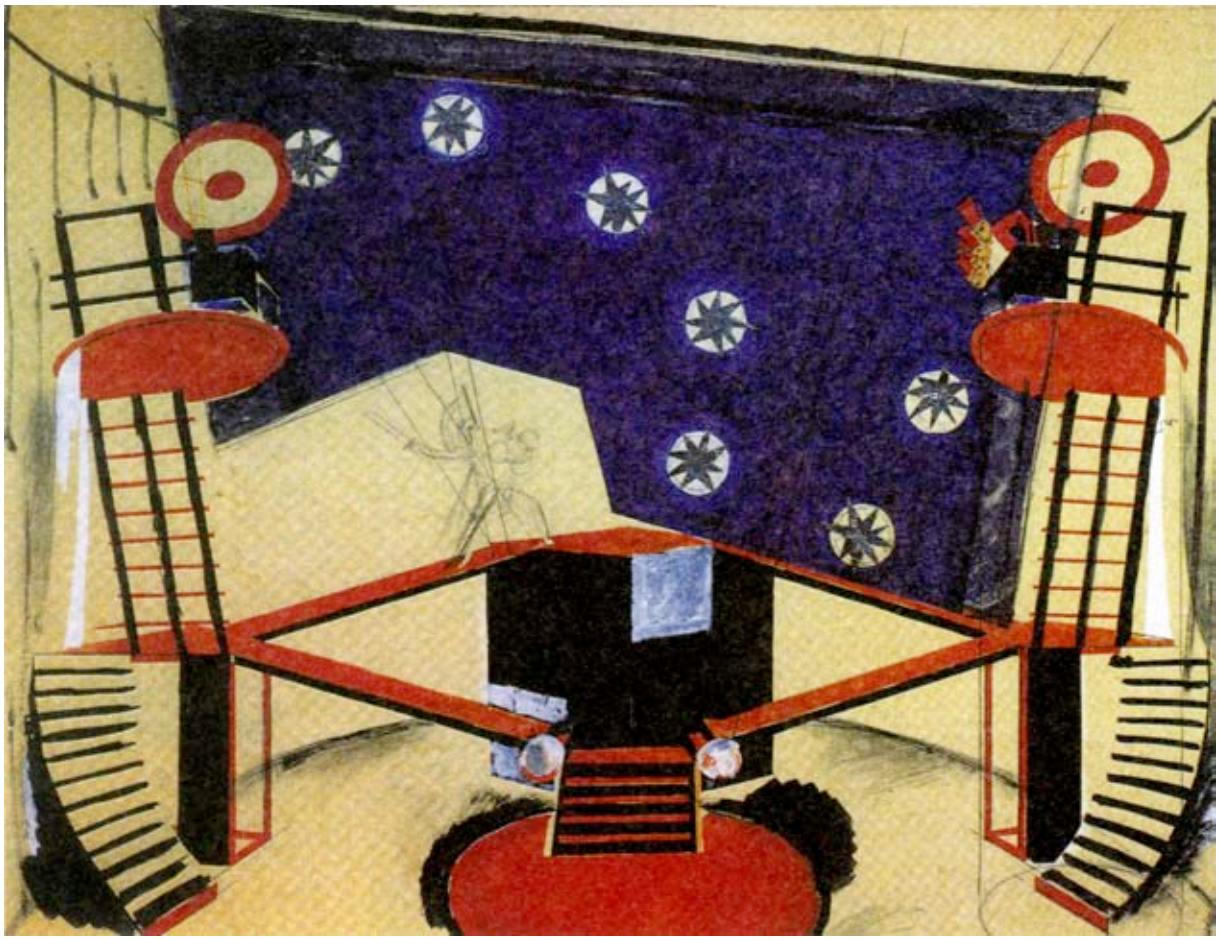


Khvostenko-Khvostov O. Glacier Hotel. Sketch for E. Kszenek's opera *Johnny Plays*. 1929–1930. Paper, gouache, appliqué. Central State Archive of Literature and Arts of Ukraine



Khvostenko-Khvostov O.
Set design for Serhiy Prokofyev's opera *Love for Three Oranges* adapted from Carlo Gozzi's comedy.
Opera and Ballet Theater, Kharkiv. 1926.
Collection of Ihor Dychenko (Kyiv)

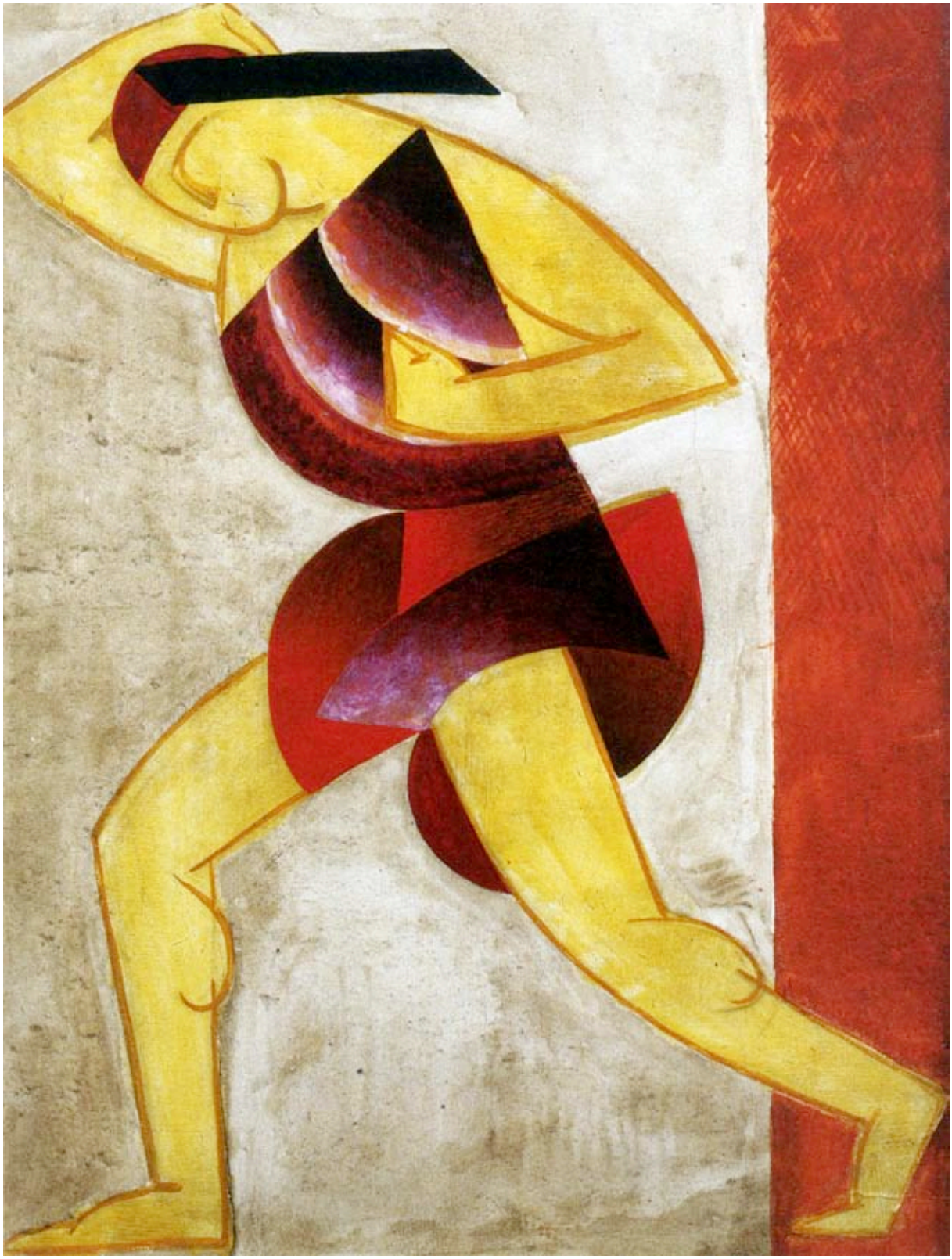
▼ *Khvostenko-Khvostov O.*
Moveable set design for *Sieglinde* theme in Richard Wagner's opera *Die Walküre.*
State Opera, Kyiv. 1929.
Colored lead pencil, gouache, and appliqué on paper.
Collection of Ihor Dychenko (Kyiv)



Ekster O. Costume sketch for William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Gouache and bronze paint on cardboard

Kosarev B. Costume sketch *Capricorn* for Ivan Kocherha's *Marko in Hell*. Gouache on paper

◀ *Petrytskyi A*. Costume sketch *Liù* for Giacomo Puccini's *Turandot*. State Opera and Ballet, Kharkiv. Gouache, bronze paint, and India ink on paper



Meller V. Costume sketch for choreographic movement for Franz Liszt's *Mephisto*.
Bronislava Nizhynska's School of Movement, Kyiv. Watercolor, pencil, and lacquer on paper

21. *Tkacz V.* Les Kurbas's Early Work at the Berezil: From Bodies in Motion to Performing the Invisible / Virlana Tkacz // Modernism in Kyiv. Jubilant Experimentation / ed. by Irena R. Makaryk and Virlana Tkacz. – Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 2010. – P. 362–385.

SUMMARY

In the late 1910s through 1920s, the cultural contrivance and renewal of literary, figurative, and theatrical arts boiled in Ukraine. It was attested by the appearance of radical poetical groups, such as the League of Seven, the powerful tide of modern art exhibitions in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa, and a striking number of gifted painters and sculptors, many of which have later on become famous abroad, while being born and occupationally developed in Ukraine. Among them were Akimov, Altman, Andriyenko-Nechytaylo, Aronson, Baranov-Rossiné, Brothers Burliuks, Sonia Delaunay, Epshtein, Yermylov, Kosarev, Larionov, Lissim, Malevych, Mandel, Meller, Nikritin, Petrytskyi, Rabynovych, Symashkevych, Tyshler, Khvostenko-Khvostov, Shyfryn, Shkolnyk, and Shlepianov. All of them illustrated the richness and diversity of the Ukrainian fine arts and theatrics of those years.

Primary catalyst of this trend having a protracted hold over young Ukrainian artists was Oleksandra Ekster.

The Ukrainian theatrical Renaissance was characterized by international, not narrowly ethnic, nature of artistic means, notably the Constructivist curtailment to primitive geometrical shapes, syncopated jazz colours, and appeal to proletariat in didactic plays with common ideological denominator.

Key witnesses of this revival were the Ivan Franko Theatre, the Hnat Mykhaylychenko Theatre, the Opera and Ballet Theatres in Kyiv and Kharkiv, the Kharkiv State Red Factory Theatre, and, of course, the Berezil Theatre.

Keywords: theatre, theatrics and fine arts, avant-garde, artistic groups, Ukraine.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Наприкінці 10-х і протягом 20-х років XX століття в Україні кипіли культурна винахідливість, оновлення літературного, образотворчого і театрального мистецтва. Про це свідчили поява радикальних художніх груп, як от харківська «Спілка семи», потужна хвиля виставок сучасного мистецтва в Києві, Харкові й Одесі, дивовижна кількість талановитих художників і скульпторів, багато з яких згодом уславилися за кордоном, але народилися і професійно сформувалися в Україні. Серед них Акімов, Альтман, Андрієнко-Нечитайло, Аронсон, Баранов-Россіне, брати Бурлюки, Соня Делоне, Епштейн, Єрмилов, Косарев, Ларіонов, Ліссім, Малевич, Мандель, Меллер, Нікрітін, Петрицький, Рабинович, Симашкевич, Тишлер, Хвостенко-Хвостов, Шифрин, Школьник, Шлепянов. Всі вони ілюструють багатство і розмаїття українського образотворчого і театрального мистецтва тих років.

Первісним каталізатором цього руху, що він мав тривалий вплив на молодих українських художників, була Олександра Екстер.

Український театральний Ренесанс характеризує інтернаціональна, а не вузько етнічна природа художніх засобів: конструктивістське скорочення до простих геометричних форм, синкоповані джазові кольори, апелювання до пролетаріату в дидактичних п'єсах зі спільним ідеологічним знаменником.

Головні свідки цього відродження – Театр ім. Івана Франка, Театр ім. Гната Михайличенка, Київський і Харківський театри опери і балету, Харківський Червонозаводський театр і, звичайно, театр «Березіль».

Ключові слова: театр, сценічне та образотворче мистецтво, авангард, художні групи, Україна.