

**South African Ballet:
A Performing Art during and after
Apartheid**

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2019

Acknowledgments

This research is the result of the many people who have helped this study to become what it is. I would like to acknowledge and thank Christian Harris and Bronwen Lovegood (a person with an incredible amount of knowledge) for all the work they have done with the State Theatre Archive (Ballet, Opera, Music and Drama). I would also like to thank Ammi Ryke, Anri van der Westhuizen and Alicia Peter from the UNISA Archives, as well as Professor Marisa Keuris and Andile Xaba (UNISA, South African Drama and Theatre Project) for helping me locate primary sources through their extensive research on Drama in South Africa. To Adrienne Sichel, Jessica Denyschen and Tammy Ballantyne Webber from the Ar(ts)chive at the University of Witwatersrand, thank you.

Thank you to Esther Meewes for finding some of my secondary sources (as well as some of my primary sources) and helping me to read the handwriting on my primary sources.

Thank you to Dr Ian Macqueen (Supervisor) and the other members of the Historical and Heritage Department at the University of Pretoria, including Professor Karen Harris, Jaco Bothma, Elize Soer and Dr Thula Simpson. Special thanks to Johnathan Hurwitz for writing and compiling detailed ballet programmes over the years. I would also like to acknowledge Edgar Moagi (Ticketing and Office Manager) and Kabelo Modiga (General Manager) from Joburg Ballet.

My gratitude to Nigel Hannah from Pro-Arte Alphen Park for allowing me to use his magazines and ballet programmes extensively.

Thank you very much to Shannon Gallagher for editing my work at such short notice.

Abstract

Literature on the topic of ballet in South Africa is growing. However, there are still gaps as a result of the fragmentation of sources. This dissertation draws on primary and secondary sources to try to provide a coherent discussion of the history of ballet in South Africa from a fresh perspective. The research demonstrates that ballet has been in constant engagement with South African history and society since its arrival on African shores. Through secondary and primary literature, the research starts by engaging with South African balletic history by looking at an overview of ballet's journey to South Africa and the establishment of balletic societies and institutions. Emphasis is placed on the more successful institutions based in Cape Town and Johannesburg. The history of these institutions, as traced within the research, demonstrates the responsiveness of the balletic community to the environment in which they were situated. South African choreographed ballets with Afrocentric themes are used to highlight the responsiveness that the ballet community has demonstrated towards the historical climate and structures within South African society during and after apartheid. Finally, ballet is explored in the post-apartheid context. Topics that are engaged with here include the removal of grand and petty apartheid policies, as well as the ideas behind the decolonisation of ballet as exemplified by the Cuban-South African exchange.

Key Words

South African ballet, cultural history, performing arts, ballet companies, decolonisation

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Abbreviation List

CAPAB / KRUIK – Cape Performing Arts Board / Kaaplandse Raad Vir Die Uitvoerende Kunste

CTCB – Cape Town City Ballet

EOAN – A Greek word from Eos which translates to dawn

JYB – Johannesburg Youth Ballet

NAPAC / NARUK – Natal Performing Arts Council / Natalse Raad Vir Die Uitvoerende Kunste

PACOFS / SUKOVS – Performing Arts Council of the Orange Free State / Streekraad Uitvoerende Kunste van die Oranje Vry Staat

PACT / TRUK – Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal / Transvaalse Raad vir die Uitvoerende Kunste

SABT - South African Ballet Theatre

SPAB - Separate Performing Arts Boards

STB - State Theatre Ballet

Balletic Terminology

Arabesque- often a stationary position where a dancer poses by standing on one leg while the other leg is extended behind the dancer's torso. The arms are "in harmony with the line of the leg."¹

Artistic Director- the person in charge of casting dancers for roles in ballets.²

Ballet Blanc- a ballet where dancers have traditionally worn white tutus from the Romantic era. These include ballets such as Giselle and Les Sylphides.³

Ballet master- a male who "rehearses ballets and the corps de ballet."⁴

Ballet mistress- a female member who has the same role as a ballet master.⁵

Ballerina- is a term from Italian origin for a female principal dancer (principal title is also given to men. These dancers frequently dance leading roles) in a ballet company.⁶

Ballon- describes the ability of dancers "to pause while jumping in mid-air. Is also used as a general description of a dancer's skill in jumping."⁷

Choreographer- a person who creates full ballets or who choreographs a variation for a dancer. The choreographer creates by putting steps to music.⁸

Corps de ballet- the largest group of dancers in a company who perform in ballets by doing the same steps. These members are also known as the body of the ballet. The origin of the corps is a result of the Classical ballet era. The corps is a reflection of a company's style and schooling.⁹

¹ J. Allyn & N. Melville, *Dawn Weller: Portrait of a Ballerina*, p. 168.

² A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 46.

³ Anon, 2018. *Ballet Terms Dictionary*. <https://ballethub.com/ballet-terms-dictionary/>, Accessed: 1st December

⁴ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 46.

⁵ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 46.

⁶ D. Craine & J. Mackrell, 2010, *The Oxford Dictionary of Dance*, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/uplib.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/acref/9780199563449.001.0001/acref9780199563449-e-213?rskey=eM4WmW&result=211>, Accessed: 1st December 2018.

⁷ H. Koegler, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Ballet*, p. 53.

⁸ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 46.

⁹ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 192.

Line- the placement of legs, arms and head with alignment of back and hips in proportion with one's body.¹⁰ The use of 'line' is described as "harmonious"¹¹

Pas-de-deux- when two people dance together, in a ballet company- this is usually performed by principal female and male dancers.¹²

Pointe shoes- these shoes are traditionally worn by female ballet dancers and are described as 'blocked shoes.'¹³ The shoes are for the purpose of dancing en pointe or on toes.¹⁴

Pas-de-trois- refers to a dance that consists of three people, one male usually participates with two females.¹⁵

Solo- see Variation below.

Variation- "a solo dance"¹⁶

¹⁰ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 370.

¹¹ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 370.

¹² J. Allyn & N. Melville, *Dawn Weller: Portrait of a Ballerina*, p. 168.

¹³ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 47.

¹⁴ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 47.

¹⁵ Anon, 2018. *Ballet Terms Dictionary*. <https://ballethub.com/ballet-terms-dictionary/>, Accessed: 1st December 2018.

¹⁶ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 198.

Introduction

“The best teacher for an artist is life – but that means the life of all of us, lived together, not regarded through the window of a studio.”

Victor Jara¹⁷

Society is mirrored through activities such as sports or the arts. These in turn are affected by the era in which they are situated. The technique and aesthetics demanded by a given sport or artform reflect this historical influence. Ballet in South Africa is no exception. It has been responsive to the ever-changing environment of South African history. South African ballet has always had individuals who have tried to create productions based on an evolving and fluctuating historical context. The aim of this dissertation is to show that ballet in South Africa has been responsive to its environment. This responsiveness can be viewed through a cultural lens, which will be broken down and explained further in chapter two. By tracing the development of ballet in South Africa, the research will demonstrate that this particular community has constantly engaged with, and responded to, the changing South African environment during and after the apartheid era.

Most dance forms rely on tradition.¹⁸ This is why any history of a dance form will have to rely on the origin of the artform itself. Any person undertaking the task of writing history must be aware of the “practices, processes and interaction”¹⁹ which define a particular historical context. Attention must be given to the dynamics within a society as influenced by certain factors prevalent during the period being observed, such as politics.²⁰ It is important to note the interaction of ballet with society as it can reflect changes and patterns. Ballet has experienced periods both of being popular and unpopular in South Africa. The reasons for this would require further research. The particular focus on ballet, is to draw not just on ballet but on what South African ballet is. The idea of South African ballet, whether it is already something or still being invented in the minds of individuals, speaks to a broader context of what is South African.

¹⁷ B. Masekela, ‘Culture in the New South Africa’, *Scenaria*, p. 7.

¹⁸ J. Cass, *Dancing Through History*, p. x.

¹⁹ C. Rassool & L. Witz. ‘Making Histories.’ *Kronos* 34, 2008, p. 15; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 3. (BSocSci Honours History, University of Pretoria, 2018)

²⁰ H. Wulff, ‘Ethereal expression: Paradoxes of baller as a global physical culture’, 2008, *Ethnography* 9 (4), pp. 519-520.

The history of ballet in South Africa begins with an account of its European roots. Ballet originates from 14th century Italy and the Renaissance. The dance method then spread from Italy to France. Its eventual importation to South Africa occurred when the French arrived in the 17th Century. Three centuries later, particularly in the early and mid-20th Century, South African ballet groups struggled to finance themselves and were in constant communication with the South African government for funding. This constant communication led to the eventual establishment of subsidised ballet companies in 1963. Published literature of a chronological nature on the topic of ballet in South Africa predominantly comes from the 20th Century. These publications include *Ballet in South Africa* (1949) edited by John Worrall and *The History of Ballet in South Africa* (1981) by Marina Grut.

Literature acknowledging the effects of apartheid on ballet has only recently begun to emerge. Richard Glasstone can be seen as an author who acknowledged these side effects on ballet in his work. It is also acknowledged by Felicity Jacqueline Job. Another article by Hilda Roos directly speaks to the effects of apartheid on individuals in the performing arts community, namely from the coloured performing arts Eoan Group, where ballet was remarkably popular.²¹ Grut will be used as a main reference but it should be acknowledged, as Job notes, that Grut does not acknowledge the full context of her time. Thus, Marina Grut has left the impact of apartheid on ballet as a grey area of discussion within the book.

In *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories* edited by Sharon Friedman, there are some chapters on ballet, but the book as a whole is centred around dance in South Africa. Throughout the book, there is acknowledgement of the effects of grand and petty apartheid structures on the dance community and how they had responded to it. Grand apartheid enforced separation of people by “national races”²² and by physical geographical location.²³ Petty apartheid measures included the establishment of separate amenities for different races, such as bathrooms or transport.²⁴

This research aims to highlight the fragmented nature of scholarship on South African ballet and aims to address this in part through a history of ballet in the country through a cultural

²¹ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 1.

²² R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, p. 126.

²³ M. Roberts, ‘The Ending of Apartheid: Shifting Inequalities in South Africa’, *Geography* 79 (1), 1994, p. 58.

²⁴ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, p. 126;

R. Stokes, ‘Reviewed Work(s): A City Divided: Johannesburg and Soweto by Nigel Mandy’, *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 36 (1), 1987, p. 196.

lens. It is important to note that culture itself has many different elements that will be emphasised and broken down in chapter two. By the end of the research one may see how ballet can be a reflection of the cultural milieu throughout South African history. As Sharon Friedman states: “The ideas and concepts which inform the eras discussed are a reflection of the journey the dance community has taken but are also a minefield of assertions, opinions and discourses.”²⁵ Similarly, the history of ballet in South Africa reveals the continuous interaction that it has had with South African society throughout history due to various factors of social change.²⁶

Rationale of Study

The aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate that ballet, as a once predominantly European artform, has been responsive to the constant change in South Africa’s historical climate. Although there is a unique style for writing balletic history, the research will attempt to find a balance between staying true to balletic history while giving acknowledgment to sport, cultural and social history writing.

Both primary and secondary sources will be pieced together to make a contribution to the gap that exists not only in the chronological structure of South African ballet history, but also in the academic acknowledgment of the apartheid system and the effect it has had on the performing arts in South Africa. Yet again, it must be stated that this is a part of a burgeoning contemporary academic field. The focus will be on ballet in South Africa, but there will be the occasional mention of other artforms which were affected by the system of apartheid.

The research will demonstrate that the government subsidised artforms in South Africa in an attempt to attain control over the performing arts through various forms of capital (which were not just financial in nature but also cultural).²⁷ Other topics like decoloniality and ballet methods, will be discussed to determine if there could ever be a South African ballet method.

²⁵ S. Friedman, ‘Chapter One: Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’, in S. Friedman e.d. *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 14.

²⁶ D. Mills, *Dance and Politics: Moving Beyond Boundaries*, p. 1.

G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs (e.d.s), ‘Introduction’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* p. 5.

²⁷ S. Friedman, ‘Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’ In S. Friedman (e.d.) *Postapartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 1; K. Johnstone, ‘Community in Concert: Transformation, Development and Community Dance’ In S. Friedman (e.d.) *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 147.

This can be compared to the origin of the Cuban ballet method, known as the Alonso Method. It should be noted that these topics are not new to dance history.

There is potential for research on ballet schools in South Africa. However, the history of ballet in South Africa is inescapably centered on an elitist culture; such elitist ballet companies are often where children go to fulfil their dance careers. Children who wish to pursue a career in dance are often expected to adhere to the societal norms and cultures espoused by these companies. Furthermore, socio-economic structures within society can also influence the ability for certain children to access the resources required for the pursuit of such a career. Therefore, the observation of elitist ballet during the timeframe of the research can serve as a reflection of the changes that have taken place over time in South African society. The research presented in this paper can potentially be a building block for any future research which is not primarily focused on elitist ballet. Such a study would need to rely on oral interviews as research in this area is scarce. I did make an attempt to engage with individuals through an organisation that would have had the potential to give me insight into South African ballet schools during apartheid. However, the organisation showed a lack of interest in handing out questionnaires to past ballet members. A last possible avenue, seeking to understand why ballet was so popular in South Africa, for example, as noted, in the Coloured communities in Cape Town, would need further research.

Methodology

The research will be multifaceted in terms of its source material. There will be qualitative research ranging from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources used in this dissertation predominantly consist of ballet programmes and newspaper articles that have either been supplied by Nigel Hannah (Head of the Dance Department at Pro Arte Alphen Park), Esther Meewes (relative of the author) or from the State Theatre Archive (which has been moved to the UNISA Archive in Pretoria, South Africa). The State Theatre, previously PACT Archive has come with some challenges based on it being part of Special Collections still being processed. Bronwen Lovegood (a past employee of the State Theatre) has been helpful regarding the finding of information and the locating of sources. Archival documents from the State Archive in Pretoria have also been used for context and added information. The Ar(ts)chive located in the Wits Fine Arts building in Johannesburg will also be utilised. An interesting element that is worth exploration for further research is the question of

artefacts (such as costumes and ballet shoes) in the archive. Many of these organisations do not have the space to keep such items. The secondary sources are made up of published books (some provided by Christopher and Tanja Montague who are teachers at the Pro Arte Senior Ballet Academy), unpublished theses, as well as newspapers and magazines (based on date of publication).

Lastly, the research will have some balletic history structure. This means that there will be mention of prominent individuals, dates of performances, and names of ballets to provide a few of the factors that make up balletic history structure as well as the balletic repertoire cannon that has been used by companies. However, this will not be the sole purpose of the research which instead centres around the asking of critical questions and engaging with the constantly changing environment of South Africa's history throughout the 20th and 21st century.

Literature Review

Secondary literature on the topic of ballet in South Africa has a significant number of chronological gaps. Grut herself recognised that the literature was “fragmented.”²⁸ Apart from these chronologically fragmented publications from the 20th century, which include books, newspaper articles, photographs, ballet programmes and other forms of archival information, there is a rising amount of more recent publications acknowledging the effects of apartheid on this area of study. There are also limited records about ballet dancers outside of balletic companies. The literature review detailed below is categorised according to South African Ballet Literature, and literature about the arts in South Africa. As the research is centred around ballet, these two categories will be brief with further reading lists provided. All literature will be chronologically ordered within their categories.

South African Ballet Literature

Ballet in South Africa (1949) was a collection edited by John Worrall who wanted to “record, from different aspects, the history of ballet in South Africa.”²⁹ Throughout the publication,

²⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. xiii.

²⁹ J. Worrall, ‘Introduction’ in *Ballet in South Africa* e.d. J. Worrall, , p. 13.

references to World War I and World War II are made. Without any form of a fully functional ballet company in South Africa at that point, constant links were drawn to dancers and ballet companies from overseas. This publication does not acknowledge or mention the rise of the National Party in 1948. This may be because the full system of apartheid was not yet established. However, it is revealing to note that there is no mention or discussion of race in the publication. Hence, it has stayed true to how balletic history is usually recorded, but it lacks acknowledgment of South Africa's changing historical climate of that time. However, the book will be useful for providing context.

Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa is a chronologically and autobiographically structured book published in 1980 by Jane Allyn (a former ballet dancer) with photographs by David Montgomery Cooper (the resident photographer for some time with the Cape Performing Arts Board). It is made clear by Allyn that "this is not a history; it is about ballet in South Africa today. On the following pages the dancers, directors, choreographers and designers, all speak for themselves; and so do the photographs."³⁰ One can disagree with Allyn as the publication is a form of history; it shows people's opinions and how dancers lived at that particular time, within that particular context.

Marina Grut's *The History of Ballet in South Africa* was published in 1981 and is still the only secondary source that delineates ballet's development in South Africa from 1781 to 1976.³¹ Grut compared writing the book to an "immense jigsaw puzzle".³² The purpose of the publication was to build a history for the then newly subsidised ballet companies and to add to the 1949 publication of *Ballet in South Africa*. Grut discusses the University of Cape Town Ballet and declares that the group has the historical status of being multiracial.³³ Yet, Grut does not interact with the true nature of the system of apartheid in the performing arts sector in terms of segregation law. Nor is there acknowledgment of what really defined a multiracial organisation such as the UCT Ballet School and the UCT Ballet. This is discussed and highlighted later by author Richard Glasstone and scholar Felicity Job. The book will otherwise provide context, autobiographies and chronological structure.

In 1988, Amanda Botha published a book that traced the life of a ballet dancer titled *Phyllis Spira: A Tribute*. The book mostly looks at Spira's life in ballet. However, there is a chapter

³⁰ J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 8.

³¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 1 & 333.

³² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. xiii.

³³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 33-37.

that mentions government subsidised ballet companies.³⁴ In the 1990s, Spira and her husband ran an organisation called Dance For All. The biographical nature of this book will be helpful in ascertaining the effect of subsidised ballet companies on the lives of dancers. Furthermore, as Spira was part of the Dance for All foundation, the story of how she started her career gives insight into a woman who was part of an organisation that promotes dance education for children in townships.

Richard Glasstone, a past ballet dancer and pupil under Dulcie Howes, wrote a partial memoir titled *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa* published in 1996. Apart from the story of Dulcie Howes, the woman who founded the first ballet company in South Africa, there is mention of some of her students. Some of her past students include Richard Glasstone and David Poole. When discussing Johaar Mosaval and David Poole, Glasstone notes that both coloured men had trained in prominent white communities. However, there seemed to have been what Glasstone calls a “hierarchy of pigmentation.”³⁵ The book also mentions prominent dancers who once danced for the University of Cape Town Ballet, which eventually became the Cape Performing Arts Board when the government subsidised the company. Glasstone acknowledges the lack of engagement with race by University Ballet and CAPAB. Therefore, Glasstone’s publication will be useful as it provides a perspective from the time (Glasstone was part of the UCT Ballet Company and then CAPAB).

Gary Rosen’s (1998) unpublished thesis titled ‘Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955 to 1959, Including a Pre-1955 Biography’ traces the life of Frank Staff as a ballet dancer and choreographer. Rosen acknowledged apartheid legislation in the thesis and notes that Staff “tended to be apolitical, and those who worked with him throughout the 1950s confirmed that the South African Ballet Company (Staff’s ballet company) was not a political instrument.”³⁶ Rosen traced South African ballet history through Staff’s ballets. Mention of CAPAB, PACT, NAPAC and PACOFS are made throughout the research. Rosen conducted several interviews and used sources from Newspapers for chronological structure. Photographs also aided the author to record the history that Staff was a part of.³⁷ Photographs from the South African Ballet Company,

³⁴ A. Botha, *Phyllis Spira: A Tribute*, pp. 53-55.

³⁵ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

³⁶ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959, Including a Pre-1955 Bibliography”, (Doctor of Philosophy, UCT, 1998), p. viii.

³⁷ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, pp. ix, x & xi.

according to Rosen, disappeared once the company closed in 1959.³⁸ The thesis has multiple benefits to the research, providing information prior to the 1950s, giving insight into Staff's political beliefs and discussion about Staff's modern South African ballets.

Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories (2012) is a collection of essays edited by Sharon Friedman. The publication date demonstrates a “fragmented”³⁹ gap in the publications about dance in South Africa. The book is meant to invoke a discussion surrounding dance within the post-apartheid context. It looks at multiple cultural elements that have affected members of the dance community. The book mentions topics within the context of ballet, but it also looks at African dance, South African choreographers, and disabilities in dance.⁴⁰ Stratification and tension caused by the ongoing debate of tradition versus modernity for the dance community are highlighted as well.⁴¹ The aforementioned topics will be helpful when looking at post-apartheid ballet as well as for analysing areas neglected in other studies.⁴² On the topic of ballet specifically, the book acknowledges that the relevant literature never addressed “socio-political contexts.”⁴³ Based on the timeframe on which the book centres, it is clear that the system of apartheid affected the dancers' identities. The book supports my argument that the dance community has been and was responsive to the historical context that members were placed within.

Felicity Job is the author of an unpublished thesis titled ‘Butoh Ballet’ (2014) that situates ballet within the post-colonial and post-apartheid context. Job conducted workshops with Cape Town City Ballet dancers by exposing them to the *butoh* dance form, a reinvented ancient Japanese dance method. Job connects her interest of interculturalism in ballet based on her own personal heritage as a coloured woman in the post-apartheid context.⁴⁴ Job has sourced information for the thesis from all the major authors reviewed here and interviews with members from Cape Town City Ballet as noted.⁴⁵ Job considered *butoh* as a reinvented form of dance method that allows for individual aesthetic, while ballet, by contrast, demands

³⁸ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. x.

³⁹ S. Friedman, e.d. *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. vii.

⁴⁰ S. Friedman, e.d. *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. viii.

⁴¹ S. Friedman, e.d. *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. vii.

⁴² A. Sichel, ‘Gate-crashing Prejudice and Perceptions: The Enduring Legacy of Arts and Dance Festivals in Post-Apartheid South Africa.’ In *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*. E.d. S. Friedman, p. 107.

⁴³ S. Friedman, e.d. *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. viii.

⁴⁴ J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 5. (Masters in Dance, UCT, 2014)

⁴⁵ J. F. Job, ‘Butoh-Ballet’, p. 7.

an aesthetic through “codified patterns”.⁴⁶ Job’s research on interculturalism, post-colonialism and not breaking away from ballet whilst finding individual expression without materialist aesthetic value, is relevant for discussion about ballet in the apartheid and post-apartheid context. The source also provides context regarding the apartheid era.

Hilde Roos’ article titled ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group, the legacy of an opera company from the apartheid era’ was published in 2014. The article tells the story of the coloured community performing arts group, the Eoan Group, which was formed in 1933 and was located in District Six, and later in Athlone.⁴⁷ Although the article is centred around opera, there is some information pertaining to the ballet division of the group. Mention is made of the ballet dancer and past director of the Cape Performing Arts Board, David Poole. Regarding Poole, Roos like Glasstone (1996 and 2018) acknowledges that being light skinned allowed him to be able to be able to perform with CAPAB.⁴⁸ Roos starts by looking at the organisation’s 80th year anniversary of being a cultural organisation in South Africa (2013). The group, according to Roos, is currently still a company and ballet school.⁴⁹ The effects of apartheid on the group are highlighted particularly in relation to identity and cultural politics throughout the history of the group’s inception. The effects of apartheid on the members of the Eoan Group and how they viewed themselves are discussed. Roos attributes these effects to structures of grand and petty apartheid.

The multi-authored article ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’ (2016) argues that ballet is an artform because it demands an aesthetic through the training of dancers in a particular way specifically for classical ballet. The classical ballet technique is globally acknowledged. The aesthetic thereof is subject to change over time while classical balletic technique has often remained standardised with emphasis on certain elements to gain an aesthetic. The group of dancers used for the study were required to perform certain balletic positions *en pointe*. These positions were: retiré,

⁴⁶ J. F. Job, ‘Butoh-Ballet’, p. 8.

⁴⁷ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 1.

⁴⁸ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 14.

⁴⁹ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 17.

arabesque and a penché.⁵⁰ The study concluded that older ballet dancers with more experience knew their bodies well enough to already have an aesthetical presence and strong classical technique. This meant that dancers with senior roles in a ballet company had less trouble getting into the position and balancing for longer than dancers with more junior roles in the company.⁵¹ While the authors argue that ballet dancers are artists, they also give some acknowledgement to the debated idea that ballet is a skill built over time. However, not enough attention was given to the fact that often young dancers who study dance are educated in dance anatomy as well. Once dancers join a company, they start as Aspirants where they study not just dance but also dance anatomy and so forth. Therefore, it can be stated that the ballet community is aware of the importance of understanding the body for the sport or the artform. The article provides insight into the debate as to whether ballet is a sport or an art.

‘Confluences 9: Deciphering decolonisation in Dance Pedagogy in the 21st century in Cape Town, South Africa’ is a published conference proceedings. The conference on decoloniality in dance was held at the University of Cape Town by the Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies in 2017. Contributors to the document included a diverse range of academics and individuals trained in dance. In the document, emphasis is placed on how the dancer’s body and how individuals can break away from the restraints placed on dance by social norms. These social norms may be sourced from “institutionalisation, communal or cultural; and media related oppression.”⁵² One of the essays in the document by Lliane Loots, is titled “Learning to Speak in my Mother Tongue: Ruminating on Contemporary Decolonising Dance Practices for Myself and my African Continent”. Loots understands decoloniality to be a way of thought as to how the individual defines and identifies themselves from the personal but also the political as an African.⁵³ Loots states that she wishes for dance in South Africa to become an environment where people will learn what it means to be a person and a human being.⁵⁴ On the topic of ballet, Loots discusses how the dance form can often be connected to coloniality based on the association that it still has to

⁵⁰ C. Dafkin, A. Green, S. Kerr, B. Oliver, W. McKinon, S. Wood & A. Woodiwiss. ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’, *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences* 22 (3:2), 2016, p. 883.

⁵¹ C. Dafkin, et. al, ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’, *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences* 22 (3:2), 2016, p. 890.

⁵² G.M. Samuel, ‘Welcome Letter.’ in *Confluences 9: Deciphering Dance Pedagogy in the 21st century*, p. i.

⁵³ L. Loots, ‘Learning to Speak in my Mother Tongue: Ruminating on Contemporary Decolonising Dance Practices for Myself and my African Continent.’ in *Confluences 9: Deciphering Dance Pedagogy in the 21st century*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ L. Loots, ‘Learning to Speak in my Mother Tongue.’, p. 9

Eurocentrism. Loots recommends that ballet dancers work towards finding a way of movement that is unique to the individual's "own political and spiritual being."⁵⁵

Pieces of a Dream: The Story of Dance for All (2017) was initially published in 2013. The book tells the story of the non-profit organisation run by Philip Boyd and Phyllis Spira (addressed in chapter three). The programme was initially a product of David Poole from the 1960s. The organisation's purpose was to provide children from townships in Cape Town with dance education.⁵⁶ The foundation's life patron is stated to be Archbishop Desmond Tutu.⁵⁷ The story traces some of the students' stories who went through the programme and managed to have successful dance careers thereafter. As the foundation was initially formed with the purpose of spreading dance education, the information in this book will allow the research to gain more insight into how dance education was affected by the apartheid regime through the implementation of petty and grand apartheid measures. This will provide context and serve as an example as to how dance has the power to bring people together.

Similarly, in *Dance and Politics: Moving Beyond Boundaries*, published in 2017 and written by Dana Mills, Mills demonstrated that the political is connected to how dance can be "reflections on the moving body, spaces of action and our interpretation of politics and political theory more broadly."⁵⁸ Mills' work can enhance the argument that dance is connected to the political. Mills' work is not the first to touch on this topic, but her it is relevant and recently published. Her chapter on gumboot dancing in South Africa also provides context for the research as well as for a relevant discussion on the arts in South Africa in general. This chapter can show how art is a reflection of the political in South African society.

Lastly, *David Poole: A Life Blighted by Apartheid* is a book published in 2018 by author Richard Glasstone. The author has set the context between the years 1926 to 1991. Glasstone has contextualised ballet in the apartheid and post-apartheid context. He acknowledges the effects that both petty and grand apartheid had on the arts community in South Africa, as well as on South Africans as individuals. Topics include the EOAN Group, Denis Hatfield, CAPAB, Frank Staff, Johaar Mosaval, Marina Grut, the ANC and Dance For All. Glasstone

⁵⁵ L. Loots, 'Learning to Speak in my Mother Tongue.', p. 14;

S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p. 10.

⁵⁶ P. Boyd, 'Forward' in *Pieces of a Dream* by G. Warren-Brown, p. 5.

⁵⁷ P. Boyd, 'Forward' in *Pieces of a Dream* by G. Warren-Brown, p. 5.

⁵⁸ D. Mills, *Dance and Politics: Moving Beyond Boundaries*, p. 1. Recommended by Dr Sarah Duff from the University of Witwatersrand, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research.

places emphasis on the coloured community in Cape Town with reference to Johaar Mosaval and with particular focus on David Poole. Bibliographies of other dancers have also been included in the publication.

The literature discussed does allow for the dissertation to reference context, as well as past and more recent discussions about ballet during and after apartheid. However, there is fragmentation within the literature which would have to be supplemented by primary sources. A considerable increase of secondary sources can be seen from 2012 onwards (with minimal chronological research) which is a strength. However, there is a significant gap between the first secondary source of 1949 until the second in 1980. This has been noted by many scholars in this literature review. Grut has covered the majority of ballet's history in South Africa (up until the date of publication) prior to the first publication of 1949. This can leave space for bias in the book and the lack of sources from her covered timeframe. Not many scholars prior to Glasstone's 1996 publication acknowledge a 'grey area' that was apartheid policy and its effect that it had on the performing arts which, as previously mentioned, has been acknowledged by scholars such as Friedman et. al. and Job.

Literature about the Arts in South Africa

Due to the implementation of ballet companies in South Africa by the National Party (NP) government in 1963, it is important to include a broader discussion about the performing arts as a whole in South Africa as they were also influenced by the previous government.

Performing Arts in South Africa: cultural aspirations of a young country was published in 1969 by the Republic of South Africa. The publication portrays the South African government as the reason why the 'arts' (Eurocentrically defined) had flourished in South Africa. The arts that are mentioned in this publication are ballet, orchestras, opera and drama. The apartheid government emphasised these areas in South Africa because it was viewed as a means to showcase the "degree of civilisation"⁵⁹ of the country. The chronological structure of the book ranges from approximately 1781 to 1969.⁶⁰ No author or editor has been named or linked to the publication. There is mention of contributors to the booklet, but none have

⁵⁹ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, Introduction.

⁶⁰ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, Introduction.

been specifically linked to chapters. With this biased publication it is evident that propaganda was used by the apartheid government in an attempt to maintain a strong influence over the performing arts in South Africa.

Theatre and Change in South Africa (1996) has multiple authors who have contributed to the book. Its purpose was to address how social change as well as transformation would require theatres to address and speak to new stories and new voices.⁶¹ Two chapters of particular interest to this research are ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’⁶² and ‘The Future of the Performing Arts Councils in a New South Africa.’⁶³ The book situates the performing arts within the political climate of the early days of the post-apartheid era. Another element discussed is what and where South African culture was heading at that time. The “high arts”⁶⁴ as discussed by Carol Steinberg are said to have been associated with the legacy of the “first world”⁶⁵, “white”⁶⁶ and “nineteenth century European civilisation.”⁶⁷ Steinberg mentions that the 1990s brought about a change to this conception through inclusion and outreach programs by PACT.⁶⁸ The contributors to this book provide historical context and a broader perspective to consider. Ballet does not directly appear in the research, but drama is a related performing art form which will provide a collective understanding in the context of the performing arts in South Africa.

South African Theatre in the Melting Pot (2003) contextualises theatre in South Africa after transformation through a collection of interviews conducted by Rolf Solberg. Featured interviewees include Janice Honeyman, an actress, director and author, Walter Chakela, a playwright, poet and theatrical director, and Antjie Krog, the well-known poet, writer and academic.⁶⁹ The literature contextualises South African theatre from its arrival in colonial

⁶¹ G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs (e.d.s), ‘Introduction’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* p. 4.

⁶² C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 246.

⁶³ A. Blumer, ‘The Future of the Performing Arts Councils in a New South Africa’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 260.

⁶⁴ C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 255.

⁶⁵ C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 255.

⁶⁶ C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 255.

⁶⁷ C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 255.

⁶⁸ C. Steinberg, ‘PACT: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (e.d.s) G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs, p. 256.

⁶⁹ R. Solberg, *South African Theatre in the Melting Pot*, L. Wright (e.d.), pp. 105, 145 & 209.

South Africa under the British, and the changes it has undergone. These changes are a result of the political and historical shifts that took place in the lead up to, during and after the apartheid era.⁷⁰ Solberg has arranged the interviews so as to discuss how theatre adapts to the social and political environment in which it finds itself.

Art and the End of Apartheid (2009) by John Peffer further contextualises South African art in its unique history of struggle and racialism in the apartheid era.⁷¹ In a country with multiple peoples and ethnic groups, culture and art play an important role in the expression of the unique diversity that is so prevalent in South African society. Peffer also addresses what many authors in the post-apartheid context speak of in other academic disciplines, namely the “problematised notion of a ‘post-apartheid.’ What was the end of apartheid?”.⁷² Peffer’s work acknowledges the “grey area”⁷³ that artists experience as a result of a mixed South African culture. This source will be useful in providing context, structure and knowledge that can be applied to South African balletic history and the research to follow.

The Art of Life in South Africa (2016) is a book with extensive research conducted by Daniel Magaziner on the apartheid government funded Ndaleni Art School for black artists in KwaZulu-Natal (previously known as the Natal province). In the book, Magaziner questions the nature of apartheid and explores the reasons behind why a white supremacist government would fund a black art school.⁷⁴ The school was a result of the 1953 Bantu Education Act. The purpose was to “preserve the absolute distinction between African (or “Bantu”) and European education.”⁷⁵ Magaziner makes the argument that the South African art community did not wish to align itself to the apartheid regime. Although ballet does not feature in the book, it can also provide historical context for the research.

After spending almost an entire “lifetime”⁷⁶ writing about the performing arts in South Africa, Adrienne Sichel combined articles from when she was a journalist with other pieces of work to create *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary dance* (2018). Sichel notes that there are fragmented gaps within the literature which are impossible for one

⁷⁰ R. Solberg, *South African Theatre in the Melting Pot*, pp. 1-8.

⁷¹ J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. xvi.

⁷² J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. xvi.

⁷³ J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. 5.

⁷⁴ D. Magaziner, *The Art of Life in South Africa*, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁵ D. Magaziner, *The Art of Life in South Africa*, p. 3.

⁷⁶ J. Denyschen, Book Launch of *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance* by Adrienne Sichel at Dance Umbrella Africa 31st of March 2019.

person to fill. Ballet is acknowledged in the book with some reference to Joburg Ballet, Friends of the Ballet, Cape Town City Ballet, the Cuban and South African teaching exchange (with reference given to Dirk Badenhorst and Alicia Alonso), Johannesburg Art Ballet Music and Drama School, the Cape Town International Ballet Competition, and the Johannesburg Youth Ballet.⁷⁷ Topics discussed include what South Africans dance about, gender, biographies, history and identity. Sichel looks at dance in the post-apartheid context, and how dance was impacted by the system of apartheid.

Christiaan Harris' previously unpublished Master's Dissertation titled 'Spiegel im Spiegel: Interpreting and Reflecting on the Stage Designs of Johan Engels with Special Reference to Tristan und Isolde (1985)' was published in 2018. Harris worked with the State Theatre Archives for PACT and State Theatre prior to the transfer of the Archive to the UNISA Archive. Harris did a significant amount of research with the PACT State Theatre Archive with Bronwen Lovegood. Harris mentions the ballet *Raka* (1967) in terms of stage and costume design.⁷⁸ The dissertation will also be useful for the historical context of the research.

The literature regarding the performing arts stems from multiple artistic backgrounds all rooted within the broader South African context. This can be considered a strength because it exposes the research on the impact of apartheid and post-apartheid aspects on the arts in South Africa. There is again a significant gap in the literature which starts with a government publication from 1969 (implying that the research was subject to propaganda). The literature then jumps to 1996 to a post-apartheid context. Despite this gap, another strength that can be mentioned is the rising increase in secondary literature regarding this topic. Further primary research would be needed to supplement the chronological gaps in these secondary sources. This would need to be done in another research paper of its own. The focus of this research will be centred around ballet as performing art and use the aforementioned sources for context and observation.

⁷⁷ A. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, pp. 168-169, 179 & 191.

⁷⁸ C. Harris, "Spiegel im Spiegel: Interpreting and Reflecting on the Stage Designs of Johan Engels with Special Reference to Tristan und Isolde (1985)", pp. 26 & 39.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter provides an overview of the origins of ballet in the Renaissance, the roots of ballet in South Africa from the 18th century onwards, up to and including the establishment of government subsidised professional ballet companies in 1963. The chapter also draws on examples of how the ballet community has shown a continuous responsiveness to the environment in which they are situated. The contextualisation of ballet in South Africa draws on examples that demonstrate the apartheid government's attempt to monopolise the performing arts through methods of grand and petty apartheid. The effects of apartheid on the performing arts, and on life in South Africa in general, are observed through the various groups that were established and through photographs. The chapter summarises how the ballet community was affected by the political factors and the historical period in which their agents were situated.

The second chapter focuses on ballet in Cape Town and details the pioneers of ballet including Helen Webb, Helen White and Dulcie Howes. Particular emphasis is placed on Howes as she established the first ballet company that was attached to a university, namely the University of Cape Town Ballet, founded in 1932. UCT Ballet was then incorporated into the Cape Performing Arts Board (CAPAB), which was a subsidised company founded by the government in 1963.

Greater emphasis is placed on chapter three due to the complexity of ballet in the Gauteng (former Transvaal) region. The development of ballet in the then Transvaal area is traced chronologically in this chapter. Ballet clubs and societies existed prior to the establishment of Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal Ballet (PACT) in 1963. PACT was a government subsidised body. PACT Ballet led to the development of the State Theatre Ballet (STB) in 1997 which shut down in 2000. The chapter then looks at the formation of the South African Ballet Theatre (SABT) in 2001. SABT was renamed Mzansi Ballet after a collaboration between SABT and Mzansi Productions in 2013. The company was then renamed again in 2014 to Joburg Ballet, which is currently still operating in Braamfontein. The discussion surrounding the ballet companies' dependency on the government, based on geographical location, is taken into account.

The fourth chapter concentrates on an in-depth analysis of South African ballets. This chapter focuses on the stories that these ballets were attempting to tell, which, in turn, demonstrates that the various choreographers were responding to their environment through the art form.

Ballets discussed include *Raka* (1967), *Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi)* (1970), *Mantis Moon* (1970), *The Rain Queen* (1971), *Nongause* (1973), *Mantis* (1991), *Incwadi* (2000) and *The Nutcracker* (2008). These ballets contain Afrocentric themes which speak of the ballet community's responsiveness and their desire to discover a story for all South Africans.

The fifth chapter places South African ballet in a post-apartheid context. A brief paradigm will be drawn from South African academia to discuss whether the state can be considered post-colonial or decolonial.⁷⁹ The discussion will look at examples from the ballet community responding to the change that occurred in South African society as the apartheid regime lost power. The idea of the creation of a South African style through learning from the Cuban balletic method will be discussed.⁸⁰ The call for people to be united through the performing arts and through sports in South Africa is a result of the balletic community's response to the environment in which they are situated.

⁷⁹ P. Lalu, 'When was South African History ever Postcolonial?' *Kronos* 34, 'Making Histories', 2008, p. 268.

⁸⁰ SABC Digital News, 2017. *Soweto Dance Project launched*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=544&v=S5Dw0Y6CSPM, Accessed: 8th April 2019.

Chapter One

The Arrival of Ballet in South Africa

“For Art is the one indestructible force of the world. It brings beauty and a magic calmness needed at all times and surely at no time more needed than now.” - Anton Dolin⁸¹

The choreographer William Forsythe once said: “You look at a ballet and you read history. I look at a ballet and all I see is history.”⁸² Joan Cass, the author of *Dancing through History*, defines dance as “the making of rhythmical steps and movements.”⁸³ Dance has been part of human societies throughout history, and it has been defined as part of culture, entertainment, art and sport.⁸⁴ Cass states that dance history requires not just the unpacking of facts but also interpretation as dance is continued by individuals with personal philosophies. Another strong influence that history holds in dance is tradition. This can be seen in the way people are trained to dance, in their attitudes towards creativity in dance, in the social life of dancers, and in how dancers earn money for dancing.⁸⁵ Another important factor for dance is how history is affected by patterns and changes over time. In the context of ballet, this is reflected in the changes in what dancers wear, how dancers look, the kinds of ballets that are performed, and how attitudes towards ballet as a form of cultural or physical expression have altered.

The Origins of Ballet in Europe

Ballet has its roots in the twilight of the Renaissance. It started in the courts of Italian noblemen courts and then spread to France.⁸⁶ The term *ballet* itself is the noun *dance* in Italian, which was adopted during the Renaissance. The de Medici family were situated in Florence, Italy. The family had risen to wealth and social status through trade and banking.⁸⁷ Catherine de Medici, a daughter of the de Medici family, was orphaned at birth and was

⁸¹ A. Dolin, ‘Forward’ in J. Worrall (e.d.) *Ballet in South Africa*, p. 12.

⁸² H. Hammond, ‘Dancing against History: (The Royal) Ballet, Forsythe, Foucault, Brecht, and the BBC.’ p. 121.

⁸³ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. ix.

⁸⁴ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. ix.

⁸⁵ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. ix & x.

⁸⁶ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 3; A. De Mille, *The Dance Book*, pp. 79, 80, 81 & 82.

⁸⁷ R.J. Knecht, *Profiles in Power: Catherine De’ Medici*, p. xxi; J. Schimmelpfenning, ‘Ballet’ in *A Handbook of Cultural Economics* e.d. R. Towse, p. 85.

constantly subjected to the dangers of the civil war in Florence.⁸⁸ Based on the status that her family held, Catherine was always aware of her political environment and learnt how to navigate herself within political situations. She later became the wife of King Henri II of France when she was fourteen years old.⁸⁹ As was common, Catherine was married for political reasons, based on the advice of Pope Clement VII.⁹⁰ She proved to be influential in French history and was arguably the reason that ballet was introduced into the French courts.⁹¹ During the Renaissance, ballet was used to open special occasions like royal births, marriages, treaties, firework displays, events where new machines were unveiled, and allegorical plays with dancing and water merriments, which were displays of wealth and power. Dancing masters from Italy were brought to teach ballet in France.⁹²

To show an early example of the intimate connection between ballet and politics, it should be noted that Catherine de Medici used ballet as a means of political leverage in Poland in 1537. The Polish ambassadors visited her in the hope of making an alliance by offering the Polish throne to Catherine's son, Henri d'Anjou.⁹³ She held a ballet for the Polish ambassadors titled *Ballet des Polonais*. The ballet was choreographed by the Queen's personal ballet master and consisted of some of the Queen's sixteen court ladies, who entered the hall on a silvery rock.⁹⁴ Due to the fact that many courtly entertainments had political undertones, the purpose of the ballet was to show France's loyalty to Poland.⁹⁵

Catherine de Medici's ballets were 'classier' versions of country dances; she would add poems and speeches about victories from war, visits, births or marriages. She subtly stated her political outlook through the 'pretty picture' provided by ballet. Ballet was performed for nobles with certain movements and patterns. Any person permitted to be in court could dance. The technique of ballet to this day is based on how those nobles moved. Royalty were expected and trained to move with controlled and graceful movements. Royalty and nobility were the only ones who were given the opportunity to perform in the early ballets. The

⁸⁸ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. 63.

⁸⁹ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. 63.

⁹⁰ J. Cass, *Dancing through History*, p. 63.

⁹¹ A. De Mille, *The Dance Book*, pp. 79, 80, 81 & 82; C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, pp. 60, 61, 62 & 63; A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 3; R.J. Knecht, *Profiles in Power: Catherine De' Medici*, p. xxi.

⁹² C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, pp. 60, 61, 62 & 63; H. Wulff, 'Ethereal expression: Paradoxes of baller as a global physical culture', 2008, *Ethnography* 9 (4), p. 520.

⁹³ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 62.

⁹⁴ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 62.

⁹⁵ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 62.

symbolism that ballet held for political life demonstrates that ballet has constantly adapted to the its own local context.⁹⁶

King Louis XIV was and is still known for his elaborate attire and stubbornness as a ballet dancer. The popularity of ballet increased in France when the King opened the ‘The Royal Academy of Dancing’ (RAD), which still exists today. It was at the RAD that a ballet master by the name of Beauchamps established the five positions of the feet which has been adopted as basic technique and is still influential in the 21st century. Acrobatic movements originated from street players and circus performers from Italy.

The nobility were only allowed to perform publicly after 1681 and even then, they were dressed in clothing that was not suitable for movement. Balletic attire, especially for females, has been influenced by specific historical movements within the art form. These movements are the Romantic, the Classical and the Modern Eras in balletic history.⁹⁷

The Romantic Era brought ballet onto the stage with passion. Its origin was in France with the first production of the Classical ballet, *La Sylphide*. The ballet was performed in London, New York, Berlin, St Petersburg, and Vienna. The pointe shoe, that is worn by all female dancers in the Modern Era, first appeared in this production during the first half of the 19th Century. Women dominated ballet in this Era and the dominant aesthetic demanded that women be thin and graceful. The Romantic costume was a calf-length dress which indicates social change for the representation of women. The Classical Era, in the 19th century, moved ballet into a professional frame in the form of theatrical performances.⁹⁸ The tutu was created in this period, which revealed the legs in their entirety for females. It originated in France. There are various kinds of tutus which show social change, and many are still worn today. Its purpose was to allow the audience to see the beautiful footwork whilst simultaneously allowing for greater mobility. The Modern Era was only set in motion towards the end of the 19th century. Ballets at this time were produced based on the ideas of “The Orient”.⁹⁹ The idea of the Orient¹⁰⁰ refers to places such as “Turkey, Greece, the Middle East, and North

⁹⁶ A. De Mille, *The Dance Book*, pp. 79, 80, 81 & 82; C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, pp. 60, 61, 62 & 63; R.J. Knecht, *Profiles in Power: Catherine De’ Medici*, p. xxi.

⁹⁷ A. De Mille, *The Dance Book*, p.84; A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, pp. 3 & 18.

⁹⁸ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 96.

⁹⁹ V. Heyworth-Dune, C. Dunford, A. Fischel, K. Hennessy & Z. Rutland, *Ballet: The Definitive Illustrated Story*, p. 148.

¹⁰⁰ This became known as the idea of ‘Orientalism’ based on the perception of certain countries from a Western standpoint (V. Heyworth- Dune et al., 2018: p. 148). Academic discussion about Orientalism in ballet is not

Africa.”¹⁰¹The ‘Orient’ was always linked to ideology surrounding “the exotic”¹⁰² and “the mysterious.”¹⁰³ The idea of ‘Oriental’ dance can be traced back to the Byzantine Empire’s¹⁰⁴ connections to Ancient Egypt.¹⁰⁵ Ballets based on the Orient, choreographed in the late 19th century, such as *Schéhérazade* and *Cleopatra*, were all created by Michel Fokine’s own ideas of the ‘Orient’ and are not true reflections of the countries listed above in respect to their cultures.¹⁰⁶ Dancers at this time started to wear light dresses or tunics (worn by men or women) and the hairstyles became freer when compared to the more conservative buns from the Romantic and Classical Era balletic aesthetics. This change indicates the key influences of culture and social developments on the evolution of ballet as it represents the structure and aesthetic prevalent within the period in which it displays itself.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the art forms and physical practices from each Era demonstrate a responsiveness to their respective environments.

Ballet’s Journey to South Africa

Turning to South Africa, ballet blossomed in 19th century Cape Town. The period of the transition of ballet to the Cape occurred during the Romantic Era and also the arrival of the Classical Era later on.¹⁰⁸ The Cape has not only played a prominent role in South African history, but also in global history as a whole. In 1652, the Dutch arrived in South Africa with the leader Jan Van Riebeeck and that is how a European settlement first began in Cape Town.

new. Culturally and historically there was a large influence on the Orient by French and British colonial power (Said, 1979: p. 3). The ballets based on the Orient were initially first produced by Fokine with the Ballet Russes (Russia). Anna Pavlova and Ruth St Denis also contributed to the performed repertoire (V. Heyworth-Dune, 2018: p. 148). Orientalism in Russia is an interesting debate based on the geographical location- between Europe and Asia (Smith, May 2014). More authors on this area will be discussed in Chapter Five with the topic of decoloniality.

¹⁰¹ V. Heyworth-Dune et al., *Ballet: The Definitive Illustrated Story*, p. 148.

¹⁰² E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 51.

¹⁰³ E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁴ Patricia Spencer states that Egyptian dance was only “described in detail” (Spencer, 2003: 112) with the arrival of the Byzantine Empire. She recognises that dance in Egypt did exist prior to the Byzantine Empire recordings, and she acknowledges the Egyptian method of recording history through wall carvings and hieroglyphics. Wall carvings are important because they can impart a sense of the aesthetic desired by a certain group of people (Bakewell & Holler, 2010: p. 39). She notes that like all forms of dance, changes would have taken place over time for Egyptian dance based on various factors (Spencer, 2003: 114).

¹⁰⁵ P. Spencer, ‘Dance in Ancient Egypt’, *Near Eastern Archaeology: Dance in the Ancient World* 66(3), 2003, p. 112.

¹⁰⁶ V. Heyworth-Dune et al., *Ballet: The Definitive Illustrated Story*, p. 148.

¹⁰⁷ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, pp. 74 & 75, 76; A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, pp. 18 & 47; H. Wulff, ‘Ethereal expression: Paradoxes of ballet as a global physical culture’, 2008, *Ethnography* 9 (4), p. 521; Unknown, ‘The Tutu’, *St Petersburg Ballet: Nutcracker Johannesburg 2017*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ J. Worrall, ‘Introduction’ in J. Worrall (e.d.) *Ballet in South Africa*, p. 15.

By establishing a settlement, the Dutch ultimately forcibly took land from the Khoikhoi. Thus, the construction of colonialism began in Cape Town during the 17th century.¹⁰⁹ Ballet was introduced with the arrival of the French in the 17th century as a result of the French being allies to the Dutch. Before the arrival of the French troops, forms of entertainment were scarce, and Cape Town only later became known as “little Paris” as the French started to dominate the cultural scene.¹¹⁰

It took the arrival of the British between the 18th and 19th century to bring ‘social life’ and the concept of ‘the theatre’ to Cape Town’s shores.¹¹¹ Through the Dutch audience, watching ballets became popular, but it was the British who built the first theatre, the African Theatre or the *Africaansche Schouwburg*, in 1801.¹¹² The French practiced ballet as a custom or as a part of their culture and that the Dutch enjoyed observing the art, thus making it popular. The British removed the cultural practice element from it and rather enjoyed ballet as a ‘theatrical sport.’ Thus, the arrival of multiple settler communities from these three European countries led to the establishment of the ballet community in Cape Town. The African Theatre was later transformed into a church once Opera Houses started to be constructed in South Africa.¹¹³

The International Influence on Ballet Methods in South Africa

The rise of ballet’s popularity in 20th Century South Africa may be accredited to the presence of Anna Pavlova, the famous Russian ballet dancer, who visited the country in 1925.¹¹⁴ A picture of Pavlova in her *Dying Swan* tutu is included below. This was the solo that made Pavlova one of the most admired ballerinas of the 20th Century. Pavlova performed in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. She spread “the same magic here that she did all over the world, and she inspired children to dance.”¹¹⁵ Pavlova performed ballets with The Cape Town Orchestra and her own ballet company, the Pavlova Company.¹¹⁶ Three programmes

¹⁰⁹ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, pp. 22-23.

¹¹⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 1.

¹¹¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 2.

¹¹² Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 5.

¹¹³ C. Harris, *Spiegel im Spiegel: Interpreting and Reflecting on the Stage Designs of Johan Engels with Special Reference to Tristan und Isolde* (1985), p. 12.

¹¹⁴ M. Pam, ‘Ballet Visits to South Africa.’, pp. 16-20.

¹¹⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 23.

¹¹⁶ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 24.

were presented, which started with the famous *Dying Swan*¹¹⁷(music by Saint-Saëns), a solo variation choreographed set created by Fokine for Anna Pavlova, *The Fairy Doll* (music by Mozart), *Bacchanale* (music by Glazunov), *Dance of the Hours* (music by Ponchielli), *Armarilla* and *The Snow Ballet*.¹¹⁸



Image 1: Anna Pavlova in *The Dying Swan* by Frans van Riel.¹¹⁹

Other influences on South African ballet include a mixture of ballet methods. However, two of the strongest styles have been the RAD (Royal Academy of Dance which is of French and English origin) and Cecchetti (which is of Italian origin) in the 20th Century. This was a result of the individuals who were influential in the South African ballet community, all of whom received training from diverse backgrounds. Helen Webb and Madge Mann received training in London. Russian trained dancers and teachers included Dulcie Howes, Yvonne Blake and Cecily Robinson. Joyce van Geems was trained by Howes and was the founder of the Johannesburg Ballet Theatre (established in 1948). Marjorie Stuurman and Ivy Conmee brought the RAD to Johannesburg. The Cecchetti method was brought to Johannesburg by

¹¹⁷ *The Dying Swan* was created by Mikhail Fokine as a variation for Pavlova in 1907 (Kerensky, 1981: p. 186). Fokine's ideas around aesthetics were partly influenced by the Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy, and his ideas of a performer's emotional connection with the audience as what matters- the audience's reactions and impressions (Nelson, 1984: p. 7). Fokine's work did bring a new kind of Romantic choreography to the scene during the early 20th Century (Nelson, 1984: p. 7). *The Dying Swan* variation will be referenced to again in Chapter Five in relation to the Joburg Ballet soloist Kitty Phetla and her take on the variation.

¹¹⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 24.

¹¹⁹ Anon, n.d. <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw251012/Anna-Pavlova-in-The-DyingSwan>, Accessed: 22nd August 2018.

Audrey Grose and Pearl Adler. Additionally, Poppins Salomon brought some Russian influence to the Johannesburg area.¹²⁰

The Impact of Apartheid on Ballet Groups in South Africa

As the performing arts grew in popularity in South Africa, the need for funding became more pronounced as increasing numbers of small ballet companies began to be formed. These clubs included the Pretoria Ballet Club, the Festival Ballet Society, the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, the Durban Ballet Club¹²¹ and the East London Ballet Club (it is assumed that this club did not receive a grant).¹²² The formation of these groups are evident from the State Archives. Most of the primary sources located in the archive are past requests for financial aid or subsidies for the various ballet societies and small groups, prior to the formation of the subsidised government ballet companies under the Separate Performing Arts Boards in 1963. There are also several sources dealing with financial requests from drama, opera and music groups. Some of the applications were successful under the Nasionale Adviesende Raad vir Opvoeding Buite Skoolverband (N.A.R.O.B.S) (the National Advisory Council for Adult Education, N.A.C.A.E).¹²³

It is important to note that the forms ask for whether the groups will include “non-Europeans.”¹²⁴ The ideas surrounding the funding of various ‘arts’ like drama, opera and ballet were initially conceived in discussions dating back to 1947.¹²⁵ The importance of the development of popular culture was highlighted during this time and the exemption on entertainment tax through a national adult education scheme was put forward.¹²⁶ Government loans were also discussed regarding the potential to fund the erection of theatres and art centres by the Union Education Department.¹²⁷ In doing so, there was an expressed desire to

¹²⁰ Information in this paragraph was drawn from M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 335.

¹²¹ State Archives, Hamilton Avenue, Pretoria (Hereafter SA), UOD 594 X8/7/23, first page of application form for government subsidy, 1952-1953, p. 1.

¹²² SA UOD 594 X8/7/22, first page of application form for government subsidy, 1953, p.1.

¹²³ SA UOD 576 X8/7/35, Letter of response from the Secretary for Education, Arts and Sciences to the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1955.

¹²⁴ SA X8/7/23, Blank Application for government subsidy, 1952-1953.

¹²⁵ SA BNS 1/11/439 49/2/8, Memorandum for Consideration by the Provincial Consultation Committee Meeting, 1947, p. 2.

¹²⁶ SA BNS 1/11/439 49/2/8, Memorandum for Consideration by the Provincial Consultation Committee, 1947, p. 2.

¹²⁷ SA BNS 1/11/439 49/2/8, Memorandum for Consideration by the Provincial Consultation Committee Meeting, 1947, p. 3.

achieve uniformity within the four Provinces. The NP government drove the notion of a ‘civilised society’ through what they decided was the arts and performing arts once they gained power in 1948.¹²⁸ However, the matter was withdrawn. The discussion only resurfaced in 1963.

To acquire government funding ballet companies were required to abide by state policy. To exemplify this, I will draw on one instructive example from the State Archives. The *Cibonne Ballet Company* was formed in December 1956.¹²⁹ The company requested permission to form from the Registrar of Companies, based in the Pretoria region. The application for *The Cibonne Ballet Company* was processed through the Companies Act of 1926, and continued to be reviewed from 1956 to 1957.¹³⁰ It was intended to be a non-profit company and its vision was to encourage “cultural development”.¹³¹ At the top of the application page, it reads that the *The Cibonne Ballet Company’s* memorandum required amendment to suit government regulations.¹³² People from the Pretoria region who were involved in the formation of the company included the following: L.R. Godfrey, W.R. Ruffles, Mrs H. Hirons, J.S. Pretorius, Mrs E. Seaborne, Miss J.H. Seaborne, Mrs M.H. du Toit and K. Robertson.¹³³

In the application, it was recommended by the Secretary of Trade and Industry in the “Union of South Africa”¹³⁴ that in order for *The Cibonne Ballet* group to be formed, it should also include Southwest Africa as the location of the group and as the geographical area where the group was expected to travel to perform.¹³⁵ It is evident that the political climate in South Africa had already affected the ballet community. Consistent lack of funding created a dependency on the government and, by extension, on various petty apartheid legislation that required groups indicate in their registration which races would be participating. This was to ensure that they abided by the racial classification and remained within the allotted areas. On

¹²⁸ D. Magaziner, *The Art of Life in South Africa*, p. xxiv.

¹²⁹ SA HEN 2303 437/1/12/494, Response to Cibonne Ballet Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956.

¹³⁰ SA HEN 2303 437/1/12/494, Memorandum of Association: The Cibonne Ballet Company, 1957, p. 1.

¹³¹ SA 437/1/12/494, The Cibonne Ballet Company: Application for Registration according to article 21 of the Company Law no. 46 of 1926, 1957, p. 1.

¹³² SA 437/1/12/494, Response to Cibonne Ballet Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956.

¹³³ SA 437/1/12/494, The Cibonne Ballet Company: Application for Registration according to article 21 of the Company Law no. 46 of 1926, 1957, p. 1.

¹³⁴ SA 437/1/12/494, Response to Cibonne Ballet Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956.

¹³⁵ SA 437/1/12/494, Response to Cibonne Ballet Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956.

the memorandum from 1957 it was noted that the company was not to perform at cinemas and schools (excluding ballet and nursery schools).¹³⁶ This was a form of petty apartheid. The company had no opposition towards these insertions which did confuse the Registrar of Companies.¹³⁷ The company promised that one of its purposes would be to promote the improvement of ballet as an art in South Africa, and “To provide facilities of segregation of European and non-European performers and audiences.”¹³⁸ In the application for registration, Article 21 of the Company Law no. 46 from 1926, on page 2 states:

*6. Voorsiening is in die Akte van Oprigting gemaak om uitvoering te gee aan die beginsel van apartheid en om te verseker dat die bestuur van die vereniging in die hande van blankes bly.*¹³⁹ (Provisions have been made in the Memorandum that allow for the Incorporation to implement the principle of apartheid and to ensure that the management of the association remains in the hands of whites.)

It is likely that the company did not last long or was not well known as no mention of it was made in Marina Grut’s *The History of Ballet in South Africa*.¹⁴⁰ More investigation on this company would have to be done. It was noted that as a non-profit organisation, the company was initially approved by the Minister.¹⁴¹

Initially, the Separate Performing Arts Boards (SPABs) were not encouraged to culturally educate the public due to the high level of cost that was behind that idea.¹⁴² Prior discussion on the possibility of the implementation of a three-year ballet teaching diploma was discussed through the years 1963 and 1965 by the PACT board with a Technical College and various

¹³⁶ SA 437/1/12/494, Memorandum for The Cibonne Ballet Company Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956, p. 2.

¹³⁷ SA 437/1/12/494, Letter to the Secretary of Trade and Industry from the Registrar of Companies, 1957.

¹³⁸ SA 437/1/12/494, Memorandum for The Cibonne Ballet Company Application from the Secretary of Trade and Industry, 1956, p. 2.

¹³⁹ SA 437/1/12/494, The Cibonne Ballet Company: Application for Registration according to article 21 of the Company Law no. 46 of 1926, 1957, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 479.

¹⁴¹ SA 437/1/12/494, The Cibonne Ballet Company: Application for Registration according to article 21 of the Company Law no. 46 of 1926, 1957, p. 2.

¹⁴² SA To the principal of Tegnieste Kollege (Kroonstad) from the Secretary of Education, Art and Science, OKW 109 E4/1/5, 1963; SA To the principal of Kunschool (Johannesburg) from J. Cronje Secretary of Education, Arts and Science, OKW 128 E4/1/74, 1965, pp. 1-2; SA Onderwysers- En Diplomakursusse in Ballet, OKW 25 E 2/6/7/1, 1965, pp. 1-2; SA Letter to Secretary of Education, Arts and Science J. Cronje from Chairman of Ballet Management of PACT C.G. Kerr, OKW 64 E2/74, 1965, pp.1-2.

Art Schools.¹⁴³ On the files with this information from the state archives, many read ‘*Gesluit*’ (closed). Therefore, it can be assumed the idea was not successful.

A 1965 letter from C.G. Kerr, the Chairman of PACT, to J. Cronje, the Secretary of Education, Arts and Science, addressed the idea again.¹⁴⁴ Subjects that would have been studied would have included English and Afrikaans, either as a first or second additional language, educational psychology, educational theory and methodology, the history of teaching, school hygiene and first aid, practical teaching and chalkboard writing, anatomy, hygiene, the history of ballet, costume and theatre, music theory, practical ballet, Greek dance and mimic, national folkdance, religious instruction, physical education, and cultural activities.¹⁴⁵ It was stated that the possibility of a diploma would commence in 1966. This too seems to have been unsuccessful.

The Formation of Professional Ballet Companies

In 1963, the National Party government decided to fund opera, ballet, theatre and music companies.¹⁴⁶ The Separate Performing Arts Boards (SPABs) were created for the four provinces and various activities in the ‘arts’ were established.¹⁴⁷ What was considered to be ‘art’ was defined by the apartheid government and included not just the ‘theatrical arts’ but also the ‘fine arts’ and the kinds of art that would be taught in schools.¹⁴⁸ The four SPABs were managed by a council called the South African Co-ordinating Performing Arts Council.¹⁴⁹ Each board had seven members with directors and there were four committees who managed the ‘arts.’¹⁵⁰ The popularity of ballet in 20th century South Africa resulted in the first prominent ballet company in South Africa known as the Cape Performing Arts

¹⁴³ SA To the principal of Tegniese Kollege (Kroonstad) from the Secretary of Education, Art and Science, OKW 109 E4/1/5, 1963; State Archives, Hamilton Avenue (Pretoria), To the principal of Kunschool (Johannesburg) from J. Cronje; Secretary of Education, Arts and Science, OKW 128 E4/1/74, 1965, pp. 1-2; SA Onderwysers-En Diplomakursusse in Ballet, OKW 25 E 2/6/7/1, 1965, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁴ SA OKW 64 E2/74, Letter to Secretary of Education, Arts and Science J. Cronje from Chairman of Ballet Management of PACT C.G. Kerr, 1965, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁵ SA OKW 128 E4/1/74, To the principal of Kunschool (Johannesburg) from J. Cronje Secretary of Education, Arts and Science, 1965, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁶ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 196.

¹⁴⁷ A. Steyn, “Graham Newcater’s Raka in its literary, musical and socio-political context”, p. 23. (Masters in Musicology, University of Pretoria, 2008)

¹⁴⁸ D. R. Magaziner, *The Art of Life in South Africa*, p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 196.

¹⁵⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 196.

Council (CAPAB). CAPAB was originally called UCT (University of Cape Town) Ballet and is currently known as the Cape Town City Ballet.

UCT Ballet has been seen by some authors, such as Grut, to have had the historical status of being multi-racial when it was formed in 1964. However, this is a perception that has been contested by other authors such as Glasstone and Job. Historically, Cape Town has been known to be more inclusive when it came to racial politics and segregation.¹⁵¹ It was seen as “a haven of ethnic harmony and integration before the coming of Apartheid in 1948.”¹⁵² The threat of Cape Town’s liberal beliefs were what ‘Pretoria’ was cautious of as they practiced and promoted Afrikaner Nationalism.¹⁵³ For some, Cape Town was originally a colonial settlement that was not centred around “the fact of race.”¹⁵⁴ However, for ballet in Cape Town during the apartheid Era, the ideology of race can be seen as a grey area. Acts were passed by the National Party that enforced ethnic separation throughout South Africa and constituted a challenge particularly for the relatively more ethnically integrated Cape Town. The infamous legislation included the Group Areas Act, the Population Areas Act, and the Mixed Marriages Act to name a few.¹⁵⁵ The Group Areas Act in particular prevented many black children from having any access to private dance tuition.¹⁵⁶ The above mentioned are forms of petty apartheid.

The second company was the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) initially based in Pretoria and later known as State Theatre Ballet (STB). PACT’s establishment was seen as “ambitious”¹⁵⁷ because the government tried to implement shows for so-called “non-white audiences” (it was originally put forward that PACT was never to give performances to a mixed race audience).¹⁵⁸ The PACT orchestra was situated at the Aula and Musaion at the University of Pretoria, and plans to move PACT ballet and opera to Braamfontein were

¹⁵¹ P. Schwartz, ‘Pirouetting in Step with the World.’ *Mail and Guardian*, p. 4; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 33-37; J. Anderson, ‘Review: South African Ballet; Reviewed Work(s): The History of Ballet in South Africa by Marina Grut.’ 1982-1983, *Dance Chronicle* 5 (4), p. 469.

¹⁵² V. Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵³ V. Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ V. Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ V. Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ K. Johnstone, ‘Chapter nine: Community in Concert: Transformation, Development and Community Dance’, p. 149.

¹⁵⁷ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

¹⁵⁸ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

considered in 1964 (a year after the establishment of SPAB).¹⁵⁹ Plans were also proposed to build what was called “a suitable theatre at the Civic Centre”¹⁶⁰ once PACT had approached the Johannesburg City Council.¹⁶¹ Prior to the establishment of PACT, other smaller ballet companies and schools were formed. These were often short lived because of the lack of funding. The company began with R20 000 as the starting budget.¹⁶²

The third company was the Performing Arts Council of the Orange Free State (PACOFS) which was situated in Bloemfontein. PACOFS was built on the foundation provided by the Orange Free State Ballet Group. PACOFS struggled to establish ballet in Bloemfontein due to lack of an orchestra, dancers and funding. Despite this, the company still managed to stage original ballets throughout its lifetime, including some of Yvonne Viljoen’s works, such as *La Valse* (1964) and *La Grotte Fantastique* (1964), as well as Frank Staff’s *Mantis Moon* (1971).

The last company was the Natal Performing Arts Council (NAPAC) which was situated in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal. According to Grut, NAPAC was situated in a place that had little “demand for a company.”¹⁶³ Most of the ballets that were popular in the region were more contemporary rather than classical in nature. Due to financial pressures (funding problems were always an issue in the ballet industry) NAPAC closed in 1976. PACT and CAPAB continued on but also struggled due to financial constraints. These monetary difficulties increased when international sanctions were placed on the apartheid government. In 1975, a call came from the South African professional ballet community for an inquiry into strengthening PACT and CAPAB financially.¹⁶⁴ Cape Town and Johannesburg still retain ballet companies. Examples from the history of these two locations will be used in the following two chapters to demonstrate how ballet in South Africa has responded to the historical changes brought to those areas during the 20th and 21st century.

As previously noted, Cape Town has historically been viewed as having been more integrative in its approach to racial politics and segregation. However, the manifestation of its liberal attitudes from within the ballet community may be subjected to questioning. In the

¹⁵⁹ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

¹⁶⁰ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

¹⁶¹ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

¹⁶² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 156; A. Botha, *Phyllis Spira: A Tribute*, p. 49

¹⁶³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 306.

¹⁶⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 196, 197, 306, 321 & 323-325.

1930s a woman named Mrs H. Southern Holt provided the EOAN Group (named after Eos, which translates to *dawn*) with opportunities to further their training and knowledge in certain arts. The EOAN Group was situated in the coloured community of District Six. The performers were given opportunities to train with UCT dancers.¹⁶⁵ The EOAN Group was taught by white teachers and this was a challenge to the apartheid regime in Pretoria. However, it remained trapped in paternalism as white people controlled the coloured people's activities.¹⁶⁶ This is made apparent in written notes between Mr W.F. Joubert (the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts and Sciences for Adult Education) and his secretary from 1950.¹⁶⁷ Dulcie Howes, one of the founding members of the UCT Ballet School and the University of Cape Town Ballet (which will be discussed further in chapter two), applied for a grant requesting funding. The application was rejected. Concern was raised over the ballet company's association with The EOAN Group.¹⁶⁸ It was known that the University of Cape Town Ballet was viewed as a white company while the The EOAN Group was deemed to be a coloured group. It was made clear that more questions would have to be answered regarding the group, specifically which races were prohibited from participating due to the ballet centre's location, which halls were to be used for performances, and how many performances were planned for the year.¹⁶⁹

Social Context of Ballet and Dance in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s

Some of the first mixed race dance companies were established in the 1970s. Examples include Johannesburg Youth Ballet and Moving into Dance. The first known multiracial ballet company was Johannesburg Youth Ballet, established in 1976.¹⁷⁰ Moving Into Dance was established roughly two years later in 1978 in Johannesburg.¹⁷¹ This organisation was started by Sylvia Glasser who is considered to be a pioneer of Afrofusion in South Africa.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 33-37.

¹⁶⁶ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 101-105.

¹⁶⁷ SA UOD 614 X8/7/147, Notes between Mr W.F. Joubert and secretary on the University of Cape Town Ballet, 1950.

¹⁶⁸ SA X8/7/147, Notes between Mr W.F. Joubert and secretary on the University of Cape Town Ballet, 1950.

¹⁶⁹ SA X8/7/147, Notes between Mr W.F. Joubert and secretary on the University of Cape Town Ballet, 1950.

¹⁷⁰ Anon, 'A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet' in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017, 2017*, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ K. Johnstone, 'Chapter nine: Community in Concert: Transformation, Development and Community Dance', p. 163.

¹⁷² Anon, 2016. <https://www.midance.co.za/>, Accessed: 1st of June 2019.

The company is still running and combines “Afrofusion and Edudance styles.”¹⁷³ However, politics still impacted communities during the political environment of the 1970s and 1980s despite attempts at multiracialism. For example, The EOAN Group was subjected to boycotts because of their “acceptance and support from government institutions.”¹⁷⁴ The boycott secluded many artists from the developments taking place in the artform outside of South Africa.¹⁷⁵

The 1980s were defined by what Friedman calls the “melting pot”.¹⁷⁶ During this time, South Africans increased their exploration into the fusion and creation of a South African style (Friedman acknowledges that this kind of exploration was not new to the dance world).¹⁷⁷ The idea for the state to fund the ‘arts’ demonstrates that the government wanted a method to exert control over the arts community and to promote ideas of ‘European’ culture. While still in control of the arts sector, the government decided that tours were only to be permitted to Israel and the Republic of China by the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council in 1987.¹⁷⁸ In an interview with *Scenaria* magazine (1987), in which the tours were discussed, the former Chairman of the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council and Chairman of the Board for NAPAC¹⁷⁹ (Natal Performing Arts Council) stated that: “Originally the Arts Councils were exclusively White, by Government decision. When they were formed, the Arts had to subscribe to fourteen conditions in order to qualify for State subsidy.”¹⁸⁰ The interview ended with Mr Justice JJ Kriek saying: “In the future, I see the arts as a means of bringing reconciliation between all South Africans. The arts are, after all, are about communication. What could be more important in the Society in which we live today?”¹⁸¹

¹⁷³ Anon, 2016. <https://www.midance.co.za/>, Accessed: 1st of June 2019.

¹⁷⁴ S. Friedman, ‘Chapter One: Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’ ..., p. 6.

¹⁷⁵ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 115.

¹⁷⁶ S. Friedman, ‘Chapter One: Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’ ..., p. 6.

¹⁷⁷ S. Friedman, ‘Chapter One: Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’ ..., p. 6.

¹⁷⁸ Anon, ‘Scenaria Interviews: Mr Justice JJ Kriek- Former Chairman of the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council and Chairman of the Board of NAPAC’, *Scenaria*, p. 7.

¹⁷⁹ Anon, ‘Scenaria Interviews: Mr Justice JJ Kriek- Former Chairman of the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council and Chairman of the Board of NAPAC’, *Scenaria*, p. 7.

¹⁸⁰ Anon, ‘Scenaria Interviews: Mr Justice JJ Kriek- Former Chairman of the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council and Chairman of the Board of NAPAC’, *Scenaria*, p. 8

¹⁸¹ Anon, ‘Scenaria Interviews: Mr Justice JJ Kriek- Former Chairman of the South African Co-Ordinating Performing Arts Council and Chairman of the Board of NAPAC’, *Scenaria*, p. 9.

The photograph attached below was taken by David Goldblatt in 1979/ 1980.¹⁸² The image shows a young girl wearing a tutu and pointe shoes in Boksburg, South Africa. Goldblatt confirmed that that the picture was taken in Boksburg, a “small town, middle class, white community.”¹⁸³ The people from the town were not primarily Afrikaners but were people of mixed heritage, such as Italian, Portuguese, Jewish, Greek, English and Afrikaans. Goldblatt wanted to record “middle class, white values.”¹⁸⁴ In an article written by Jayawardabe, Goldblatt said that the girl’s expression resembles a “fixed” smile. Goldblatt attributed the girl’s values to her mother who said to her: “If you’re going to be a ballet dancer, you must learn to smile, my girl. You can’t have a grim face. You must smile! And when you’re on point[e].”¹⁸⁵



Image 2: “On the stoep: a girl in her new tutu”, 1979/1980.”¹⁸⁶Photographer: David Goldblatt, Dancer: Unknown.

The second image below is from an advert for ‘United’ featured in a 1989 PACT Ballet programme for the production of a triple bill of *La Bayadère* (Act 5), *Suite Temptation* and

¹⁸² M.N. Jayawardabe, ‘David Goldblatt: Returns and Elisions’, *The Salon* 3, n.d., p.58. Photograph recommended by Dr Sarah Duff from the University of Witwatersrand, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research.

¹⁸³ M.N. Jayawardabe, ‘David Goldblatt: Returns and Elisions’, *The Salon* 3, n.d., p.58.

¹⁸⁴ M.N. Jayawardabe, ‘David Goldblatt: Returns and Elisions’, *The Salon* 3, n.d., p.58.

¹⁸⁵ M.N. Jayawardabe, ‘David Goldblatt: Returns and Elisions’, *The Salon* 3, n.d., p. 59.

¹⁸⁶ M.N. Jayawardabe, ‘David Goldblatt: Returns and Elisions’, *The Salon* 3, n.d., p.58.

Sparante.¹⁸⁷ The picture features what appear to be ‘artists.’ From the left a model in a white full-length leotard is being painted so that she looks like a zebra. Standing in the upper left corner is an artist painting what appears to be a landscape with trees. Towards the centre of the photograph is an electric guitar player, a mime, a violin player and an opera singer. Next to the opera singer on the right is a man wearing what appears to be traditional Zulu warrior clothing with a shield and staff (the only black person in the photograph). On the floor, in front of the opera singer, is a ballet dancer in a white tutu.¹⁸⁸ The advert has a quote by Albert Camus reading: “In art, rebellion is consummated and perpetuated in the act of real creation, not in criticism or commentary.”¹⁸⁹

Camus grew up in French Algeria where the population consisted of many different cultures and ethnicities including “Spaniards and Alsatians, Italians, Maltese, Jews and Greeks.”¹⁹⁰ As the previous statement is what Lottman (1979) quoted from Camus, it should be addressed that he seems to have given little acknowledgement to Algeria and the Algerian people outside of a French and European context. Camus’s father took part in the French colonial invasion as a soldier to Morocco in 1907 and he moved his family to Algeria after France had invaded the territory via Morocco.¹⁹¹ As a philosopher, Camus believed that art stemmed from “frivolity and propaganda.”¹⁹² He also saw art as being “critical and transformatively constructive.”¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Special Collections (still being processed), UNISA Archive (hereafter SCUA), Muckleneuk, Pretoria, 0002. J. Hurwitz, *PACT BALLET TRUK: La Bayadère, Suite Temptation, Sparante*. April 1989. in Ballet Programme Box.

¹⁸⁸ SCUA. J. Hurwitz, *PACT BALLET TRUK: La Bayadère, Suite Temptation, Sparante*. April 1989.. Found in Ballet Programme Box.

¹⁸⁹ SCUA. J. Hurwitz, *PACT BALLET TRUK: La Bayadère, Suite Temptation, Sparante*. April 1989. Found in Ballet Programme Box.

¹⁹⁰ H.R. Lottman, *Albert Camus: a bibliography*, p. xi & 7.

¹⁹¹ H.R. Lottman, *Albert Camus: a bibliography*, pp. 14 – 17.

¹⁹² J. R. LeBlanc, ‘Art and Politics in Albert Camus: Beauty as Defiance and Art as a Spiritual Quest’, *Literature and Theology* 13 (2), 1999, p. 126.

¹⁹³ J. R. LeBlanc, ‘Art and Politics in Albert Camus: Beauty as Defiance and Art as a Spiritual Quest’, *Literature and Theology* 13 (2), 1999, p. 127.

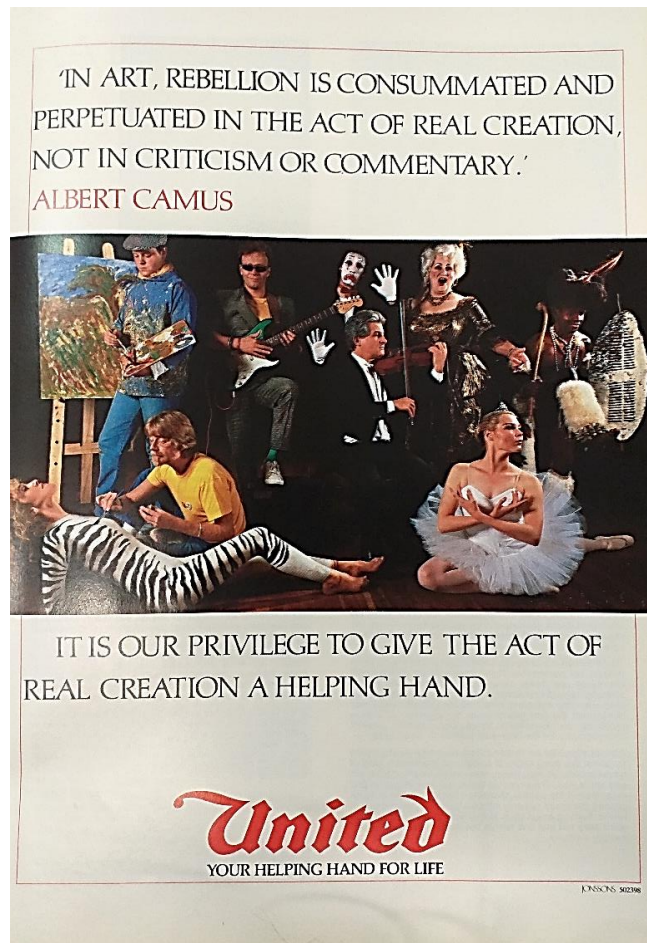


Image 3: United: Your Helping Hand for Life Advert¹⁹⁴

Beneath the photograph the caption reads: “It is our privilege to give the act of real creation a helping hand.”¹⁹⁵ The advert was responsive to its environment. It merely demonstrates the image of a “melting pot.”¹⁹⁶ Despite appearances, it is not a true representation of a melting pot. Instead, it is a picture of what Eurocentrism deems to be art. This advert was potentially the result of the loss in popularity of “Afrikaner popular culture”¹⁹⁷ and an increased desire for “modernity”¹⁹⁸ among white South Africans. Artforms like ballet rely on tradition. However, this advertisement can open a multifaceted debate. On the one hand, it speaks of Camus’s idea of art as rebellion and as a form of propaganda, which is relevant for the context in which it was situated. On the other hand, it uses a European lens and defines being

¹⁹⁴ SCUA. J. Hurwitz, *PACT BALLET TRUK: La Bayadère, Suite Tentation*, Sparante. April 1989. Found in Ballet Programme Box. UNISA Archives, State Theatre/ PACT Archive.

¹⁹⁵ SCUA. J. Hurwitz, *PACT BALLET TRUK: La Bayadère, Suite Tentation*, Sparante. April 1989.

¹⁹⁶ S. Friedman, ‘Chapter One: Mapping an Historical Context for Theatre Dance in South Africa’, p. 6.

¹⁹⁷ A. Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure practices in modern Afrikaner history*, p. 78. Author recommended by Dr Sarah Duff from the University of Witwatersrand, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research.

¹⁹⁸ A. Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure practices in modern Afrikaner history*, p. 78.

a black South African as a rebellious form of art because it does not conform to traditional European ideas of art. These statements are debatable. Therefore, Camus's understanding of art being contradictory can apply. He believed that artistic aesthetic is interlinked to the political which can apply to South African ballet and the performing arts.¹⁹⁹

By contextualising these images and remembering Camus's idea of aesthetics linked to the political,²⁰⁰ the images can be seen to identify to societal elements such as gender, race and class. These pictures can be a form of responsiveness to the changing cultural climate in South Africa from the 1980s. Regarding the idea of a melting pot in South Africa, the second image was merely an attempt to incorporate black South Africans by only seeing Eurocentric arts as professions and Afrocentric cultures as art due to stereotypes and exoticism.

Groups formed during the 1980s and the 1990s

The 1980s and 1990s marked the rise of dance organisations independent of government influence. Such organisations provided contemporary dance and theatrical arts education to disadvantaged communities affected by the structure of the apartheid regime.²⁰¹ The rise of such organisations can be seen as the result of the removal of petty apartheid legislation from the 1980s onwards and the release of political prisoners in the 1990s.²⁰² Groups formed during the 1990s were the Bophuthatswana Arts Council, Dance for All and the Soweto Dance Project. The Bophuthatswana Arts Council was established in 1990.²⁰³ The establishment consisted of a Cultural Centre, which was directed by Mrs Rosemary Mangope (Lucas Mangope's daughter in law).²⁰⁴ It is important to note that questions about how to marry dance and culture did arise during the period of subsidised ballet companies. An example that was often used came from the all black America Dance Theatre of Harlem Company. The Dance Theatre of Harlem was founded in 1969 and they established culture

¹⁹⁹ A. Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure practices in modern Afrikaner history*, pp. 78-79; J. R. LeBlanc, 'Art and Politics in Albert Camus: Beauty as Defiance and Art as a Spiritual Quest', *Literature and Theology* 13 (2), 1999, p. 126-127; J. Cass, *Dancing Through History*, p. x.

²⁰⁰ J. R. LeBlanc, 'Art and Politics in Albert Camus: Beauty as Defiance and Art as a Spiritual Quest', *Literature and Theology* 13 (2), 1999, p. 126.

²⁰¹ K. Johnstone, 'Chapter nine: Community in Concert: Transformation, Development and Community Dance', p. 149.

²⁰² J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. xvi.

²⁰³ G. Glueck, 'A NEW DANCE VISION FROM BOPHUTHATSWANA', *Scenaria*, p. 17.

²⁰⁴ G. Glueck, 'A People's Quest for Excellence- Mmabana Cultural Centre', *Scenaria*, p. 5.

Staff Reporter, 15/09/1995, <https://mg.co.za/article/1995-09-15-r300-000-in-18-months-without-working>, Accessed: 28th of September 2019.

within dance. Throughout the '70s and the '80s there was constant growth in the number of dancers who came from all black dance companies like the Alvin Ailey Company and the Dance Theatre of Harlem.²⁰⁵ The ballet division of SPABs was overseen by two past members of UCT Ballet School, Julia Peter and Verina Marx, who were teaching children through the RAD method by that stage.²⁰⁶

Bophuthatswana was the creation of the Bantustan policy enforced by the apartheid government. It was allowed for under the Land Act of 1913, and under 1936 grand apartheid legislation²⁰⁷ which implemented the formation of homelands such as Bophuthatswana.²⁰⁸ The country was declared and given independence in 1977 by South Africa. The official languages of Bophuthatswana were Tswana, English and Afrikaans.²⁰⁹ The Group Areas Act (1950) and further segregation Acts passed by the apartheid regime were acknowledged by authors such as Glasstone and the numerous authors of *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories* as pieces of legislation that restricted the mobility of dance students.

In 1992 Carly Dibakwane started the Soweto Dance Project, which was later directed by Douglas Sekete.²¹⁰ The Cape Town Ballet community project for disadvantaged groups called Dance For All started in 1995 but had already been conceptualised in the 1960s by then Artistic Director of CAPAB, David Poole.²¹¹ Further discussion surrounding the projects will be discussed in later chapters. Other Acts passed by the apartheid government such as the Immorality Act of 1927, 1957 and 1985, and the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 “segregated all public facilities including dance studios and theatres.”²¹²

²⁰⁵ G. Glueck, 'A NEW DANCE VISION FROM BOPHUTHATSWANA', *Scenaria*, p. 17; J. Cass, *Dancing through history*, p. 13.

²⁰⁶ G. Glueck, 'A People's Quest for Excellence- Mmabana Cultural Centre', *Scenaria*, p. 7.

²⁰⁷ J. Drummond, 'Reincorporating the Bantustans into South Africa: the question of Bophuthatswana', *Geography* 76 (4), 1991, p. 369.

²⁰⁸ J. Cilliers, 'From Pariah to Partner- Bophuthatswana, the NPKF, and the SADF', *African Security Review* 7 (4), 1998, p. 31.

²⁰⁹ J. Cilliers, 'From Pariah to Partner- Bophuthatswana, the NPKF, and the SADF', *African Security Review* 7 (4), 1998, p. 34.

P.S. Hattingh, 'Bophuthatswana at a Glance', *South African Journal of African Affairs* 2, 1977, p. 216.

²¹⁰ A. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 171.

²¹¹ D. Hathaway, 'Ex-royal ballet stars take local students back to basics', *The Cape Times*, p. 10.

²¹² A. Sichel, 'Chapter 7: Gate-crashing Prejudice and Perceptions: The Enduring Legacy of Arts and Dance Festivals in Post-Apartheid South Africa.' In S. Friedman (e.d.), *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 108.

The topic of racial inclusivity of the UCT Ballet will be addressed again in chapter two. Ballet in Cape Town was also influenced by the Russian style of ballet (Vaganova method) which shows how central and culturally diverse the city was. The survival of ballet in South Africa has always been a concern for the dance community predominantly based on financial concerns. For example, ballet in the Gauteng province has also had its ups and downs. The PACT (Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal) Ballet in Pretoria was renamed as the State Ballet Theatre in 1998 but closed in 2000. It was originally governmentally funded, but due to problems in this regard, the company had no choice but to close. The South African Ballet Theatre (SABT) took its place and was later renamed Joburg Ballet (after being named Mzansi Ballet for a short period of time) which is still operating at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre.²¹³

Conclusion

The argument that may be extended is that ballet was accessible for multiple levels of class strata within the white community, and also for dancers from diverse racial backgrounds to a certain extent. Access for the larger majority of the population can be considered to have been limited and was only provided later on by organisations that were removed from government funding. Johnstone argues that Acts such as the Group Areas Act restricted children's mobility and thus limited their access to dance education finance and training.²¹⁴ Before racial segregation was lifted in 1978, "dancers of colour"²¹⁵ who received training "left the country in order to dance professionally."²¹⁶ Therefore, ballet may, debatably, not have been elitist for the white South African community as access to dance education was not impacted by geographical and, in some cases, financial accessibility. However, for the larger majority of the population, ballet may be viewed as having been elitist in terms of these aspects. Although the ballet community could only become integrated once petty and grand apartheid measures were lifted (due to the heavy funding received from the government for the Performing Arts community), one can take note of the "grey areas, both literal and

²¹³ P. Schwartz, 'Pirouetting in Step with the World.' *Mail and Guardian*, p. 1; C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 126; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 33-37.

²¹⁴ K. Johnstone, 'Chapter nine: Community in Concert: Transformation, Development and Community Dance', p. 149.

²¹⁵ A. Sichel, 'Chapter 7: Gate-crashing Prejudice and Perceptions: The Enduring Legacy of Arts and Dance Festivals in Post-Apartheid South Africa.', p. 108.

²¹⁶ A. Sichel, 'Chapter 7: Gate-crashing Prejudice and Perceptions: The Enduring Legacy of Arts and Dance Festivals in Post-Apartheid South Africa.', p. 108.

metaphorical”²¹⁷ for all South Africans facing intersections of a merging multicultural society that is constantly responding to a changing environment.²¹⁸ After the closure of STB in 2000 the South African Ballet Theatre (SABT) was formed a year later. The company is now known as the Joburg Ballet and was previously the Mzansi Ballet before 2014.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ K. Ramsay Johnson, “Art and the End of Apartheid by John Peffer”, 2011, *Postcolonial Text* 6 (3), p. 1.

²¹⁸ K. Ramsay Johnson, “Art and the End of Apartheid by John Peffer”, 2011, *Postcolonial Text* 6 (3), p. 1.

²¹⁹ P. Schwartz, ‘Pirouetting in Step with the World.’ *Mail and Guardian*, p. 4.

Chapter Two

A History of Ballet in Cape Town

“Perhaps it was because there were so many different nationalities assembled on this southern point of Africa, that the need arose to express themselves in the theatre in different ways.”

Marina Grut²²⁰

As already stated, ballet in Cape Town has maintained a prominent place in South African ballet history. When Dulcie Howes, prominent figure in the South African ballet community, returned from touring with Anna Pavlova’s company, she started her own school for dancing in Rondebosch in 1928.²²¹ This is seen as the start for dance as a profession in South Africa. Howes was also the founder of the first ballet company in South Africa, which was also one of the first in the world to be attached to a tertiary institution.²²² How the ballet community responded to their historical context can be observed within the chapter. This has been done by drawing on ballets produced and discussion around race and politics. Although the research does reduce the fragmented nature of South African balletic history, the chapter itself is multi-faceted.. This chapter is still necessary to provide context for the current and potentially future research.

Howes took ballet classes as a child with Helen Webb and her assistant Helen White (who had received training from the ballet teacher Enrico Cecchetti). Webb, an English woman, studied ballet in London and came to Cape Town in 1912. She began to teach at the University of Cape Town Ballet in 1932. Webb produced many well-known dancers like Maude Lloyd, Dulcie Howes, Frank Staff, Cecily Robinson and Alexis Rasmine. Helen Webb passed away in 1968. Her assistant, Helen White, was born in Cape Town and was a student of Webb until she moved to England to study the Cecchetti method. She returned to Cape Town to teach Cecchetti ballet in 1930.²²³ Howes eventually went to London for more training before earning a spot in the “magical and stern disciplinarian”²²⁴ Anna Pavlova’s ballet company. The dates have not been made clear in Denis Hatfield’s chapter on ‘The

²²⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 1.

²²¹ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 28; D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, in J. Worrall (e.d.) *Ballet in South Africa*, p. 28.

²²² E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter 97: Dulcie Howes.’ In Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 468-469; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 68.

²²³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 12, 421-422, 424.

²²⁴ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, in J. Worrall (e.d.) *Ballet in South Africa*, p. 29.

Cape Town University Ballet’ in *Ballet in South Africa*.²²⁵ However, the University of Cape Town Ballet was born from a collaboration that occurred in 1935.²²⁶ Professor Bell, from the College of Music at Cape Town, offered to attach Howes’s school to the institution.²²⁷ Bell had provided many opportunities for people to create plays and operas at the Little Theatre, and gave ballet a place to be performed as well.²²⁸ Much later, Professor Bell composed a musical piece dedicated to Dulcie Howes titled *Jongleur de Notre Dame*. Howes in turn created a ballet for the piece based within a Medieval Age context embodying the “evocation of religious mysticism.”²²⁹ Other ballets created by Howes were *La Famille* in 1939 and later *Spring in the Park*.²³⁰ She created many other ballets throughout her lifetime, and the aforementioned are but a few of her works. Howe’s ballets, as expressed through the dancers she trained, garnered what Glasstone calls “enthusiastic audiences.”²³¹ She was inventive with her ballets as can be exemplified by *Suite*, which combined the “classical and romantic.”²³² Howes also designed and made costumes for some of her ballets. She believed that ballet was meant to be a reflection of human emotion.²³³ However, it can be seen that ballet in Cape Town has been ever present since its establishment in the 19th century, and has constantly responded to the environmental changes that have taken place in South African history and society. Ballet in South Africa was internationally appreciated, and its dancers were said to have been of a high standard. Students who attended the Cape Town University Ballet were given lectures and readings to study. Emphasis was placed on musical understanding. However, dancers did not stay as work overseas was more readily available than work in South Africa.²³⁴

Dulcie Howes is said to have left a legacy of racial inclusivity for ballet in Cape Town. This is questioned in Chapter Five regarding ballet in the post-apartheid context.²³⁵ Elizabeth

²²⁵ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, pp. 28-29.

²²⁶ D. Hathaway, ‘75 years of Dance’, *Saturday Weekend Argus*, p. 5.

²²⁷ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, p. 30.

²²⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 30.

²²⁹ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, p. 32.

²³⁰ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, pp. 35-36.

²³¹ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 117.

²³² D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, in J. Worrall (e.d.) *Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 25 & 26.

²³³ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, p. 26; J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 84; R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 10.

²³⁴ D. Hatfield, ‘The Cape Town University Ballet’, , pp.29, 30 & 31.

²³⁵ E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter 97: Dulcie Howes’ in Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, p. 470.

Triegaardt explains that Howes was “firmly but politely persuasive.”²³⁶ As discussed in the previous chapter racial segregation in South Africa was entrenched in the 1950s with the establishment of the Population Registration Act of 1950.²³⁷ At this time “racial classification based on physical appearance, as well as on reputed long-standing social acceptance”²³⁸ defined the period. This explains the application forms and strict racial requirements from the 1950s for adult subsidy grants which were previously mentioned in Chapter One.²³⁹

Glasstone has stated that there was still interaction between white and coloured communities in the arts. However, Glasstone characterises the Eoan Group as controversial because it was managed by white producers and the classes were taught by white teachers.²⁴⁰

Howes wrote to the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts and Science in Pretoria on the topic of an Adult Education Grant in 1950.²⁴¹ In her letter, she stated that the University of Cape Town Ballet would not give the assurance of never performing to a mixed race audience.²⁴² Her politely persuasive manner²⁴³ is evident in this letter because she states that the University of Cape Town Ballet performed in “City Hall, Cape Town, Town Hall Stellenbosch, Paarl and Somerset West and most of the big theatres belonging to African Consolidated Theatres.”²⁴⁴ All these areas were multi-racial in Cape Town.²⁴⁵ Howes continued by stating that all races were allowed in municipal halls, and she reminded the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts and Sciences that African Consolidated Theatres did occasionally make provision for non-European audiences.²⁴⁶ In 1950 there were four to five performances in each area, apart from the Little Theatre Cape Town where ten or sometimes twelve shows were performed.²⁴⁷ In Paarl, Somerset West and Stellenbosch, only one

²³⁶ E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter 97: Dulcie Howes’, in Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, p. 470.

²³⁷ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

²³⁸ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

²³⁹ SA X8/7/23, Blank application form for government subsidy, 1952-1953, pp. 1-2.

²⁴⁰ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

²⁴¹ SA UOD 594 ‘University of Cape Town’, 17/11/1950.

²⁴² SA X8/7/147 Letter to the Secretary of Education from Dulcie Howes, 17/11/1950.

²⁴³ E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter 97: Dulcie Howes.’ In Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, p. 470.

²⁴⁴ To the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts and Science, 1950. From Dulcie Howes, University of Cape Town.

²⁴⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

²⁴⁶ SA X8/7/147 Letter to the Secretary of Education from Dulcie Howes, 17/11/1950.

²⁴⁷ SA X8/7/147 Letter to the Secretary of Education from Dulcie Howes, 17/11/1950.

performance per year was aired.²⁴⁸ Howes finished her letter with the following rejoinder: “I am unable to give any assurance that the University of Cape Town Ballet Company will not perform to mixed audiences as it is my intention to continue to perform in the above halls and theatres which admit mixed audiences”.²⁴⁹

This caused concern amongst officials and questions were asked by the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts and Science. A primary concern was over the UCT Ballet’s association with the Eoan Group. Questions like which halls and buildings were to be used for performances and so forth were the of particular concern for the government.²⁵⁰

Ballet dancer, Eduardo Greyling later stated in 2009 that “Dulcie was against racism but played with it in order to keep the company alive.”²⁵¹ This perception can be contested. In a grant application from 1950 (as seen below) the ballet company was described as including “3(d) Europeans primarily”.²⁵² This wording leaves room for interpretation. Job has observed that Howes mostly incorporated coloured individuals to be racially inclusive. However, people of Black and Indian origin were not considered. Job provides the examples of Poole and Mosaval who were coloured individuals. Poole could dance in white-only theatres because of his lighter pigmentation which caused less controversy in theatres.²⁵³ Glasstone states that the degree of discrimination varied based on elements such as “education, economic circumstances, and that nebulous but potent factor, ‘social class’, also played their part.”²⁵⁴

In January 1952, there was an application for a decrease in duty tariffs on ballet shoes.²⁵⁵ The request was for a reduction on the 30% import duty. As ballet shoes were not made in South Africa, the applicant maintained that no manufacturers would be negatively affected by a reduction in tariff duty.²⁵⁶ The applicant’s name is not given and there is only reference to the

²⁴⁸ SA X8/7/147 Letter to the Secretary of Education from Dulcie Howes, 17/11/1950.

²⁴⁹ SA X8/7/147 Letter to the Secretary of Education from Dulcie Howes, 17/11/1950.

²⁵⁰ SA UOD 614 X8/7/147, Notes that were exchanged between the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts & Science and his own secretary, 1950; SA X8/7/147, Notes that were exchanged between the Acting Secretary for Education, Arts & Science and his own secretary, 1950.

²⁵¹ D. Hathaway, ‘75 years of Dance’, *Saturday Weekend Argus*, p. 5.

²⁵² SA UOD 614 X8/7/147, Application for Government Grant for the University of Cape Town Ballet, 1950, p. 6.

²⁵³ J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 78.

²⁵⁴ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

²⁵⁵ SA RHN 449 28/10/3 ‘Association of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa: Memorandum Submitted to the Tariff Advisory Committee on: Ballet Shoes. Item 2. 21/01/1952.

²⁵⁶ SA 28/10/3 Memorandum of the Tariff Advisory Committee on Ballet Dancing Shoes, 21/01/1952.

‘applicant’ in February 1952.²⁵⁷ Athletic gear tariffs were at 15%, which was what the applicant believed to be an appropriate tariff for ballet shoes. In February 1952, it was decided that it was impossible to make ballet shoes in South Africa. Thus, it was a priority to have them imported. Thirty percent was also regarded by the South African Federated Chamber of Industries as a rather high tariff. However, due to the fact that ballet shoes were not ‘practical’, or, in other words, used for walking and everyday life, the SAFCI opposed the application for decreased tariffs. The memorandum reads: “It is recommended that the application be NOT granted.”²⁵⁸

Another group that was formed prior to the establishment of subsidised ballet companies was the Cape Town Theatre Ballet funded by Anton Dolin.²⁵⁹ The CTTB was founded in 1953 by Mignon Furman as “a small semi-professional company.”²⁶⁰ According to Grut the company consisted of twelve dancers who performed in a total of fifty-four performances in Cape Town. In 1954, the Sadler’s Wells Theatre Ballet performed in Cape Town in association with African Consolidated Theatres. Several South African dancers were part of the Sadler’s Wells Ballet Theatre. The dancers included Maryon Lane (from Johannesburg), Patricia Miller (Cape Town) and David Poole (Cape Town).²⁶¹ Two of the choreographers from South Africa included John Cranko (who choreographed works like *Pineapple Poll* with a score by Sullivan/Mackerras, *Beauty and the Beast* (Ravel) and *The Lady Fool* (Verdi/Mackerras)). Another choreographer was Alfred Rodrigues (who choreographed works such as *Blood Wedding* (Apivov) and *Ile des Sireness* (Debussy)).²⁶² The CTTB asked for financial assistance after the visit from the Sadler’s Wells Theatre Ballet in July 1954.²⁶³ The CTTB felt that government financial assistance would promote higher artistic standards.²⁶⁴ It was stated that: “With the assistance of the Government, it is within the power of an existing organisation, such as ours, to take a great step forward in the cultural life of

²⁵⁷ SA RHN 449 28/10/3 ‘South African Federated Chamber of Industries: Memorandum on an Application for a Decrease in Duty on Ballet Shoes- Tariff Item 251 (d): 30% Ad Valorem’, 06/02/1952.

²⁵⁸ SA 28/10/3 Memorandum on an Application for a Decrease in Duty on Ballet Shoes, 06/02/1952.

²⁵⁹ SA UOD 576 X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 1.

²⁶⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 48.

²⁶¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 48.

²⁶² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 48.

²⁶³ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 1.

²⁶⁴ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 1.

South Africa.”²⁶⁵ W.S. Kapla noted that in Sadler’s Well Theatre Ballet there were six South African members and that South African choreographers were gaining international recognition in the 1950s. South African dancers were known to have had “a particular talent for Ballet which has been lost to overseas countries, particularly England.”²⁶⁶

The loss of dancers was seen as the result of the lack of permanent dance facilities at the time. The cultural value of a permanent ballet company was also emphasised by CTTB.²⁶⁷ If the CTTB were to be given funding, the aim was to establish ballet as a profession in South Africa through the creation of a professional ballet company.²⁶⁸ Another aim was to “develop talent among South African artists, musicians and choreographers”.²⁶⁹ In the application for financial aid, the CTTB attached a memorandum which included income and expenditure accounts.²⁷⁰ In 1955 and 1956, the CTTB requested forms for financial assistance again. The Secretary for Education, Arts and Sciences provided a response in November 1955.²⁷¹ The letter can be seen below with a ballet programme cover from a performance at the Little Theatre Worcester with the words “Exempt from tax”²⁷² written at the bottom (1954). In the same year, CTTB sent out a letter to members requesting them to RSVP to a meeting with the Sadler’s Wells Theatre Ballet, which indicates a connection between dancers in South Africa and British Ballet companies.²⁷³ It is unclear what happened to the small company. Poole returned to South Africa in 1959 after spending time overseas with Sadler Wells ballet. Upon his arrival, he “had himself reclassified as white”²⁷⁴ to allow him to pursue a professional

²⁶⁵ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 2.

²⁶⁶ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 1.

²⁶⁷ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 2.

²⁶⁸ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 1.

²⁶⁹ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 2.

²⁷⁰ SA X8/7/35, Letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1954, p. 2.

²⁷¹ SA UOD 576 X8/7/35, Letter to the Secretary for Education, Arts and Science from W.S. Kapla from the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, 1955; SA UOD 576 X8/7/35, Letter to the Cape Town Theatre Ballet, from the Secretary for Education, Arts and Sciences, 1955.

²⁷² SA X8/7/35, Programmes from the CTTB, 1954.

²⁷³ SA UOD 596 X8/7/35, Member letter for CTTB, 1954.

²⁷⁴ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 14.

ballet career in South Africa. The same year that Poole returned to South Africa, Glasstone recalls seeing a play titled *Try for White*, which depicted the story of a coloured woman who moves with her son to a white suburb. Once the son is grown up, he falls in love with a white Afrikaans girl. Glasstone discusses the “moral dilemma posed by the emotional conflict”²⁷⁵ throughout the play. Both Glasstone and Riley address the central theme of how racial laws in South Africa were affecting the coloured community. Glasstone connects this play to the example of David Poole. He wondered why he never met majority of Poole’s family apart from one of his brothers who was also involved in the dance community that Glasstone was familiar with.²⁷⁶

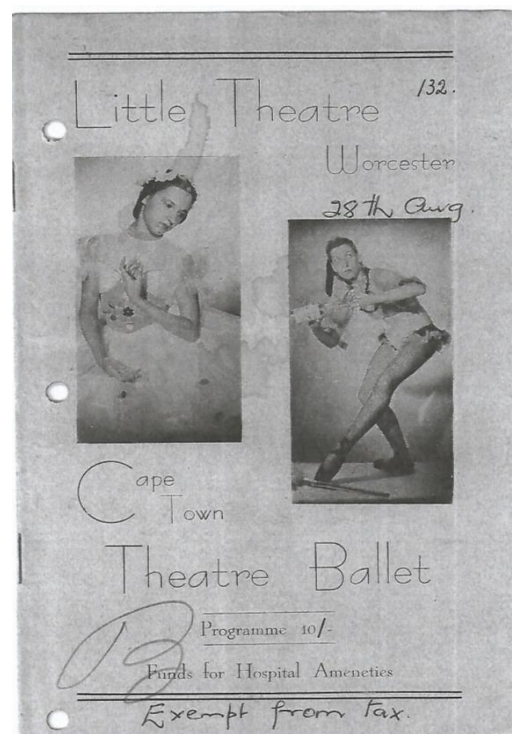


Image 4: Programme cover from a performance of the CTTB from the year 1954 at the Little Theatre Worcester.²⁷⁷

With the establishment of Separate Performing Arts Boards by the government in 1963, CAPAB (Cape Performing Arts Board) was formed. As UCT Ballet Company had already

²⁷⁵ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 14; R. Glasstone, *David Poole: A Life Blighted by Apartheid*, pp. 50 – 51.

²⁷⁶ R. Glasstone, *David Poole: A Life Blighted by Apartheid*, pp. 50 – 52; K. Riley, *Nigel Hawthorne: On Stage*, pp. 71- 72.

²⁷⁷ SA X8/7/35, Programmes from the CTTB, 1954.

been started thirty years prior to the formation of the Separate Performing Arts Boards, there was a firm foundation for CAPAB to be built upon.²⁷⁸ *The Sleeping Princess* was one of the first productions to be performed by the newly founded ballet company.²⁷⁹ David Poole was appointed ballet master and Frank Staff was the first choreographer for the company in 1964.²⁸⁰ Students from UCT Ballet formed the *corps de ballet* (the body of the ballet) and they were paid enough to cover the costs of ballet gear, such as ballet shoes and tights. Later, students were given salaries that assisted in medical aid and pension funds.²⁸¹ CAPAB (now known as CTCB; Cape Town City Ballet) was and is the oldest ballet company in South Africa.²⁸² The company toured to places like Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South West Africa (Namibia).²⁸³ The company also toured Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) and the Transvaal (Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the North West) with the ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*.²⁸⁴

By 1965 it was evident that CAPAB needed a larger financial subsidy if it was to continue to operate.²⁸⁵ In the very same year, an agreement between UCT Ballet, CAPAB and the Dulcie Howes Ballet Trust allowed the company to continue functioning whilst remaining independent from government subsidy.²⁸⁶ Howes ensured that UCT Ballet still performed in areas such as the Luxurama Theatre (one of the only theatres in South Africa that was a commercial multi-racial theatre). UCT Ballet was still funded by the Dulcie Howes Ballet Trust.²⁸⁷ As previously discussed, the purpose of subsidising CAPAB was to enforce racial segregation.²⁸⁸ CAPAB put a clause in the contract which stated that any audience member was allowed to attend ballets. By keeping UCT Ballet in action, Howes retained her multiracial audiences. When the company toured with various performances they were restricted to segregated areas. They had to have separate performances and venues for different races when possible.²⁸⁹ Resident choreographers who joined Staff were Gary Burne

²⁷⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 196 & 198.

²⁷⁹ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 74.

²⁸⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p.199.

²⁸¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

²⁸² M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, pp. 79-80.

²⁸³ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 80.

²⁸⁴ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 74.

²⁸⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 196.

²⁸⁶ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

²⁸⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

²⁸⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

²⁸⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 199.

(1970-1971) and Veronica Paeper (1974).²⁹⁰ Frank Staff and Veronica Paeper were married until his death in 1971.²⁹¹

Ballet shoes were still not made in South Africa during the 1960s and shoes were still costly in 1967.²⁹² That year, a letter from the head of the 'Balletkomitee' (Ballet committee) was sent to the director of the "Kaaplandse Raad vir die Uitvoerende Kunste"³⁰² (Cape Performing Arts Council in September). The correspondence was also sent to Dr S.S. Grove, the Secretary of Trade and Industry regarding the matter.²⁹³ The contents of the letter detail the high cost of importing ballet shoes. In England, ballet shoes cost R2.00. After they were imported to South Africa the cost rose to R2.45. With suppliers buying the shoes and then reselling them, it was estimated to bring ballet shoes up to R3.20 per pair. The annual expense of ballet shoes was estimated to increase to R3 000. The letter also disclosed that 4000 pairs of ballet shoes were imported to South Africa annually, 8 pairs of shoes were used per dancer monthly and there was a total of 30 dancers in CAPAB's ballet company. It was reaffirmed, at the end of the letter from the director of CAPAB, that costs needed to be kept low and that no taxation should be placed on ballet shoes.²⁹⁴

The director of CAPAB continued to try push for lower tariffs on ballet shoes and he received a response in January 1968. In a letter addressed to the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry from the director of CAPAB, dated February 1968, the request to lower the cost on ballet shoes was emphasised again and needed more motivation.³⁰⁸ After the director of CAPAB stated that he had consulted with Dulcie Howes on the matter, it was noted that the shoes that were really needed were the "Pink Satin Blocked Shoes"³⁰⁹ otherwise known as pointe shoes traditionally worn by female ballet dancers. The director of

²⁹⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 205.

²⁹¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 205; G. Rosen, "Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959, Including a Pre-1955 Bibliography", p. ii.

²⁹² SA RHN 449 28/10/3 Letter to the Secretary of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 31/10/1967.

³⁰² SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Secretary of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 31/10/1967.

²⁹³ SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Secretary of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 31/10/1967.

²⁹⁴ SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Secretary of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 31/10/1967.

³⁰⁸ State Archives, Hamilton Avenue, Pretoria (South Africa), RHN 449 28/10/3 Letter to the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 01/02/1968.

³⁰⁹ SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 01/02/1968.

CAPAB mentioned that there were attempts to make local ballet shoes. However, if dancers had to one day pay for their own shoes (the government had been providing ballet shoes since the creation of the Separate Performing Arts Boards), they would still have bought shoes from overseas due to their comfort and durability.³¹⁰ Although local products would have been preferred because of costs, the director of CAPAB requested that his letter, regarding lifting the tariff on ballet shoes from October 1967, be reconsidered.³¹¹ The final decision of the Director and Economic Advisor was that removing the tariffs on ballet pointe shoes would take away the pressure to develop a local South African ballet shoe company.³¹² It was stated that legal provisions could not be met to provide duty free rehearsal and performance shoes for dancers.³¹³ Thus, ballet shoes remained at a costly price for CAPAB and PACT.³¹⁴ Ballets performed in 1968 included *Transfigured Night* and *Peter and the Wolf*, and were choreographed by Staff.³¹⁵ The company toured Natal as well as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.³¹⁶ Dulcie Howes remained the artistic director of the company until she retired in 1969 and was replaced by David Poole. Poole was initially a ballet master and had been with the company from the beginning which made his promotion effortless as the dancers knew and were comfortable with him. Poole did not have to overcome the obstacles that Dulcie Howes had faced when starting a new company.³¹⁹ Instead, he focused on raising the standard of dancing.³²⁰ Both Howes and Poole shared a vision. As Howes wrote in *The Star* in 1965, their goal was to “develop principal dancers of [their] own in order to develop a South African feeling as it were.”³²¹ The idea of finding a sense of what is South African is a constant theme that can be seen throughout this research, South African balletic literature and other South African performing art literature. According to Glasstone, legislation prevented

³¹⁰ SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 01/02/1968.

³¹¹ SA 28/10/3 Letter to the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry from the Director of Cape Advisory for the Executive Arts, 01/02/1968.

³¹² State Archives, Hamilton Avenue, Pretoria (South Africa), RHN 449 28/10/3 Draft letter to the Director of CAPAB from the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry, 27/02/1968.

³¹³ SA 28/10/3 Draft letter to the Director of CAPAB from the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry, 27/02/1968.

³¹⁴ SA 28/10/3 Draft letter to the Director of CAPAB from the Director and Economic Advisor of Trade and Industry, 27/02/1968.

³¹⁵ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 74; J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 160

³¹⁶ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 74.

³¹⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 199, 200-201.

³²⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 201.

³²¹ Cited in M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 213.

Poole from hiring people or expanding to an audience that did not fall within “a colour bar.”³²² In the same year South Africa was placed under a Cultural Boycott by the United Nations, Gary Burne choreographed for CAPAB from 1970-1971.³²³

In the 1970s the country saw a general rise in unemployment. This led to significant unrest in the country and sparked many protests.³²⁵ Howes recommended that one national company be formed as opposed to the existing four under to lessen the heavy financial burden. Nevertheless, the government kept the four companies and, as previously mentioned, by the end of the 1970s only two remained, these being the ones based in Cape Town and the Transvaal.³²⁷ A few of the productions held throughout the 1970s included *Ballet Mosaic*, *Giselle*, *The Dying Swan*, *Herrie-Hulle*, and *Swan Lake*.³²⁸ The company toured the Northern Cape (1971, 1978), the Eastern Cape (1970, 1971, 1973, 1978 and 1979), the Western Cape (1972), Durban (1973), Johannesburg (1973), Orange Free State (1973, 1975 and 1978), Port Elizabeth (1972 and 1977), Pretoria (1973), Rhodesia (1978), and Windhoek (1976).³²⁹ The South African ballet *The Rain Queen*, discussed in Chapter Four, was choreographed by Poole and featured music by Newcater.³³⁰ The ballet also toured to the Orange Free State and Johannesburg.³³¹

CAPAB had strong dancers like Elizabeth Triegaardt, Olga Twell, Phyllis Spira, Eduard Greyling and Keith Mackintosh.³³² At first, the company mostly performed at the City Hall and in Maynardville.³³³ They were accompanied by the constantly-in-demand Cape Town Municipal Orchestra, which eventually became the CAPAB Orchestra in 1971.³³⁴ The establishment of dancers that progressed to CAPAB from UCT Ballet was effective for the stability of the ballet company. In 1971 CAPAB settled into a residence and had a permanent place to perform in the newly built opera and theatre house (Nico Malan Theatre) at that time.

³²² R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 115

³²³ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, pp. 74- 75; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 202; J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p.48

³²⁵ D.C. Hindson, ‘The Restructuring of Labour Markets in South Africa, 1970s to 1980s’, *Vierteljahres Berichte: Probleme der internationalen Zusammenarbeit* 118, 1989, p. 409.

³²⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 197.

³²⁸ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, pp. 74-78.

³²⁹ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, pp. 75-78.

³³⁰ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 75.

³³¹ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 76.

³³² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 202.

³³³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 205.

³³⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 205.

In this same year, Richard Glasstone, the author of *Dulcie Howes: A Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, joined CAPAB. The Nico Malan Opera House was boycotted during the early 1970s as black people were not allowed to watch performances in the theatre. This changed in 1974 and by the year 1978, all theatres in South Africa were opened to all races.³³⁵ This was significant as it was perhaps one of the early signs of the removal of petty apartheid legislation. The performing arts in South Africa, despite being funded by the apartheid government, have been a means of encouraging cultural exchange. South African artists were not permitted to travel overseas, nor were international artists allowed to come to South Africa due to the Cultural Boycotts implemented in 1969. Sports Boycotts had already been happening since the 1950s. In South Africa, it can be said that the sports and arts were important to the apartheid regime as they were linked to the ideology of ‘civilisation.’ In 1972, Dame Margot Fonteyn, a famous ballet dancer who had many roles created for her by the choreographer Sir Frederick Ashton, visited Cape Town and stated that “her loyalties lay with the dancers and that she could not involve herself with the politics of every country she visited. Her duty lay with her art. She danced for all races but within the law.”²⁹⁵ Fonteyn was the most well-known ballet dancer of the 20th century. Her statement implies that she was trying to remove herself from the political situation in South Africa. That same year, David Poole became the principal of the University of Cape Town Ballet school whilst continuing in his position as artistic director.²⁹⁶

In 1973, PACT brought *Nongause* to CAPAB’s Nico Malan Theatre. CAPAB did tour Johannesburg in the same year and performed *Swan Lake*, David Poole’s *Rain Queen* (with music written by Graham Newcater who also composed for the ballet *Raka*), and *Le Cirque*. Later that year, the performance of *Petrushka* featured dancers like the author of *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, Jane Allyn. Olga Twell and Phyllis Spira played the doll and David Poole and Owen Murray danced the lead of the Moor.²⁹⁷ *Petrushka* is the story of a showman who demonstrates that his puppets (a Moor, a ballerina and *Petrushka*) come alive when he plays a flute. *Petrushka* and the Moor get in a fight over the ballerina, and the former dies. The showman tells his audience that *Petrushka* is only a puppet, yet his ghost haunts the

³³⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 207, 227 & 229

²⁹⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 233.

²⁹⁶ G. Glueck, ‘MARGOT FONTEYN: 1919-1991 A LEGEND IN HER LIFETIME’, *Scenaria*, p. 3; H. Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society*, p. 62; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 235; J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p.48; A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 44.

²⁹⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 239, 242 & 241.

showman and mocks him. The ballet is a from the Modern Era. The steps are not necessarily difficult for male dancers, but it requires that attention be paid to the portrayal of emotions. Nijinsky was known for performing the ballet with great sensitivity. This is also one of the few ballets that focuses on a male Principal dancer.²⁹⁸

In 1974, funding was cut by the government as the arts were expensive. Yet, the ballet community in Cape Town continued to put on performances. They commenced 1975 with the Romantic ballet *La Sylphide*. The opening of *The Sleeping Beauty* marked the first season where all races could go to the theatre. Notably, this was prior to the removal of petty apartheid legislation. During that same year, after a joint music and ballet tour by CAPAB, Spanish dancers performed with the ballet company for the last time due to lack of finances. In 1976, David Poole's new *Kami* was performed based on a play. *Kami* shows the strength of "Malay influence on dance in the Western Cape."²⁹⁹ Other new ballets were presented that year, including *Souvenir*, *A Time Parting* and *Judith* choreographed by Alfred Rodrigues. Even through financial uncertainty, CAPAB still managed to produce new ballets. In the December of that same year, a fire devoured the sound and lighting equipment of the Nico Malan Opera House. This challenge was surmounted, and the theatre was only inoperable for a week. In 1977, the male dancer, Johaar Mosaval danced his dream role of *Petruskha*. Mosaval was also the first coloured dancer to perform at the Nico Malan Opera House. He was given a medal for his services to ballet by Elizabeth II, the Queen of England, in 1978. In that same year, performances consisting of *Les Sylphides* and *The Firebird* were danced, and featured costumes made by Peter Cazalet. Dancers from CAPAB toured again with a production of *Coppélia*. Members who performed in these productions included Phyllis Spira, Elizabeth Triegaardt, Eduardo Greyling, Olga Twell and Linda Smit to name a few. In 1979, the first ballet shoe manufacturing company, Teplov, was founded in Cape Town by the principal dancers of CAPAB, George Teplitsky and Diana Cawley.³⁰⁰

Ballets performed in the 1980s included *Kami*, and a *War and Peace pas de deux*. The company toured Durban (1980), the Orange Free State (1980 and 1983), Pretoria (1982), Natal (1981), the Northern Cape (1983), the Eastern Cape (1982, 1983 and 1984) and Windhoek (1981). The ballets *Drie Dierie* and *Gesamtkunswerk* were choreographed by

²⁹⁸ A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 42; V. Heyworth-Dune et al., *Ballet: The Definitive Illustrated Story*, pp. 143-144; C. Dodd, *Ballet: In Colour*, p. 36.

²⁹⁹ F. Job, "Butoh-Ballet", p. 81.

³⁰⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 242, 247, 248 – 249, 254, 255, 256, 262 & 264; Anon, N. d. <https://teplov.co.za/pages/about-us>, Accessed: 20th October 2018.

Peter Klatzow. *Vespers* was choreographed by Veronica Paeper and Peter Cazalet with CAPAB and was produced in 1985 as adaptations of some of N.P. van Wyk Louw's poems. The dancers were reported to have received high praises for their performances in these productions. That same year, UCT Ballet School entered one of the largest numbers of students to the RAD Solo Seal Examinations. The Acting Director of the UCT Ballet School at that time, Mignon Furmann, was awarded in with an Honorary Degree of Fellow for the Royal Academy of Dance in London in 1984 and 1985. Other South African recipients of the award include Poppy Frames, Marjorie Stuurman and Ivy Conmee.³⁰¹

The repertoire for 1985 included *Les Sylphides*, *The Firebird*, *Spartacus*, *Serenade*, and *Giselle*. The works that were newly revised were *Abelard and Heloise*, rechoreographed by Veronica Paeper, *Concerto Barocco*, *Tales of Hoffman* (again, with new choreography by Paeper), *Variations within Space*, *Petrouchka* and *Pine Apple Poll*. The *Concerto Barocco* was a new ballet choreographed by the father of American ballet, George Balanchine.

CAPAB also presented some of George Balanchine's other works such as *Four Temperaments* and *Abelard and Heloise*. The productions of these international works were significant due the various international economic, cultural and sports boycotts that were implemented against South Africa from the 1950s to the 1980s.

The boycotting of sports was a sensitive matter for apartheid society as the government associated it with the notion of a civilised society. An example of a cultural boycott is the Music Union which prohibited members from performing in South Africa in 1961.³⁰² The Cultural Boycott movement against South Africa was initiated by Father Trevor Huddleston who was "a patron of black artists."³⁰³ His idea was then adopted by the United Nations in 1969 as Resolution 2396. In 1981, the UN General Assembly condemned cultural collaboration with South Africa altogether. In 1986, the AAA (Artists Against Apartheid) was formed. Artists who belonged to this organisation produced concerts to raise awareness for the then political prisoner, Nelson Mandela. The restrictions caused by the cultural sanctions prompted the apartheid government to allow for the "pirating plays and the permission to allow mixed audiences at certain performances."³⁰⁴ Political movements like the MDM (Mass Democratic Movement) and the UDF (United Democratic Front) were

³⁰¹ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, pp. 78-79; R. Edgcombe, 'Triple Bill', *Scenaria - incorporating Arabesque*, p. 36

³⁰² Anon, 'Grapevine', *Scenaria - incorporating Arabesque*, p. 39.

³⁰³ J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p.48.

³⁰⁴ H. Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society*, p. 63.

formed in the 1980s and they believed that music, poetry, theatre and dance were important factors that could be employed when resisting apartheid.³⁰⁵

Productions from the 1980s included a production of *Giselle* (1987) at the Nico Malan Opera House from the 21st to the 30th of January. The costumes were designed by Peter Cazalet and lighting was done by John T. Baker. In 1988, the Stellenbosch Farmer's Winery sponsored the CAPAB Ballet's performance of *Carmen*. Other organisations that became involved included the Cape Flats Distress Association, the Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouevereniging, and the Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation.

In 1989, the ballet *Spartacus* was performed again by CAPAB. The dancers cast in the lead roles were Johan Kotze and Carol Kinsey who received praise for their performances. *Spartacus* was originally a Soviet ballet that had not initially been successful with Western audiences.³⁰⁶ The story follows Spartacus, a Jewish slave who is a part of a "revolt against the Roman Empire."³⁰⁷ The score for the ballet was written by Aram Khachaturian in 1954. The ballet can be described as the portrayal of "the proletariat of antiquity."³⁰⁸ This description can be attributed to the strong theme in the story about man's ability to "overcome oppression."³⁰⁹ There were initially diverse reactions to the theme of the proletariat when the ballet was released in Russia during the 1950s. Considering the political climate of 1989 and the fall of the USSR, the production of this ballet may show how politics is often integrated into ballets. The shift of power in Eastern Europe also raised questions on the topic of funding for the Separate Performing Arts Boards as the resisting parties like the ANC had started negotiating with the government to bring about an end to the system of apartheid.³¹⁰ Ideas regarding national artistic policy in terms of public funding were contemplated all over the world during the global power shift. The following year President de Klerk removed the ban on opposition parties due to the fall of communism which ended both a global and local

³⁰⁵ H. Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society*, pp- 62 – 63; J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p.48.

³⁰⁶ Anon, 'BALLET: OPERA HOUSE Jan 21- Jan30', *Scenaria*, p. 12; Anon, 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project', *Scenaria*, p. 3; Anon, 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project', *Scenaria*, pp. 31-32; W. S. Kaplan, 'CAPAB Ballet's Spartacus', *Scenaria*, p. 32.

³⁰⁷ M. Burton, 'Performance of Jewish Identity: Spartacus', *Shofar* 27 (1), 2008, p. 1.

³⁰⁸ M. Burton, 'Performance of Jewish Identity: Spartacus', *Shofar* 27 (1), 2008, p. 1.

³⁰⁹ D. Cooper, 'a second look: spartacus', *Cinéaste* 6 (3), 1974, p. 30.

³¹⁰ B. Schwars, 'Soviet Music Since the Second World War', *The Musical Quarterly* 51 (1), 1965, p. 268; J. Eichbaum, 'Funding the Arts: Part III- A Fair Solution?', *Scenaria*, p. 33; J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. xi.

political divide. Black liberation movements started to gain momentum following de Klerk's announcement.³¹¹

In 1990, Standard Bank held the Standard Bank Arts Festival where CAPAB Ballet performed *Romeo and Juliet*. Dancers included Ann Wixley (who was described as a petite and energetic dancer), Carol Kinsey (who was deemed to have a sense of fluidity to her movements), Johan Jooste (who was noted as a powerful dance partner) and Francois Joubert (who was said to have clean lines and a good ballon). However, the standard of CAPAB male dancers was seen as very low, particularly regarding their technical abilities. The end of the ballet season in December 1990 saw a production of *Cinderella* which was choreographed by CAPAB's in-house choreographer Veronica Paeper. It also marked David Poole's resignation as artistic director of CAPAB. Poole stated in a speech marked by determination and passion that he was going to start the David Poole Ballet Trust to try promote and increase the number of black dancers throughout the country.³¹²

The Grahamstown Arts Festival saw the production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Ballet by then was viewed as "a dying culture."³¹³ The notion of ballet as dying art form can be attributed to financial struggles as well as ballet's attempts to constantly reinvent itself for a modern world. However, the production of *Romeo and Juliet* still received praise based on its choreography, set and costumes. In April 1991, CAPAB held a tribute to some of the works of Frank Staff including *Les Sylphides*, *Transfigured Night* and *Peter and the Wolf*. The month of May saw the opening of Paeper's interpretation of *Don Quixote*.³¹⁴

After the democratic transition in 1994, CAPAB had a new board of directors set in place by 1995. The new members were under the leadership of the Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Ben Ngubane. In 1994, Peter Klatzow (music) and Paeper (choreographer) produced a ballet titled *Hamlet* in London. The ballet had a successful premiere in Cape Town in 1992. Both Klatzow and Paeper had won awards in South Africa. Spies describes *Hamlet* as not being "everybody's idea of a pretty ballet."³¹⁵ Poole initially rejected the idea of the ballet brought

³¹¹ J. Eichbaum, 'Funding the Arts: Part III- A Fair Solution?', *Scenaria*, pp. 33-34; G.B. Lewis & A.C. Brooks, 'A Question of Mortality: Artists' Values and Public Funding for the Arts', *Public Administration Review* 65 (1), 2005, p. 15; J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. xx.

³¹² G. Glueck, 'The 1990 Bumper Standard Bank Arts Festival', *Scenaria*, pp. 26-27; Anon, 'Einde van goue ballet-tydperk.', *Oostelig*, p. 6.

³¹³ V. Baxter, 'Worst of Wardrobes, Best of Festival Fare.', *The Natal Witness*, p. 6.

³¹⁴ V. Baxter, 'Worst of Wardrobes, Best of Festival Fare.', *The Natal Witness*, p. 6; Anon, 'Grapevine', *Scenaria*, p. 24.

³¹⁵ B. Spies, 'Peter Klatzow's Hamlet: A Drama in Music and Movement', *SAMUS* 24, 2004, p. 65.

forward by Paeper as he was not happy with the story itself. Spies argues that the rejection of the music and the ballet itself was not because of its lack of appeal but was rather based on a deeper the questions of what art and its purpose truly are.³¹⁶ She asks the question, “should art provide an *escape* from life or must it *reflect* life?”³¹⁷ The transitional period provided certain levels of obstacles for the ballet community in South Africa. The plan was for the interconnected CAPAB to be discontinued and for three independent, state funded companies to be created for ballet, theatre and opera respectively. 1995 also brought the establishment of the dance program Dance For All by Philip Boyd. The program, also called Ballet for All, was meant to incorporate African dance and Jazz into its curriculum to teach people who could not afford dance training. In the meantime, CAPAB’s balletic standard remained intact, and in 1996 Linda Lee, a CAPAB ballet dancer received a Nederburg Award for her performance in *Swan Lake*.³¹⁸

By 1999 change was inevitable and CAPAB transformed alongside the rest of the country. This year marked the second democratic elections since the fall of the apartheid regime. Various “social, economic, and racial problems”³¹⁹ where still an issue for the country. However, the strengthening of democracy was a collective goal for politicians. CAPAB was associated with the apartheid regime’s cultural dominance, which led to the company board being renamed ‘Artscape.’³²⁰ The word used to describe the change was “metamorphosis.”³²¹ CAPAB’s ballet and other fields expanded to include other disciplines. The artistic management was to be overseen by Nicolette Moses who had auditioned for CAPAB in the 1980s. She recalled how CAPAB “rejected me because I was the wrong colour.”³²² This again brings into question CAPAB Ballet’s contradictory racial hierarchy of skin colour that Glasstone and Job speak of. Moses then danced with the Jazzart branch of CAPAB in the 1990s. According to her, there were many bitter feelings that were caused by CAPAB's past. In an attempt to try to move forward, the name ‘Nico Malan’ was removed from the theatre complex with the help of the public. CAPAB Ballet was renamed to CTCB (Cape Town City

³¹⁶ B. Spies, ‘Peter Klatzow’s Hamlet: A Drama in Music and Movement’, *SAMUS* 24, 2004, p. 66.

³¹⁷ B. Spies, ‘Peter Klatzow’s Hamlet: A Drama in Music and Movement’, *SAMUS* 24, 2004, p. 66.

³¹⁸ F. Chisholm, ‘New Capab board all set’, *Cape Times*, p. 13; A. Gilder, ‘Dance and money in the new millennium’, *Mail & Guardian*, p. 3; Anon, ‘Capab stars win awards’, *The Citizen*, p. 11.

³¹⁹ S. Orvis, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, *A Journal of Opinion* 27 (2), 1999, p. 1.

³²⁰ S. Dikeni, ‘Ex-Dancer at Artistic Helm: For art’s sake, Artscape rises from Capab’s ashes’, *The Citizen*, p. 5; S. Orvis, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, *A Journal of Opinion* 27 (2), 1999, p. 1.

³²¹ S. Dikeni, ‘Ex-Dancer at Artistic Helm: For art’s sake, Artscape rises from Capab’s ashes’, *The Citizen*, p. 5.

³²² S. Dikeni, ‘Ex-Dancer at Artistic Helm: For art’s sake, Artscape rises from Capab’s ashes’, *The Citizen*, p. 5.

Ballet) in 1997.³²³ Elizabeth Triegaardt was its artistic director from 1999 and she was also the head of the University of Cape Town Ballet School.³²⁴

Paeper choreographed *Cleopatra* for the transition, as the story of an “African Queen.”³²⁵ Triegaardt recalls that this was the way that CTCB tried to “clothe classical technique in an African blanket, with minimal success.”³²⁶ Triegaardt criticises South African ballet for not creating local stories and folklore. What stories should ballet tell if it is still associated with Eurocentrism and can be seen as cultural appropriation? This is a complicated topic which will be addressed in the final chapter and conclusion. As funding troubles loomed, CTCB and STB (State Theatre Ballet which was renamed from PACT ballet) were forced to combine in 1998 so that they could function as a business.

When asked why Jazzart members were not absorbed into the company, Triegaardt stated that money was an issue and that dancers were already limited. In 1999, there were plans to reunite again with STB for the Spring Season triple bill. The dancers employed in both CTCB and STB needed to build a repertoire. The classics were still performed but works by foreign choreographers were also brought in to build interest amongst audiences. The future of ballet as a viable performing art in South Africa was rather uncertain at the time due to the diversity of the audience. For this, Samuel draws on Spivak’s social theory of education. Applied in the post-apartheid context, this theory can allow for previously othered artists to be understood. To quote Sydney Harris: “The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.”³²⁷

By the early 2000s, the reality of closure increased significantly. Questions surrounding what would replace the dance and ballet companies of South Africa loomed on the horizon.

Concern for companies such as Jazzart and CTCB were prominent in this context. Andrew Gilder said that: “Given the energy and commitment in the industry, it is, thankfully, unlikely that we will miss out on seeing the emergence of new South African dance talent.”³²⁸

Towards the end of the 2000s, CTCB was the only ballet company left standing as embezzled

³²³ R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101; F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 78; S. Dikeni, ‘Ex-Dancer at Artistic Helm: For art’s sake, Artscape rises from Capab’s ashes’, *The Citizen*, p. 5; A. Gilder, ‘Survival Blues’, *The Star*, p. 2.

³²⁴ A. Gilder, ‘Survival Blues’, *The Star*, p. 2.

³²⁵ E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter two: Cape Town City Ballet: Conserving the Voice of Classical Ballet’, in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Post-Apartheid dance: many bodies, many voices, many stories*, p. 20.

³²⁶ E. Triegaardt, ‘Chapter two: Cape Town City Ballet: Conserving the Voice of Classical Ballet’ ..., p. 20.

³²⁷ A. Zalewska, ‘The Education (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and Student Support Regulations 2009: turning windows into mirrors?’, *SSRN 2389904*, 2014, p. 1.

³²⁸ A. Gilder, ‘Hopes of dance community lie with lottery funding’, *The Cape Times*, p. 13.

funds led to the downfall of the STB company. Collaboration between the two companies only worked for a limited time as the choreography was not entirely embraced by balletic theatre goers after a triple bill season of modern works, *Beyond Borders*, failed to reach audience members. Most ballet goers of that time were white-middle class individuals who did not share the youth's tastes in dance. The youth was the only way to keep ballet alive and to maintain a consistent audience and cash flow. This has been a constant struggle for the South African ballet community.³²⁹

More viewers attended the classical ballet, *Camille*, than any of the modern works previously put on by the company. In October 2000, CTCB had to compete with the touring Bolshoi Ballet (the Russian ballet company) which dominated ticket sales. In an attempt to try keep the local ticket sales going, ballets like *Giselle Act II*, Black and White Swan pas deux and an adaptation of *Dr Zhivago* were planned for the year 2000. However, commercial sponsors were barely interested in ballet at the time and, as there was limited funding, CTCB could not bring in an overseas choreographer, a problem that has been prevalent throughout South Africa's ballet history. To bring in visitors, the Chiappini Ballet Trust contributed R10 000 to sponsor companies like Cisne Negro (Black Swan) from Brazil which performed in Durban and Cape Town with works like *Danses Concertantes*, *Beyond the skin* and *Impromptu*. The company was left to fund itself as the Brazilian embassy did not aid them and they also paid for their tour to the *Arts Live* in Gauteng.³³⁰

Four years later, in 2004, CTCB was still standing and celebrated its 70th birthday. The improvement of the company's standard was accredited to David Poole's demand for perfection from his dancers, and Elizabeth Triegaardt's strength in the training of the corps de ballet. The Dance for All program was created by Philip Boyd in 1995. By 2004, he was teaching over 200 children in the Western Cape townships to dance. Five years later, in March 2009, the interconnected University of Cape Town Ballet School, University of Cape Town Ballet Company, and CTCB celebrated its 75th birthday. A photographic exhibition was presented by Dr Eduard Greyling, a past ballet dancer. He gave a photographic representation of the shifts that occurred over time, which ultimately brought the company to where it was in 2009. Greyling has a Teacher's Diploma in Benesh Movement Notation and

³²⁹ A. Gilder, 'Dance and money in the new millennium', *Mail & Guardian*, p. 3.

³³⁰ A. Gilder, 'Dance and money in the new millennium', *Mail & Guardian*, p. 3.

MMus (Dance) and BMus degrees from the University of Cape Town. The exhibition was held at the Baxter Theatre in the November of 2009.³³¹

Conclusion

This chapter has observed the growth of small groups like the UCT Ballet, CTTB and the Eoan Group prior to the establishment of government subsidised ballet companies. The Eoan Group has been discussed in connection to ideas of racism in ballet by authors such as Glasstone and Job. UCT Ballet has been observed through previous government subsidy applications which have allowed for the questioning of whether UCT Ballet and CAPAB were really multiracial or not. Notions of racial ‘inclusivity’ during the apartheid Era by CAPAB have been contested. CAPAB’s transition and transformation to CTCB have also been included in this chapter to stand testament to how ballet has been responsive to its historical environment and context. Initially, CAPAB was supported by the Dulcie Howes Trust, the University of Cape Town Ballet School and the initial University of Cape Town Ballet Company, which made it less dependent on government subsidies than PACT Ballet.

³³¹ A. Gilder, ‘Dance and money in the new millennium’, *Mail & Guardian*, p. 3; D. Hathaway, ‘75 years of Dance’, *Saturday Weekend Argus*, p. 5.

Chapter Three

The History of Ballet in Johannesburg

“Cape Town seemed to take the lead in collaborative projects. In Greater Johannesburg and Pretoria dance was much more divided and segmented.”

Adrienne Sichel³³²

Although this chapter primarily focuses on Johannesburg, it must be noted that mention will be made of Pretoria as well. The two cities are close to each other and are only “less than an hour’s drive away”³³³ from each other. Johannesburg and Pretoria were initially part of the Transvaal region, now known as Gauteng. Ballet’s existence in Johannesburg can be credited to dancers who have remained excited about their art form over the years. Wilmot compared ballet in Johannesburg to a woman who is beautiful when she is not faithful and faithful when she is not beautiful. This can clearly indicate how ballet is subjected to gendered stereotypes and changing trends within a society. As Wilmot continues, it is clear that ballet in Johannesburg was fragmented prior to the publication of her work in 1949, and was constantly responding to its environment to either gain or maintain an audience.³³⁴

The popularity of ballet has undergone significant highs and notable lows.³³⁵ Wilmot quotes a critic who stated: “Of all the arts, ballet is the most difficult to promote in South Africa. The country simply hasn’t got the public for this form of entertainment.”³³⁶ In 1923 the Dancing Teachers Association was established in Johannesburg. All the members of the association were active dancers and teachers. The association was founded for the purpose of examining students and to promote uniformity in training. The following year there were still no professional ballet companies to create the possibility of ballet as a career for students. This prompted many dance students to leave the country and find work abroad. Britain was particularly popular for these dancers.³³⁷ South African dancers were valued in Britain

³³² A. Sichel, ‘Chapter 7: Gate-crashing Prejudice and Perceptions: The Enduring Legacy of Arts and Dance Festivals in Post-Apartheid South Africa.’ In S. Friedman (e.d.), *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 114.

³³³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 154.

³³⁴ E. Wilmot, ‘Ballet in Johannesburg’, pp. 65, 66-67.

³³⁵ E. Wilmot, ‘Ballet in Johannesburg’, p. 65.

³³⁶ E. Wilmot, ‘Ballet in Johannesburg’, pp. 65-66.

³³⁷ E. Wilmot, ‘Ballet in Johannesburg’, pp. 66-67; Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 21.

because they brought a sense of unique artistic value to companies like the Royal Ballet and the Festival Ballet Company.³³⁸ Later, in 1932, the teachers who joined the Dancing Teachers Association included Pearl Adler, Sunbeam List, Betty Brooke, Isolene Frames, Dorothy Forrest, Moorcroft Lamb and Vivienne Tailleux (who initially danced first in Milan and then in Stockholm).³³⁹

Many South African dancers were trained under the English (RAD) Method. Other styles of ballet were present in the region like the *Cecchetti Society* (Italian ballet method) which arrived in 1920. International dancers who emerged from South Africa included Alexis Rassine, Nadia Nerina, Maryon Lane, Deanne Bergsma and Monica Mason. Wilmot, as previously mentioned, stated that the peak of popularity for ballet in Johannesburg was not as clear as it was in Cape Town. The arrival of Anna Pavlova caused a rise in interest when she visited the country in 1926. After Prima Ballerina Anna Pavlova's visit there was a heightened sense of commercialisation of ballet in the country.³⁴⁰ Madame Ravodna then visited the country to bring a production of *The Sleeping Princess* to Johannesburg. However, the production never took place because of the lack of a fully functional ballet company in the Transvaal. A cast list was created but due to "irreconcilable jealousies"³⁴¹ the production was cut. Considering that this comes from a 1969 government publication, the vagueness of this explanation may be opened for questionable reliability.

The Transvaal had one of the biggest ballet companies in South Africa due in part to the large population present in the region because of gold-mining prospects as well as attendant industrialisation and capital investment.³⁴² Prior to the establishment of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) in 1963,³⁴³ which was government subsidised, ballet schools were predominantly private.³⁴⁴ Many little companies were formed such as "Les Danseuses of Madge Mann; Ballet Theatre started by Faith de Villiers and Joyce van Greems; Festival Ballet founded by Marjorie Stuurman, Ivy Conmee and Poppy Frames; de

³³⁸ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 21.

³³⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 155-156.

³⁴⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 155-156; Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, pp. 21, 23 & 28.

³⁴² Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 21.

³⁴³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 196.

³⁴⁴ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 21.

Villiers's Johannesburg Ballet; and, later, Yvonne Mounsey and Fred Ziegler's Johannesburg City Ballet."³⁴⁵

In 1934, Levitikoff's Russian Ballet toured South Africa. This elevated the hopes that a local ballet company would be formed. The companies were to be named the South African Ballet and Production Club, but there were conflicts and they were disbanded before they could start.³⁴⁶ Small ballet clubs were consistently formed over the years prior to the establishment of professionally subsidised companies. Only a few will be mentioned for the purpose of this dissertation.

The Pretoria Ballet Club was eventually formed in 1941 when the director Johannesburg City Orchestra, John Connell, created a ballet for an opera which was being performed at the time.³⁴⁷ However, in *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, the club is said to have been formed in 1944.³⁴⁸ The founding members and teachers of the club featured the likes of Marjorie Stuurman, Poppy Frames, Ivy Conme and Lesley Hodson. The birth of the Pretoria Ballet Club then prompted the idea of The Festival Ballet Society, which was formed in Johannesburg in 1943 (Grut states that the Johannesburg Festival Ballet Society was formed in 1944). The group started with Marjorie Stuurman, Poppy Frames, Ivy Conmee, Elaine Grant and Michael Hodson.³⁴⁹ Marjorie Stuurman put on productions with the Johannesburg Festival Ballet Society and the Pretoria Ballet Club. The repertoire included in these productions were *Le Lac Des Cygnes (Act II)*, *Les Sylphides* and *Giselle*. These pieces were a combination of Romantic ballets and one Classical ballet (*Le Lac Des Cygnes*).³⁵⁰ The Pretoria Ballet Club and the Johannesburg Festival Society became conjoined because of the leadership of Marjorie Stuurman in 1950, and the name changed to the Festival Ballet Society.³⁵¹

During period in which these productions were staged, the lack of male ballet dancers was a significant problem.³⁵² The Johannesburg Festival society also struggled to source funds like

³⁴⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 154.

³⁴⁶ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 28.

³⁴⁷ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 28.

³⁴⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 164.

³⁴⁹ E. Wilmot, 'Ballet in Johannesburg', p. 69; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 163.

³⁵⁰ E. Wilmot, 'Ballet in Johannesburg', p. 70; A. Thomas, *An Usborne Guide: Ballet*, p. 42.

³⁵¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 164;

SA UOD X8/7/23 594, Letter from the Chairman of the Festival Ballet Society to the Secretary for Education, Arts and Science (N.A.C.A.E- Adult Education), 1955.

³⁵² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 163-164.

the other groups. The group held fundraisers like cake sales to try to finance travel, costumes and shoes.³⁵³ The groups toured Pretoria, Johannesburg, as well as other towns in the Transvaal and parts of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal).³⁵⁴ Even world famous ballet dancers performed with the society, such as Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes.³⁵⁵ In 1951, the company wrote to Eric Henrick Louw inviting him to a performance of *Le Lac de Cygnes*.³⁵⁶ The invitation was sent as a request for financial aid and for the registration of the society under the Companies Act. Mr Louw rejected the invitation due to prior engagements.³⁵⁷ The company eventually closed in 1957 because the use of recorded music was seen as incorrect at the time and the orchestra that they had previously used moved to Durban.³⁵⁸

The Johannesburg City Ballet was founded by Yvonne Mousey and Fred Ziegler in 1959.³⁵⁹ The company first performed in 1960.³⁶⁰ Yvonne Mousey had been dancing in America with George Balanchine's New York City Ballet before she returned to South Africa and co-founded the Johannesburg City Ballet. People who were interested in the company's formation included Faith de Villiers, Audrey King and Reina Burman, to name a few. The initial purpose of the company was to create a professional ballet company in the Transvaal region. Many dancers auditioned for the Johannesburg City Ballet. Transport was arranged to bring "aspirants from Pretoria."³⁶¹ A crowd of 200 people reportedly watched the audition as Marjorie Stuurman, Faith de Villiers, Yvonne Mousey, Vera Lane and Ivy Conmee decided which dancers were good enough to join the company. Teachers for professional dancers started on a voluntary basis and the classes offered included specified male classes, pas de deux classes and classes for professional ballet dancers who had joined the company.³⁶²

After Yvonne Mousey had finished directing the company, Faith de Villiers took her place in 1960.³⁶³ In 1961, the President was invited to become a Patron-in-Chief for the company.³⁶⁴

³⁵³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 163-164.

³⁵⁴ Republic of South Africa, *Performing Arts in South Africa: Cultural Aspirations of a Young Country*, p. 28.

³⁵⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 175.

³⁵⁶ SA HEN 2303 1/12/400, Letter from Elaine Grant to Hm. Eric H. Louw from the Johannesburg Festival Ballet Society, 1951, p. 1.

³⁵⁷ SA 1/12/400, Letter from Elaine Grant to Hm. Eric H. Louw from the Johannesburg Festival Ballet Society, 1951, pp. 1-2.

³⁵⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 176.

³⁵⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 154 & 178.

³⁶⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 268.

³⁶¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 269.

³⁶² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 272.

³⁶³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 177-178, 268-269 & 272.

³⁶⁴ SA Invitation from the Johannesburg City Ballet to the State President, SPT 51 1/6/275, 1961, p.1.

Other honorary patrons were “Mr Alec Gorshell; Mr Kelvin B. Clegg; Mr W. Grant Mackenzie; Councillor A. Rosen; Miss Hermien Dommissie; Mr S. Mandell; Mrs E. Sulsky; Mr E.W.A. Salmon and Mr F. Ziegler.”³⁶⁵ The invitation sent to the President was declined “as a result of the new status of the Head of State under the Republican Constitution.”³⁶⁶ In 1962, the President was invited to the premiere of *Coppélia*.³⁶⁷ While under the leadership of de Villiers, the company was subsidised to start the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) in 1963. Johannesburg was initially the centre for which PACT was started.³⁶⁸

In April 1963, PACT joined with the Joburg City Ballet for ballet seasons. *Giselle* was the inauguration ballet for the opening.³⁶⁹ PACT had ‘home advantage’ when it came to finance because the government was located in Pretoria. As a result, the surrounding municipalities were constantly contributing larger funds to PACT.³⁷⁰ However, it also caused a comfortable dependency that stopped the company from pursuing funds from the private sector until many years later. From 1963 to 1973, there were ten ballet masters, consisting of professionals like Gary Burne and James Riveros. Burne was born in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). His talent was spotted by Anton Dolin who recommended that he study ballet further. Burne took his advice and furthered his studies in London in 1951. He danced with a number of ballet companies such as the Sadler Wells Company before he was offered a Master and Principal dancer position with PACT in 1963. Burne went on to become the ballet Master of CAPAB in 1969 (following Poole’s resignation). Thereafter, when Poole became the Artistic Director of CAPAB (1970), Burne became a Choreographer for the company. He then left in 1971 to be a freelance choreographer in Europe. Burne married Linda Smit in 1975 and he died in Rhodesia a year later. James Riveros, by contrast, was born in Chile and moved to PACT Ballet in 1969.³⁷¹ He started choreographing for the company in 1974. His works includes a pas de deux for *Spartacus*. Riveros worked alongside choreographers such as Fredrick Ashton, Elsa Marianne van Rosen and Vassilie Trunov to name a few.³⁷²

³⁶⁵ SA SPT 51 1/6/275, Invitation from the Johannesburg City Ballet to the State President, 1961, p. 2.

³⁶⁶ SA Reply from the Secretary of the State President from the Secretary of the Johannesburg City Ballet, SPT 51 1/6/275, 1961.

³⁶⁷ SA Invitation from the Johannesburg City Ballet Secretary to the Secretary of the State President, SPT 51 1/6/275, 1962.

³⁶⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 196 & 286.

³⁶⁹ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 264.; *PACT Ballet: Giselle* (1993), Kuns op een/Arts on one.

³⁷⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

³⁷¹ J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 79.

³⁷² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 404.

The expansion of PACT to encompass ballet, opera, music and drama a year after the SPAB was formed was seen as ambitious. Ballet and opera acquired status in 1965, the same year the orchestra was formed.³⁷³ Reportedly, PACT did not have perform for mixed audiences or for “non-Whites (sic) in White areas.”³⁷⁴ Shows were planned for areas like Coronationville or Meadowlands where there were facilities for performances. This is based on information regarding PACT as a whole, but with emphasis on the PACT orchestra (ballet, drama, music and opera). It was planned that PACT Ballet and Opera were to be housed in Braamfontein, Johannesburg. PACT Music would be housed at the University of Pretoria’s Aula and Musaion.³⁷⁵ After the formation of PACT Ballet, the company toured around the Transvaal, and throughout South Africa, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Zambia, and Mozambique.³⁷⁶

In the 1970s, PACT Ballet maintained the reputation of having high standards for its ballet dancers. The company’s Artistic Directors included the actress Hermien Dommissie for one year, in 1963, Faith de Villiers (1964-1967)³⁷⁷ and then Denise Schultze and Louis Godfrey (1973-1978).³⁷⁸ Faith de Villiers died in 2001, but throughout her life she remained close to PACT Ballet. The funeral was held in Parkview, 2001.³⁷⁹ The company had trouble with Directors and there were no performances between 1968 to 1971 due to differences within Artistic Directorial management.³⁸⁰ Apart from the period of 1968-1971, PACT continued to thrive partly because it had invited numerous guest artists to perform and to keep audiences intrigued.³⁸¹ Grut notes that trends constantly changed in Johannesburg.³⁸² In the 1980s, for example, local dancers were favoured, and she states: “Johannesburg will respond to their own dancers and not succumb to our old colonial disease, which means regarding something from abroad as necessarily better than the home-grown product.”³⁸³

By taking Grut’s words into account, one may observe the attitudes towards interconnection with countries outside of South Africa and how they had impacted trends in the changing

³⁷³ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

³⁷⁴ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

³⁷⁵ The Star’s Pretoria Bureau, ‘Ambitious Expansion for PACT’, *The Star*, p. 18.

³⁷⁶ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 264.

³⁷⁷ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 264.

³⁷⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

³⁷⁹ J. Hurwitz, ‘Ballet pioneer Faith de Villiers dies at 80’, *Citizen*, p. 17.

³⁸⁰ M. Clarke & David Vaughan (e.d.), *The Encyclopaedia of Dance & Ballet*, p. 264.

³⁸¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

³⁸² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

³⁸³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265.

environment of the South African context. From 1969 to 1971, evidence from the UNISA Archive shows that PACT Ballet made arrangements to perform and give demonstrations at coloured schools.³⁸⁴ In July 1969, performances were held in coloured schools including halls such as Cornonationville Hoër, Noordegesig Hoër, Krugersdorp Hoër and Chris Botha Hoër (Coronationville Hall), Riverlea Hoër and Kliptown Hoër (Riverlea Hall), Eesterust Hoër and Oosrand Hoër (Eesterust Gemeenskapsaal and Pretoria East).³⁸⁵ The dancers were split into groups for performances. Performances included *So This is Ballet* (choreographed by Staff), *Florestan Pas De Trois* and *Coppélia Act II*.³⁸⁶

In the August and September of 1973, PACT performed at the Nico Malan Opera House (Cape Town). CAPAB also toured the Transvaal in October. Veronica Paeper produced two ballets by Frank Staff namely *Peter the Wolf* and *Transfigured Night*. Furthermore, two ballets by James Riveros were also shown that year: *The Legend of the Sea* and *The Seasons*. In 1974, *The Witchboy* was staged and is known as a rather dramatic ballet.³⁸⁷

The 1980s produced a fair number of dancers, such as Catherine Burnette.³⁸⁸ She was known as a dancer who did not enjoy publicity and she was described as having a “luminous aura”³⁸⁹ when she danced. Burnette had a number of well-known performances behind her name including *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *La Sylphide*. In fact, Hurwitz declares that Burnette’s performance in *La Sylphide* was “among the most glittering jewels, not only in PACT Ballet’s crown, but in the history of South African ballet.”³⁹⁰ Ballets by George Balanchine featured in her repertoire included *Agon*, *Rubies*, *Who Cares?* and *Themes and Variations*. She also performed in other smaller works such as *War and Peace* and *Spartacus*.³⁹¹ Burnette retired from her balletic career in 1991.³⁹² Past ballerina, Dawn Weller became artistic director of PACT in 1983.³⁹³ In the same year, the SABC broadcasted

³⁸⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 265; SCUA, ‘Memorandum to state that the following schools were to have performances’, 1967, p. 1. Box packed by Bronwen Lovegood labelled: Ballet Boxes 3- 1. Coloured Performances (Interesting for research).

³⁸⁵ SCUA. ‘Memorandum for performances from the 29th to the 30th of July 1969’ by Basil Taylor. Ballet Boxes 3- 1. Coloured Performances (Interesting for research).

³⁸⁶ SCUA. Cast List: Coloured Schools 29th & 30th, July 1969, Basil Taylor. Ballet Boxes 3- 1. Coloured Performances (Interesting for research).

³⁸⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 291.

³⁸⁸ Catherine was born in 1961 and died in 2009 at the age of 48 due to cancer (Hurwitz, 2009: p. 8).

³⁸⁹ J. Hurwitz, ‘Ballerina Burnette danced away with our hearts’, *Pretoria News*, p. 8.

³⁹⁰ J. Hurwitz, ‘Ballerina Burnette danced away with our hearts’, *Pretoria News*, p. 8.

³⁹¹ J. Hurwitz, ‘Ballerina Burnette danced away with our hearts’, *Pretoria News*, p. 8.

³⁹² J. Hurwitz, ‘Ballerina Burnette danced away with our hearts’, *Pretoria News*, p. 8.

³⁹³ J. Allyn & N. Melville, *Dawn Weller: A portrait of a Ballerina*, p. 135.

a production of *Romeo and Juliet* (Prokofiev) from the Bolshoi Ballet in Russia.³⁹⁴ In 1988, PACT put on a production of *Rosalinda*. The ballet was comedic and was based off of Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*. The ballet was choreographed by Ronald Hynd based off of George Balanchine's original choreography. Dawn Weller-Raistrick's portrayal of the character Rosalinda was described as "warm."³⁹⁵ Another cast, led by Liane Lurie, and Jeremy Coles as Von Eienstein, also received praise. Stella Howitz played Adele the maid. The company did receive some criticism on their footwork which critics said needed some improvement. Nigel Hannah played Dr Falke as the character dancer of PACT Ballet. The policeman was played by Ian Harper, who was labelled as a "satisfying performer."³⁹⁶ Graham Gardner played the jailer and Manuel Norman played Alfredo.³⁹⁷ Members of the supporting cast who were said to have stood out were Odette Millner, Nadine Sacker and Gavin Louis. Lighting was done by Peter Dockerty and Michael K. Lehr.³⁹⁸ Hurwitz (who created the programmes for PACT Ballet) was mentioned as it was hoped that "he [would] be encouraged to incorporate more of his research in future programmes!"³⁹⁹ In 1989, PACT was moved to the State Theatre in Pretoria.⁴⁰⁰

The shift towards political democratic transition occurred in the 1990s with the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. There were fears that arts established and promoted under the apartheid regime would be associated with the past. The funding of the Separate Performing Arts Boards came into question. The performing arts were dominated by white narratives, so in 1992 the all black dance company from America, the Harlem Dance Theatre, toured South Africa. The company performed at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre. This likely was done to demonstrate to people in South Africa that artists can come from many backgrounds.⁴⁰¹

Between 1989 and 1996, arts funding had declined significantly. The government stopped spending a total of R24 million on what was considered 'arts' in South Africa. In 1989 the board controlling PACT created a secret fund which distorted its annual financial

³⁹⁴ Anon, 'NEW RECORDS', *Scenaria*, p. 36.

³⁹⁵ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9.

³⁹⁶ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9.

³⁹⁷ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9.

³⁹⁸ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9.

³⁹⁹ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁰ J. Froman, 'PACT Ballet's Rosalinda', *Scenaria*, p. 9; R. Greig, 'Sad tale of State theatre's decline to bankruptcy', *The Sunday Independent*, p. 11.

⁴⁰¹ L. Kriel, 'The State Theatre Dance Company and the shaping of contemporary dance in South Africa.', *Historia* 46 (1), 2001, pp. 175-176.

statements.⁴⁰² In 1993, as part of a global celebration of the 150th year of *Giselle*, PACT performed the ballet for the first time with a Russian ballerina from Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet, Alla Mikhhalchenko. Jeremy Coles, the Senior Principal, performed in the leading role as Albrecht. At the time, Nedbank was a sponsor for PACT ballet. The Transvaal Philharmonic Orchestra was conducted by Michael Hankinson.⁴⁰³ In 1993, Dawn Weller, the Artistic Director of PACT ballet (discussed later) stated that the male roles in *Giselle* can be likened to the enormous role women have in the ballet of *Swan Lake* because in the former, there is a solo for men in ACT II, where the dancer simply has to keep dancing.⁴⁰⁴ *Giselle* also has more opportunities for the male dancer to perform.⁴⁰⁵

When President Nelson Mandela was inaugurated on the 10th of May 1994, six professional ballet dancers from PACT performed at the Union Buildings.⁴⁰⁶ The performance was drawn from a diverse range of cultures and was titled "Many Cultures, One Nation."⁴⁰⁷ Specific dances included in the performance included a coda and pas de deux by Ann Wixley and Johnny Bovang (from *Le Corsaire*), and another pas de deux performed by Tanja Graafland and Ian MacDonald (from *Spring Waters*).⁴⁰⁸ The resident conductor as well as the pianist of PACT were also present at the event.⁴⁰⁹ The ballet dancers from PACT also performed an "African Interpretation of Ravel's Bolero, complete with drums and gumboot dancing."⁴¹⁰ This demonstrates that the ballet community was being responsive to their historical environment. The classical ballet pas de deux that were performed were considered to be popular with the crowd that day.⁴¹¹ The dancers were said to have made an impression and enchanted many people who had never seen ballet before.⁴¹² In 1994, it also became clear that financial trouble was imminent for PACT. Meridy Wixley and Arlette Franks (two members of the board) tried to expose the corruption of a fund in PACT's financial records

⁴⁰² R. Greig, 'Sad tale of State theatre's decline to bankruptcy', *The Sunday Independent*, p. 11.

⁴⁰³ *PACT Ballet: Giselle* (1993), Kuns op een/Arts on one.

⁴⁰⁴ *PACT Ballet: Giselle* (1993), Kuns op een/Arts on one.

⁴⁰⁵ *PACT Ballet: Giselle* (1993), Kuns op een/Arts on one.

⁴⁰⁶ J. Hurwitz, PACT Ballet: The Merry Widow, July 1994.

⁴⁰⁷ M. Gevisser, 'SA's reconciliation in Motion.', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁸ J. Hurwitz, PACT Ballet: The Merry Widow, July 1994.

⁴⁰⁹ J. Hurwitz, PACT Ballet: The Merry Widow, July 1994.

⁴¹⁰ M. Gevisser, 'SA's reconciliation in Motion.', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 9.

⁴¹¹ E. Bulbring, R. Hartley, B. Pottinger, C. Robertson & M. Robertson. 'The moment we came together.' *Sunday Times*, p. 23.

⁴¹² E. Bulbring, R. Hartley, B. Pottinger, C. Robertson & M. Robertson. 'The moment we came together.' *Sunday Times*, p. 23.

from 1994 until its closure.⁴¹³ The two members were removed for trying to expose the corruption present in the administration.⁴¹⁴ After 1994, the government implemented a new administration.⁴¹⁵ The ballet company was given five years to find and maintain private sponsorship.⁴¹⁶ It was later exposed in 1995 that the directors had used secret funds and had given certain people within PACT the opportunity to remove themselves from the Performing Arts Council before the anticipated financial ruin commenced. For example, many managers who were aware of the corruption had resigned from PACT and had then worked for the theatre as consultants to maintain their jobs without the risk of sudden unemployment.⁴¹⁷ Change was heading for the dance and ballet community in 1996 when the government released the White Paper on the Arts.⁴¹⁸ The White Paper stipulated that there was to be a decrease in subsidies over three years from that year.⁴¹⁹ Thereafter, grants would have to be applied for from the National Arts Council.⁴²⁰ As a result of this, PACT Ballet and PACT Contemporary Dance Company combined in 1997 to try to become independent from government subsidies.⁴²¹ CAPAB, as already discussed, also struggled to find independent financial means.⁴²² Some of the repertoire for PACT's 1996 seasons included *La Sylphide*,⁴²³ *La Bayadère*⁴²⁴ and *The Nutcracker*.⁴²⁵ For the production of *La Bayadère*, a guest performer by the name of Paula Olivier was featured.⁴²⁶

As a child, Olivier studied ballet with Marjorie Stuurman and Lorna Haupt (to whom she later became an Assistant Dance Teacher).⁴²⁷ At some point in Olivier's career she was part of the Festival Ballet Society and danced for choreographers Frank Staff and Lorna Haupt.⁴²⁸ She also taught at institutions like Pro-Arte and the University of Pretoria, and was a member

⁴¹³ H. Mackie, 'Greek Tragedy in Pretoria', *Business Day*, p. 9.

⁴¹⁴ H. Mackie, 'Greek Tragedy in Pretoria', *Business Day*, p. 9.

⁴¹⁵ H. Mackie, 'Greek Tragedy in Pretoria', *Business Day*, p. 9.

⁴¹⁶ H. Mackie, 'Greek Tragedy in Pretoria', *Business Day*, p. 9.

⁴¹⁷ R. Greig, 'Sad tale of State theatre's decline to bankruptcy', *The Sunday Independent*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁸ Anon, 'The Future of Ballet in SA', *The Citizen*, p. 21.

⁴¹⁹ H. Friedman, 'Political Beasties come out to Play', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 35.

⁴²⁰ H. Friedman, 'Political Beasties come out to Play', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 35.

⁴²¹ H. Friedman, 'Political Beasties come out to Play', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 35.

⁴²² H. Friedman, 'Political Beasties come out to Play', *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, p. 35.

⁴²³ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996, p. 23.

⁴²⁴ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996.

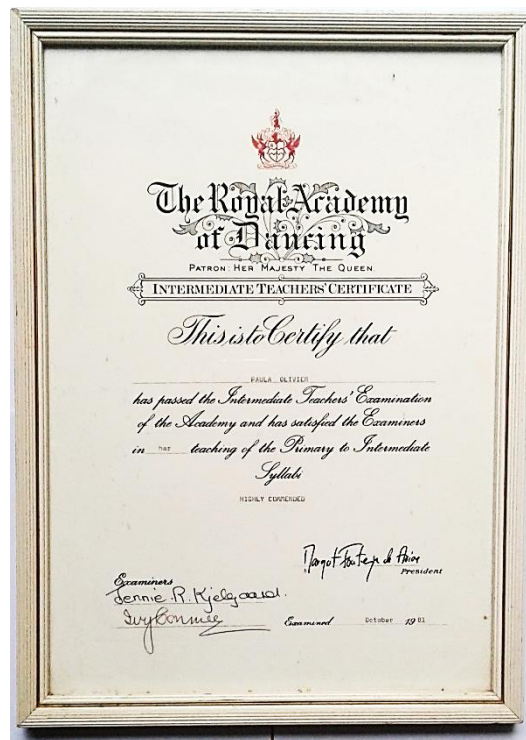
⁴²⁵ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: The Nutcracker*, 1996.

⁴²⁶ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996, p. 23.

⁴²⁷ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996, p. 23.

⁴²⁸ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996, p. 23.

of the board for PACT Ballet School.⁴²⁹ Olivier also started her own school in 1975, the Paula Olivier Ballet School. The author has known a few of her past ballet students. When Olivier passed away in 2016, the running of the school was undertaken by her daughter and granddaughter. The school has been renamed the Centurion Ballet Academy, but it is still located at the same studio in Lyttleton, Centurion (1005 Pretorius Ave, Lyttleton Manor, Centurion, Pretoria).⁴³⁰ In the Lyttleton area there is a hospice called Centurion Hospice, which runs a second hand store to raise funds for its charitable ventures (it is a non-profit organisation).⁴³¹ My mother found Paula Olivier's framed certificates on sale for R5.00 each. When I went to go look at the remainder of the certificates, I noted that some of them were highly valuable due to the presence of Ivy Conmee and Margot Fonteyn's signatures on those that Olivier received from the R.A.D. There are also certificates from the Cecchetti association. A sample of the certificates is attached below.



Images 5: Intermediate Teacher's Exam Certificate (Signature of Ivy Conmee, bottom left and Margot Fonteyn, upper right) 1981. Photographer: Sarah Meewes, 2018.

⁴²⁹ J. Hurwitz, *PACT Ballet: La Bayadère*, 1996, p.23.

⁴³⁰ Anon, n.d., <https://centurionballet.weebly.com/>, Accessed: 7th November 2018.

⁴³¹ Anon, 2018, <http://centurionhospice.com/about-us/>, Accessed: 7th November 2018.



Image 6: Certificate for Advanced Solo RAD, Margot Fonteyn's signature can be seen at the top of the signatures on the right-hand side 1959. Photographer: Sarah Meewes, 2018.

In 1997, Dawn Weller (the artistic director of PACT) went to Moscow to judge the 8th Moscow International Ballet Competition. Weller held a deep appreciation for the Russian ballerinas. When she first visited in 1991, the ballet master of the company, Bruce Simpson, was also sent to train with the Russians to learn the same gymnastics techniques that the Bolshoi Ballet was using in their own company. During her visits to Russia, Weller met ballet dancers like Natalia Makarova and Galina Ulanova which she found exciting. She also discussed the issue of weight with other Artistic Directors in Russia. Weller ran a tight ship at PACT where dancers were regularly weighed and had their fat percentages tested. With the introduction of gymnastics training, Weller believed that a “streamlined”⁴³² look was achieved by the dancers of PACT Ballet.⁴³³ Weller mentioned to a journalist from *The Star*, Diane de Beer, that there had only been two people who did not meet the weight requirements and had been told to leave. She acknowledged that dancers needed to eat otherwise they could not be strong and have endurance. She stated in the interview, “I respect dancers because they work incredibly hard and in the end they are just people who have to cope with tremendous pressures and all the usual problems that other people experience.”⁴³⁴ Weller was not open to discussing company troubles in public. She said: “It’s

⁴³² D. de Beer, ‘Dawning of a Dream’, *The Star*, p. 4.

⁴³³ D. de Beer, ‘Dawning of a Dream’, *The Star*, p. 4.

⁴³⁴ D. De Beer, ‘Dawning of a Dream’, *The Star*, p. 4.

like a family and you don't have those discussions away from the dinner table."⁴³⁵ That same year in April, the members who had created 'the secret fund' (such as Johann Van der Bergh whose name was mentioned in *The Sunday Independent*) had exacerbated the financial troubles for PACT. A total of R740 000 had gone missing from the State Theatre. Dr Ben Ngubane (the new Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology at the time) was aware of the situation because he had been warned by F.W. de Klerk during the democratic transition period of 1994.⁴³⁶

While Weller was not voicing any concerns she may have had, there were speculations that of imminent closure in 1997. At the time, PACT Ballet and PACT Dance Company were to form part of the new State Theatre Ballet and Dance Company.⁴³⁷ A production of *Coppélia* was also produced during the course of the year.⁴³⁸ The grants that had supported the companies from the inception of the SPAB were to no longer be funded by the new government from March 1999. The Executive Officer of the Board, Alan Joseph, remained at optimistic that ballet and dance would still be well supported. The companies still had to be formed under Section 21 of the Companies Act and two Artistic Directors had to be appointed for dance and ballet. The board, re-shaped in the early 1990s, hoped that the State Theatre would bring ballet and dance together. The hope was to build a bridge connecting the two within a South African context.⁴³⁹

The company moved to Pretoria State Theatre (built in 1981) from the Johannesburg Civic Theatre.⁴⁴⁰ Weller (who was still the Artistic Director) saw the move in the following light: "Moving us to Pretoria in the first place was a political decision...Audience research has shown that the majority of ballet audiences at the State come from Johannesburg, and productions at the Civic are (were) costly."⁴⁴¹ To prepare for any future financial trouble, both the ballet and dance companies had to reduce the amount of dancers they were employing. The remaining members' contracts were renewed until the 31st of March 1998.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁵ D. De Beer, 'Dawning of a Dream', *The Star*, p. 4.

⁴³⁶ R. Greig, 'Sad tale of State theatre's decline to bankruptcy', *The Sunday Independent*, p. 11.

⁴³⁷ Anon, 'The Future of Ballet in SA', *The Citizen*, p. 21.

⁴³⁸ J. Hurwitz, *STB: Coppélia*, 1997.

⁴³⁹ Anon, 'The Future of Ballet in SA', *The Citizen*, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁰ R. Greig, 'Sad tale of State theatre's decline to bankruptcy', *The Sunday Independent*, p. 11; H. Mackie, 'Pact's Ballet new dispensation brings a more open policy', *Business Day*, p. 16.

⁴⁴¹ H. Mackie, 'Pact's Ballet new dispensation brings a more open policy', *Business Day*, p. 16.

⁴⁴² Anon, 'The Future of Ballet in SA', *The Citizen*, p. 21.

The ballet aspirant program⁴⁴³ was dissolved and a Graduate program was designed to cater for a diversity of dance forms.⁴⁴⁴ In 1988 the repertoire for STB included *Swan Lake* and *La Fille Mal Gardée*.⁴⁴⁵

Ballet and ‘dance’ were also used as separate terms in this context. Alan Joseph concluded that the future was going to be a difficult one for both dance forms. It was emphasised that all members had to remain committed to keeping the legacy of dance and ballet alive.⁴⁴⁶ Weller faced questions on matters of finance, the hiring of foreign dancers, black dancers and keeping past PACT dancers within the reformed company. She wanted the company to tour overseas, but the lack of finances prevented this from becoming a reality. The lack of well-trained male dancers at the time was a global problem.⁴⁴⁷ Weller believed that the future of male dancers in South Africa was to remain secure through black male dancers. She estimated that the PACT school would train (from the year 1997) black male dancers from the ages of five to six years old. As Weller foresaw continued financial pressure, newer neo-classical ballets were produced by the company with works from choreographers like Forsyth, Taylor and Jyri Killian. Classical ballet was not disregarded, but a variety of other pieces were added to the original repertoire. To maintain financial stability, Weller estimated that eleven ballets could be staged, each requiring three to four ballet casts so that enough tickets could be sold to fill enough seats. The company no longer did school tours. Rather, the schools were rather brought to the State Theatre.⁴⁴⁸

In March 2000, Dr Ben Ngubane declared that the State Theatre’s subsidy of R30 million was to be cut off because the theatre had already lost R18.2 million in profit. It was deemed unlikely that the money could be made back. Ballet and opera demanded expensive budgets to remain in production. The new government did not know if it was going to be financially feasible to continue its subsidies for the arts. There were also fears that there would be an exodus of skilled dancers from the country which would produce a brain drain in the industry.⁴⁴⁹ In an excerpt published in *The Citizen*, Richard Ntuli MP, the spokesperson for the Department of Arts, Culture, Science of the ANC government, states: “We can only hope

⁴⁴³ an internship for ballet students, these students are usually given a year to try prove themselves and get a set position such as a member of the corps de ballet by the end of the aspirant programme (Anon, 1997: 21).

⁴⁴⁴ Anon, ‘The Future of Ballet in SA’, *The Citizen*, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁵ J. Hurwitz, STB: *Swan Lake*, 1998; J. Hurwitz, STB: *La Fille mal Gardée*, 1998.

⁴⁴⁶ Anon, ‘The Future of Ballet in SA’, *The Citizen*, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁷ H. Mackie, ‘Pact’s Ballet new dispensation brings a more open policy’, *Business Day*, p. 16.

⁴⁴⁸ H. Mackie, ‘Pact’s Ballet new dispensation brings a more open policy’, *Business Day*, p. 16.

⁴⁴⁹ R. Ntuli, ‘SA dancers will go abroad, and they will never come back’, *The Citizen*, p. 13.

that the demise of the State Theatre is not part of the master plan to avoid the integration of Eurocentric culture into the African Culture”⁴⁵⁰.

His statement is open for debate and now forms part of the relevant discussions taking place in the post-apartheid context. The State Theatre Ballet closed its doors in June 2000. The final production, *The Merry Widow*, was held on the 30th of June 2000.⁴⁵¹ The title roles were performed by Tanja Graafland and Ian MacDonald. Other dancers in the final act included Angela Malan and Orlando Russell, Irina Zyrianova and Christian Tatchev, Ian MacDonald and Karen Beukes. The New Arts Philharmonic Orchestra accompanied the performance with Graham Scott as the conductor.⁴⁵² Ballet conductors in South Africa were a rarity because balletic music was often not favoured by the music community. Also, conductors of ballet music needed to be aware of how ballet tells a story. This was highlighted by the ballet music conductor Alan Barker.⁴⁵³ The company was also set to tour China in October (with the production of Weller’s *La Bayadère*) and to collaborate with the Royal Danish Ballet in July. The company’s development winter school program was also shut down.⁴⁵⁴ Below, a photograph shows a protest that took place against the closure of the Theatre. This image was confirmed by Bronwen Lovegood as a protest where people from the streets came to join the employees.

⁴⁵⁰ R. Ntuli, ‘SA dancers will go abroad, and they will never come back’, *The Citizen*, p. 13.

⁴⁵¹ P. De Mervelec, *The South African Ballet Theatre*, p. 1; A. Sichel, ‘Ballet company to have emotional Swansong’, *The Star*, p. 3.

⁴⁵² A. Sichel, ‘Ballet company to have emotional Swansong’, *The Star*, p. 3.

⁴⁵³ Anon, ‘Scenaria Interviews: ALAN BARKER: THE ART OF THE BALLET CONDUCTOR’, *Scenaria*, p. 5.

⁴⁵⁴ A. Sichel, ‘Ballet company to have emotional Swansong’, *The Star*, p. 3.

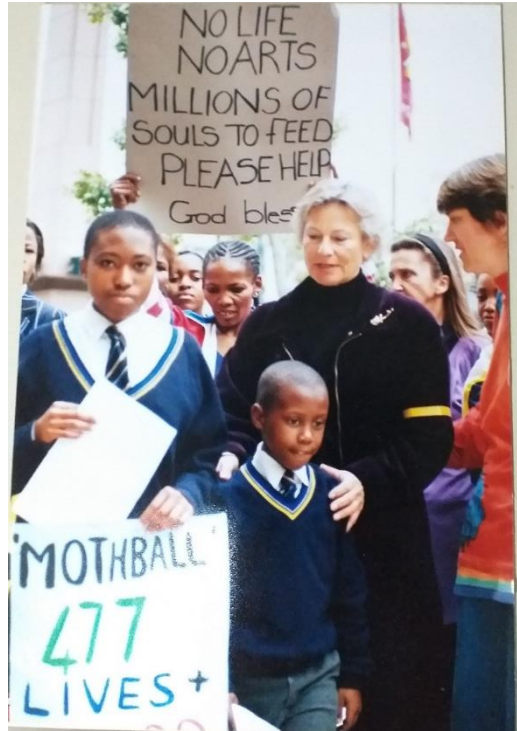


Image 7: Photograph estimated to come from 2000 prior to the Shutdown of The State Theatre Performing Arts. Photographer: Waldemar Swierczewski, people in the photograph remain unidentified.⁴⁵⁵

The South African Ballet Theatre was formed a year later in 2001. The purpose of the company was to give the ballet community a proud South African voice. The founding members were past STB members Karen Beukes, Fiona Budd, Ian MacDonald, Angela Malan and Dirk Badenhorst.⁴⁵⁶ The CEO of SABT, Dirk Badenhorst, said that “Running a ballet company does not become easier with the passing years in fact the opposite may be true- but the rewards, while often fleeting, like dance itself, remain firmly in memory.”⁴⁵⁷ The first production staged by the company was *Giselle* in 2001 which was attended by the then first lady Mrs Zanele Mbeki. SABT’s repertoire included some of Veronica Paeper’s works such as *Carmen*, *Cinderella* and *La Traviata*, as well as an adaptation of Frank Staff’s *Transfigured Night*. SABT’s sponsors included First National Bank (FNB), the National Lottery Dispensation Fund, and DNA Automotive a division of Super Group Trading (Pty) Ltd. SABT’s patron, Mr Tito Mboweni, the Governor of the Reserve Bank, was introduced to

⁴⁵⁵ SCUA, Photograph of protest assumed to have commenced outside the State Theatre in Pretoria prior to the shutdown of the Theatre in 2000.

⁴⁵⁶ P. De Mervelec, *The South African Ballet Theatre*, p.1.

⁴⁵⁷ P. De Mervelec, *The South African Ballet Theatre*, p. 2.

Dirk Badenhorst by Mrs Zanele Mbeki. Mboweni had previously served as South Africa's Labour Minister.⁴⁵⁸

The company moved from The State Theatre in Pretoria to the Johannesburg Civic Theatre in March 2004. The theatre offered a five-year period in which the company did not have to pay rent. The sole condition was that the company performed two seasons at the theatre. In 2004, the company's productions included *Swan Lake*, *Rock-a-TuTu* and *The Nutcracker*. The performance of *Swan Lake* was reported to have earned a total of R1 million on the opening night. There was an orchestra sponsored by Rand Merchant Bank (it had become rare to have orchestras at ballets due to high costs).⁴⁵⁹ The company also toured all nine provinces of South Africa and featured guest stars from The Royal Ballet, Johan Kobborg and Alina Cojocaru, The National Ballet of Canada, Guillaume Côté, and dancers from the San Francisco Ballet, as well as the Parisian Madame Claude Bessy (past director of the Paris Opera Ballet School) in September 2004. SABB also performed to 10 000 South Africans at soccer stadiums in Mamelodi and Alexandra.⁴⁶⁰

In 2007, Lorna Maseko was the first black female dancer to be cast in the title role of Kitri for the ballet *Don Quixote*.⁴⁶¹ Her hometown was the Alexandra Township. She started ballet when she was nine years old with Martin Schonberg (founder of Ballet Theatre Afrikan). Andile Ndlovu was the first local black man to play the role of Basilo in *Don Quixote*. Ndlovu was one of the few black men participating in ballet at the time.⁴⁶² He grew up in Soweto, Johannesburg. Initially, Ndlovu refused to go near ballet because he believed that if he did so, he would be stereotyped as homosexual. He first started with ballroom and Latin American dance before he went to a ballet studio.⁴⁶³ When he did start leaning towards ballet, he was not understood by his community. This lack of understanding by the community was compared to the musical *Billy Elliot* in an article in The Times newspaper. Ndlovu received offers from the Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Washington Ballet.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁵⁸ S. Mkhwanazi, 'Mr fix it': Mboweni appointed Finance Minister 'to fix economy', *Pretoria News*, p. 1; P. De Mervelec, *The South African Ballet Theatre*, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵⁹ L. van Rooyen, 'The Civic Theatre comes alive again', *SATURDAY STAR*, p. 8.

⁴⁶⁰ P. De Mervelec, *The South African Ballet Theatre*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁶¹ A. Sichel, 'Back in the ballet biz', *STAR*, p. 2.

⁴⁶² Staff Reporter, 'Township teen goes classical...', *The Times*, p. 1.

⁴⁶³ H. Crooks, 'TV tale of dancer brings new hope for future', *Weekend Post*, p. 7.

⁴⁶⁴ Staff Reporter, 'Township teen goes classical...', *The Times*, p. 1.

Joyce van Geems was a ballet dancer and the founder of the Ballet Theatre (in 1948) which was situated in Lynwood, Pretoria. She and others had the dream that one day there would be one national South African Ballet.⁴⁶⁵ Even eight years after the establishment of four separate ballet companies, Howes was quoted to have said: “It is crazy to have four ballet companies in South Africa. Are we doing what is best for ballet?”⁴⁶⁶ In 2010, this almost became a reality when both CTCB (with a budget of R6 million) and SABT (a budget of R12 million at the time) faced financial pressures. The CEO of CTCB, then Elizabeth Triegaardt, stated that government funding had depleted by 66% for the ballet company and corporate funding was trickier to obtain.

Ian MacDonald acknowledged that potential corporate funders were reluctant to contribute due to the economic instability in South Africa at the time. MacDonald also noted that with the FIFA World Cup being hosted in the year 2010, there was more focus on funding the sport than ballet.⁴⁶⁷ The chance to host the World Cup allowed South Africa to be seen as “world-class”.⁴⁶⁸ MacDonald noted that it was the arts that felt the tight economic restrictions in that year. However, both companies in Cape Town and Johannesburg noted that they had a loyal audience who also enjoyed watching ballets with orchestral performances. SABT lost two dancers to the production of *The Lion King* and CTCB often lost dancers to cruise ships.⁴⁶⁹ Both companies tried ways to obtain funding. For example, CTCB was to tour to Grahams Town and Durban. The idea was to try to get ten people to donate R1000 each.⁴⁷⁰ Another method to try raise funds was to sell any valuables that the companies had. SABT sold a pair of Margot Fonteyn signed ballet shoes from when she performed *Swan Lake* in 1971, a painting by Walter Batiss called *The Dancer*, and an autograph from the ballerina Nadia Nerina. Both MacDonald and Triegaardt were in discussion with each other to collaborate more often in order to keep the companies alive. A past dancer from former

⁴⁶⁵ SA, UOD 595 X8/7/24, Letter to The Secretary for Education, Department of Education, Arts and Science from Ballet Theatre for grant application, 1956; E. Wilmot, ‘Ballet in Johannesburg.’, pp. 72 & 75.

⁴⁶⁶ SCUA, Special Correspondent, ‘Too many companies spoil the ballet broth’, *The Star*, p. unknown Box labelled Centralisation of Ballet under Miscellaneous: Study of Centralisation of Ballet in South Africa 1968 – 1972).

⁴⁶⁷ B. Capazorio, ‘Crunch time for ballet companies: call for a national company to be formed.’, *Sunday Argus*, p. 7.

⁴⁶⁸ C. Bolsmann, ‘Representation in the First African World Cup: ‘World-Class’, Pan-Africanism, and Exclusion’ *Soccer and Society*, 13 (2), 2012, p. 163.

⁴⁶⁹ B. Capazorio, ‘Crunch time for ballet companies: call for a national company to be formed.’, *Sunday Argus*, p. 7.

⁴⁷⁰ B. Capazorio, ‘Crunch time for ballet companies: call for a national company to be formed.’, *Sunday Argus*, p. 7.

CAPAB and then SABT, Allison Foat, believed that the companies should have formed a national company, not only to garner a larger audience, but to create a bigger ballet company with a full corps de ballet.⁴⁷¹

SABT then became the South African Mzansi Ballet after joining Mzansi productions.⁴⁷² In 2013, the Mzansi ballet made an appearance on *Big Brother* (season 8), a television show. In May of the same year a pas de deux was performed at the Swartkops Air Show. Badenhorst encouraged the sharing of ballet outside the theatre walls. In the same year the Mzansi Ballet performed with twenty-five international dancers at the Teatro in Montecasino for a tribute to Alicia Alonso, the founder of the National Ballet of Cuba. A fair number of dancers were also provided to Mzansi by the National Ballet of Cuba. Along with the Cuban dancers and Badenhorst's outreach program, a total of 500 aspirant dancers from various disadvantaged areas in South Africa were given the chance to participate in ballets. These efforts won the Mzansi Ballet an R8 million government grant for the years 2013, 2014 and 2015.⁴⁷³

Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the establishment of small ballet groups such as The Pretoria Ballet Club, The Festival Ballet Society and the Johannesburg City Ballet prior to the formation of government subsidised ballet companies which was PACT Ballet in the Transvaal. The dependency of such groups on government funding prior to subsidised companies is also acknowledged as a reason for ballet's struggle in Johannesburg and Pretoria to gain alternative funding. A political tone can be sensed throughout the chapter due to the geographical location of the company. It can be stated that the group did receive larger amounts of funding than other subsidised companies as they were the closest to Pretoria. Once the new South Africa was formed, fear spread that the 'white' arts funding would be cut. This resulted in members of PACT embezzling funds which led to the fall of STB (renamed after transition). The rise of the new company SABT, shortly after the closure of STB, and its transition to Mzansi Ballet and Joburg Ballet were also discussed.

⁴⁷¹ B. Capazorio, 'Crunch time for ballet companies: call for a national company to be formed.', *Sunday Argus*, p. 7.

⁴⁷² A. Sichel, 'Honouring Brilliant Burnise.', *STAR*, p. 5.

⁴⁷³ P. Schwartz, 'Pirouetting in Step with the World.' *Mail and Guardian*, p. 4; A.C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 169.

Chapter Four

South African Ballets

“One day, I’ll probably be a director or assistant director or create African ballets for the country. That’s my dream – I want to make African stories real. I want to see white, black, coloured, Indian all in one company together and then create ballets that will represent them, their audiences and their society. That way, South Africa will really sit on top, because we are unique.”

Andile Ndlovu⁴⁷⁴

Ballet tends to follow a historical pattern. Choreography by individuals in specific contexts speak of the past’s influence on the present and the future. Dance can often reflect the responsiveness of performing arts and artists alike to the historical environment in which they are situated. Ballets discussed in this chapter will include *Raka* (1967), *Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi)* (1970), *Mantis Moon* (1970), *The Rain Queen* (1971), *Nongause* (1973), *Mantis* (1991), *Incwadi* (2000) and *The Nutcracker* (2008). While other South African works are mentioned, emphasis is placed on the ballets listed above. These ballets have Afrocentric themes which will be discussed and contextualised below. It should be noted that this chapter and its contents are multifaceted, meaning that there are many topics and areas that can be explored further.

Afrocentric Themes in South African Ballets

In 1952, Howes choreographed a ballet for a festival to commemorate the arrival of the Dutch in the Cape. Grut calls it the first South African ballet. *Vlei Legend* (the picture of the dancers and the stage set can be seen below) depicts the story of a Khoisan princess written by Uys Krige. She is chased by sailors near the Cape Flats between Muizenberg and Wynberg. She falls and starts to cry, her tears then make a vlei and the sailors drown in it. The set and costumes of the dancers can be observed as early representations of Afrocentrism in ballet. Job holds the opinion that such a topic for a celebration of the arrival of settlers was non-conforming and that what Howes did was “experimental.”⁴⁷⁵ Considering the rise to state

⁴⁷⁴ E. du Preez, ‘US-based ballet star Andile Ndlovu tells young South Africans: ‘Don’t be afraid to do something different’’, 2019, <https://www.channel24.co.za/News/Local/us-based-ballet-star-andile-ndlovu-tells-young-south-africans-dont-be-afraid-to-do-something-different-20190827-2>, Accessed: 31 August 2019.

⁴⁷⁵ F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 79.

power of the NP four years earlier, she is correct to label this ballet as non-conforming. Howes believed that constant communication with South African problems was required for ballet to remain relevant and alive in South Africa.⁴⁷⁶



Image 8: “Vlei Legend, specially commissioned ballet by Dulcie Howes for the Van Riebeeck Tercentenary Festival, 1952. Venue: Cape Town City Hall.”⁴⁷⁷ Photographer: Unknown, Dancers: Unknown.

The idea of “indigenous”⁴⁷⁸ South African ballets was a concept discussed by PACT in 1965.⁴⁷⁹ In a letter dated 13 January, 1965, Basil Taylor (the Manager of Opera and Ballet) wrote to Stefan Grové that he was “arranging a meeting with Professor Leo Quayle and Miss Faith de Villiers, PACT Ballet’s Artistic Manager, early next week to discuss the whole question of Indigenous ballets.”⁴⁸⁰ The letter was clearly as a response to Grové who had expressed an interest in the topic.⁴⁸¹ In 1971, the journalist Marilyn Jenkins wrote an article

⁴⁷⁶ F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 79; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 92; R. Solberg, *South African Theatre in the Melting Pot*, p. 1; School of Dance Archives, n.d.

<https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/islandora/object/islandora:13928>. Accessed: 24th of November 2019.

⁴⁷⁷ School of Dance Archives, n.d. <https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/islandora/object/islandora:13928>. Accessed: 24th of November 2019.

⁴⁷⁸ SCUA. M. Jenkins, ‘Pact plan ballet based on a Xhosa fairy-tale’, *The Star*, p. unknown. Clip from 1971 packed in box.

⁴⁷⁹ SCUA. Letter to Mr Stefan Grové from Mr Basil Taylor (Manager of Opera and Ballet) 13th of January 1965..

⁴⁸⁰ SCUA. Letter to Mr Stefan Grové from Mr Basil Taylor (Manager of Opera and Ballet) 13th of January 1965..

⁴⁸¹ SCUA. Letter to Mr Stefan Grové from Mr Basil Taylor (Manager of Opera and Ballet) 13th of January 1965.

for *The Star*, titled ‘Pact plan ballet based on a Xhosa fairytale’.⁴⁸² In it, she stated that: “Worthwhile indigenous ballets in South Africa based on tribal heritage, can regrettably be counted on fingers of one hand. Pact’s ‘Raka’ and Pacofs ‘Mantis Moon’ both written by Frank Staff, are the only two from the past five years which spring to mind.”⁴⁸³ In the context in which Jenkins wrote the article, ‘indigenous’ ballets that had been produced exceeded the two that she had mentioned and credited to Staff. *Raka* (1967), *Mantis Moon* (1970) and *The Rain Queen* (1971) had all been produced by that time (it must be noted that even though *The Rain Queen* was incomplete, it still counts as Staff’s work).⁴⁸⁴ Jenkins mentions in the article that PACT had planned to have a season in June 1971 to launch a new ballet called *She Walks By Moonlight*. The ballet was to be choreographed and produced by Lorna Haupt, based on what Jenkins has quoted to be “an African Legend.”⁴⁸⁵

A document located in the UNISA Archives reads “PROPOSED BALLETS FOR CONSIDERATION BY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS.”⁴⁸⁶ This document was found in a box bearing the wording ‘Ballet Box 2: Interesting for Research’, with the title “Indigenous Ballets” written on it by Bronwen Lovegood. These ballets were all to be choreographed by Lorna Haupt.⁴⁸⁷ The list of potential ballets included *Study for Man and Trumpet*, *Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi)*, *Oppie Niewedjaar* and *Kasina*.⁴⁸⁸ It is unclear whether or not these ballets were actually produced and performed. For the purpose of this research the story of *Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi)* will be discussed in brief as part of the contention that the balletic community had a desire to produce what they deemed as indigenous ballet. Chronologically, this ballet came after *Raka*. When examining the idea of indigenous ballet, Job notes from an interview with Triegaardt that ballet has to find themes that will keep audience’s interest. She believes that indigenous ballets are important, but that dancers also need to be able to connect to the stories. Triegaardt had attempted to

⁴⁸² SCUA. M. Jenkins, ‘Pact plan ballet based on a Xhosa fairy-tale’, *The Star*, p. unknown.

⁴⁸³ SCUA, ‘Pact plan ballet based on a Xhosa fairy-tale’, *The Star*, p. unknown.

⁴⁸⁴ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, pp. 332 & 333; J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 81.

⁴⁸⁵ SCUA. M. Jenkins, ‘Pact plan ballet based on a Xhosa fairy-tale’, *The Star*, p. unknown.

⁴⁸⁶ SCUA. Anon, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs”, 1970, p. 2. packed in box by Bronwen Lovegood when PACT/State Theatre Archive moved to UNISA in 2018. Box labelled Ballet Box 2: ‘Interesting for Research’ with Indigenous Ballet written on the top of the box).

⁴⁸⁷ SCUA, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs” date: unknown, pp. 2-4.

⁴⁸⁸ SCUA, Anon, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs” date: unknown, pp. 2-4.

choreograph an Afrocentric ballet called *Amangoso* (1979) with traditional music, as described in *Dance for Life*. She was given advice regarding the ballet from Dulcie Mazwi. It is described by Grut as the “legend of Nongause to traditional music.”⁴⁸⁹ The characters of the ballet include a Tribal Chief, and “Mongane Wally Serote’s *Yakhal Inkomo* (Berio).”⁴⁹⁰ Job briefly discusses other ballets such as *Pink Lemonade* (1959, Poole), *Raka*, *Mantis Moon* and *The Rain Queen, Drie Diere* (another ballet based off of N.P. van Wyk Louw’s poem, Paeper, 1980), *Le Cirque* (1972, Poole), *Kami* (1976, Poole), *Herrie-Hulle* (Paeper, 1973), *Cleopatra: an African Queen* (1999, Paeper), *The African Firebird* (Kindo, 2003) and *African Landscapes* (2010, Bovim).⁴⁹¹

Raka was choreographed by Frank Staff and was based on N.P. van Wyk Louw’s poem of the same name.⁴⁹² Staff did not use any kind of African dances in the choreography. The ballet was commissioned by the Performing Arts Council in 1966. Nicolaas Petrus van Wyk Louw was a prominent individual in Afrikaans literature and cultural life. His poem was written in 1941 and was turned into a ballet by Graham Newcater in 1967. It was known both locally and internationally. Van Wyk Louw believed in the ethical treatment of people and had what has been claimed to be a somewhat more balanced perspective of the South African problem during the Era of apartheid. However, his perception of ethical treatment and his claims to speak to more than just the Afrikaner population of his work should be questioned due to some of the themes prevalent in his work. When the poem *Raka* was commissioned to be turned into a ballet, N.P. van Wyk Louw and the Prime Minister H.F. Verwoerd were caught in disagreement over whether Louw was patriotic or not. Since the production of the ballet aired in the 1960s, it went through a considerable amount of airings throughout the 20th century.⁴⁹³ *Raka* was successful and national stamps were commissioned by the government, an example of which is provided below. This demonstrates that Louw

⁴⁸⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 237.

⁴⁹⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 237.

⁴⁹¹ J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, pp. 81 & 84; J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 160.

⁴⁹² *Raka, the ballet: based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw* (1980). Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie; I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 19.

⁴⁹³ *Raka, the ballet: based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw* (1980). Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie; I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 19; A. Steyn, *Graham Newcater’s Raka in its literary, musical and socio-political context*, p. 2; C. Landman, ‘Chapter 16: NP van Wyk Louw.’ In Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, p. 90; I.J. Grové, ‘Die Fyn, Fyn net van die Woord Verklank: N.P. van Wyk Louw se Raka in Musiek.’ *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 42 (3), 2002, pp. 224-225.

was accepted as a patriot by the Nationalist Party. It must be noted that the poem itself can actually be considered to be a racist one which offers an explanation as to why the National Party commissioned it in the first place. Ian Ferguson (1968) stated that the ballet *Raka* was the “beginning for South African ballet. It is an indication that in time South Africa may evolve a ballet form of its own.”⁴⁹⁴ This was a crucial comment that speaks to how the contemporary ballet community evolved, but the context of the story used is one that should not be employed to define South African ballet. This point is consistently highlighted throughout this research.



Image 9 and 10: Photographs from the production of *Raka* in 1968. Photographer: Tommy Murray.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹⁴ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 20.

⁴⁹⁵ SCUA, Photographs found in *Raka* production file from 1968 sourced for Sarah Meewes by Bronwen Lovegood.

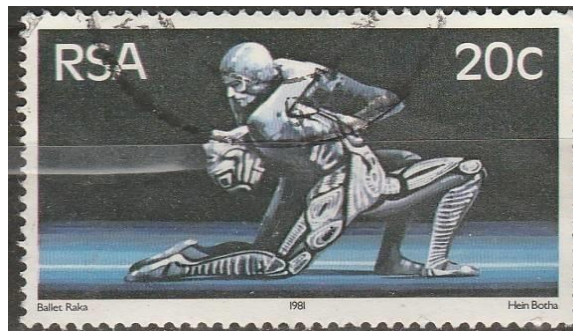


Image 11: Ballet *Raka*, 1981 by Hein Botha.⁴⁹⁶

N.P. van Wyk Louw was recorded on radio shortly before his death saying: “One committed one’s single, short life irrevocably to the little nation, indeed devoted to it.”⁴⁹⁷ Newcater also did not use any form of African tribal music to create the score of *Raka*.⁴⁹⁸ The ballet was performed in 1967 and again in 1968.⁴⁹⁹ When the ballet was staged again in 1968, Jenkins wrote for *The Star* that “Although, to my mind, the company has improved considerably since last season, even today it is in the less traditional choreography that the dancers find their forté, unrestricted by conforming to a rigid pattern of combined movement”.⁵⁰⁰

Raka was later turned into a movie in 1980.⁵⁰¹ The ballet featured dancers such as Juan Sanchez, Veronica Paeper and Ken Yeatman in the principal roles.⁵⁰² Ferguson stated that he found the choreography repetitive and that the costumes were “insufficiently imaginative with the exception of the brilliant red patterning on Veronica Paeper’s tights suggesting the composition of the inner body”⁵⁰³ The patterning on the costumes was meant to depict a sense of unity among the dancers and to demonstrate to the audience that they formed part of a cohesive group of people. The make-up on the dancers’ faces can also be said to be between classical ballet and modern ballet.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁶ Anon, 2014. <http://stampbears.net/thread/2254/ballet-on-stamps-show>, Accessed: 23rd August 2018.

⁴⁹⁷ C. Landman, ‘Chapter 16: NP van Wyk Louw.’ In Human & Rousseau (Pty) Ltd, *They Shaped Our Century: The most influential South Africans of the Twentieth Century*, p. 90.

⁴⁹⁸ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3) p. 19.

⁴⁹⁹ J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 149.

⁵⁰⁰ UNISA Archive, Muckleneuk, Pretoria. M. Jenkins, “‘RAKA’ STILL HAS IMPACT”, *The Star*, p. unknown, Clipping found in Newspaper Clipping book labelled 1968 in UNISA PACT/ State Theatre Archive Special Collections, still being processed.

⁵⁰¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 51.

⁵⁰² *Raka, the ballet: based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw* (1980). Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie.

⁵⁰³ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 19.

⁵⁰⁴ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 19.

Classical ballet stresses the importance of facial expression, but in *Raka*, greater emphasis was placed on bold make up instead. Modern art, as Martha Grantham put it, has emphasised the importance of searching for and expressing “aspects of the Self.”⁵⁰⁵ This may have been used for uniformity as previously mentioned. The poem and ballet were about an ape-like man by the name of Raka who causes chaos for a small group of people because of his desire for a woman who is loved by a man named Koki.⁵⁰⁶ Koki is a reflection of goodness and pureness, while Raka resembles evil and darkness. At the end, Raka is victorious.⁵⁰⁷ His character description likely reveals the racial undertone of the poem.

These undertones clearly indicate the desire for white ideology to be dominant over others. The character Koki danced with movements that were more balletic in nature compared to Raka. This was likely due to the representation of Eurocentricism in the poem which was then reflected in the ballet adaptation. It may perhaps be argued that Raka was a reflection of the “dominance of intellect.”⁵⁰⁸ If this was the case, it is likely that it was founded on a Western understanding and definition of intellect. When I think back on my research, I realise that I did not see many pictures of Raka himself from the ballet. Most of the pictures from secondary literature show the ‘tribe of people’ which is likely due to the National Party’s use of the ballet as propaganda.⁵⁰⁹ *Raka* is of significance because it was a step towards embracing contemporary ballets in South Africa.⁵¹⁰ However, the story of Raka is not one that should be used to define ballet in South Africa due to its questionable racial undertones. Another story that speaks of our diversity should be used as the face of contemporary ballet in South Africa.

⁵⁰⁵ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 20.

⁵⁰⁶ *Raka, the ballet: based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw* (1980). Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie.

⁵⁰⁷ *Raka, the ballet: based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw* (1980). Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie.

⁵⁰⁸ I. Ferguson, ‘A Note on Raka’, 1968, *De arte* 3 (3), p. 19.

⁵⁰⁹ I also tried to obtain a copy of the video from the University of Pretoria’s special collections. Initially, I was told that they needed a special machine to play the tape and that they would have to get it working. I went back several times before I was told that they could not locate the tape. I made other attempts to try watch the video through the Ar(ts)chive, but again, the tape requires a special machine. There was the potential option of having it put onto a DVD, but I never heard back from them on the matter. As if it were by chance, I was in a Woolworths in February 2020. I was looking at the red wines when I saw the word RAKA jump out at me. If I had not done this dissertation, I likely would not have noticed the bottle at all. I turned it around and the story about the man who had owned the vineyard described his passion for his fishing boat of the same name. After visiting their website, I learnt that he had named his ship after the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw. After his ship would be covered in black ink by squids, he decided to paint his ship black to prevent having to repaint it. The name, according to their website, is inspired by the poem as it is: “About an African tribe (sic) being threatened by Raka, half man half beast as black as the night.”⁵⁰⁹ I have since wondered whether people have been educated enough in modern South Africa to realise what the connotations of the poem mean?

⁵¹⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 224.

The potential ballet *Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi)* was inspired by “a Bantu fairy story”⁵¹¹ in 1970. It was set to be choreographed by Lorna Haupt with music composed by Peter Klatzow. The story begins with the birth of a beautiful princess, the daughter of Chief Mohale and his favourite wife. Fellow tribesmen bring her gifts and the witchdoctors say that she will have wealth and good fortune. The wisest witchdoctor, Muketi, warns that the princess must not be exposed to sunlight or she will be in grave danger. “The Spirits advised that she go out only at dark or dawn to keep her safe from the Light that Burns.”⁵¹² Her beauty and accomplishments became known throughout the land.⁵¹³ *Seilatsatsi* is known as a Sotho folktale and the story can be found in poetry. Tsotetsi, Kock and Swanepoel link to the poem “‘Moloho was hlooho’ (freely translated as: The girl with the plaited hair).”⁵¹⁴ When *Seilatsatsi* falls in love with a young chief, she ventures into the sun and turns into a termite hill. A healer restores her to her human form and *Seilatsatsi* becomes “more beautiful than ever before and brought prosperity to everyone she knew.”⁵¹⁵ As far as the author of this dissertation is aware, this was only an idea for a ballet and was not actually performed by PACT. However, it can still show a desire for engagement with Afrocentric themes by the ballet community and this, by extension, demonstrates the responsiveness of the balletic community to their environment.

Mantis Moon (1970) was choreographed by Staff who received the suggestion for the name from the composer Hans Maske. Maske suggested the name when the need for original South African ballets became known. The idea for *Mantis Moon* was first conceived in Staff’s mind when he visited Namibia and saw what was then referred to as ‘Bushman’⁵¹⁶ paintings. Southern Africa is the area that has the most rock paintings and carvings by the San. The San painted their art on rocks as a means of communicating with ancestral spirits. The San were

⁵¹¹ UNISA Archive, Muckleneuk, Pretoria. Anon, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs”, 1970, p. 4.

⁵¹² UNISA Archive, Muckleneuk, Pretoria. Anon, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs”, 1970, p. 4.

⁵¹³ UNISA Archive, Muckleneuk, Pretoria. Anon, “Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal: Proposed Ballets for consideration by the Department of Cultural Affairs”, 1970, p. 4.

⁵¹⁴ J.L. Tsotetsi, L.J. Kock & C.F. Swanepoel, ‘MATHATA KE MENATE BOPHELONG’, *South African Journal of African languages* 5 (1), 2012, p. 98.

⁵¹⁵ Anon, n.d., ‘Central University of Technology: Seilatsatsi’, <http://www.solarchallenge.org.za/content/central-university-technology-seilatsatsi>, Accessed: 20th of November 2019.

⁵¹⁶ The word San is used in the 21st Century (R. Bester and B. Buntman, 1999: p. 50).

not hierarchical, and their culture had a sense of “fluidity”⁵¹⁷ from which their art is sourced. Both Grut and Rosen mentioned that the ballet was based on “the transmutability of animals and heavenly bodies; death and rebirth; and of the Mantis as god.”⁵¹⁸ Rosen declares that the ballet was more Afrocentric than *Raka* but was not political in nature. According to Mary Jenkins, the ballet was performed with long crutches held in the dancer’s arms to represent the legs of a praying mantis. The dancers used the crutches to glide along the stage. The ballet had strong themes of death and rebirth and depicted the Mantis as a god. In San culture, the Mantis is described as a god on earth.⁵¹⁹ Van der Post states the Mantis was chosen because of the insect’s human looking face, how it is born a small worm that grows to be a strong insect,⁵²⁰ and then lastly because the act of the female eating the male after mating is seen as signs of “spiritual creation and being and rebirth.”⁵²¹ When depicted together, the Mantis and the Eland (the spirit of the San) symbolise the movement towards a new way of life. When the two are depicted together, the Mantis is shown beside the toes of the eland as the feet are what “walks on the earth.”⁵²²

The Rain Queen (1971) was Staff’s last ballet. He was unable to complete it due to his death in 1971 from stomach cancer.⁵²³ Staff decided to choreograph the ballet as soon as Raymond Schoop, the costume designer, had recommended the name.⁵²⁴ The term ‘Rain Queen’ was said to be derived from two anthropologists (Eileen and Jack Krige) who did fieldwork with the Lobedu people located in Limpopo in 1943.⁵²⁵ The “ruler, Modjadji, was widely known as rain-maker.”⁵²⁶ Ultimately, David Poole choreographed the ballet two years later and it

⁵¹⁷ R. Ego, *Visionary Animal: Rock Art from Southern Africa*, p. 23.

⁵¹⁸ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 325.

G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. 333.

⁵¹⁹ R. Ego, *Visionary Animal: Rock Art from Southern Africa*, p. 23; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 325; G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. 333; L. van der Post, ‘Praying Mantis and Porcupine: The Creative Pattern in Bushman Myth’, 1969, *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 2 (3), p. 84.

⁵²⁰ L. van der Post, ‘Praying Mantis and Porcupine: The Creative Pattern in Bushman Myth’, 1969, *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 2 (3), p. 84.

⁵²¹ L. van der Post, ‘Praying Mantis and Porcupine: The Creative Pattern in Bushman Myth’, 1969, *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 2 (3), p. 85.

⁵²² L. van der Post, ‘Praying Mantis and Porcupine: The Creative Pattern in Bushman Myth’, 1969, *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 2 (3), p. 87.

⁵²³ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. 335.

⁵²⁴ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, pp. 333-334.

⁵²⁵ P. Davison & G. Mahashe, ‘Visualising the Realm of a Rain-Queen: The Production and Circulation of Eileen and Jack Krieg’s Lobedu Fieldwork Photographs from the 1930s’, *Kronos* 38, 2012, p. 47

⁵²⁶ P. Davison & G. Mahashe, ‘Visualising the Realm of a Rain-Queen: The Production and Circulation of Eileen and Jack Krieg’s Lobedu Fieldwork Photographs from the 1930s’, *Kronos* 38, 2012, p. 47

was staged in 1973. The music was composed by Graham Newcater for PACOFS.⁵²⁷ In an interview conducted by Paeper, Rosen mentioned that she and Staff had travelled into the northern Transvaal to find a Rain Queen. From an article written in 1989, Jan Aukema discusses examples of the Lephhalala from the northern Transvaal. According to the article “most southern African communities performed this ritual, or paid someone to have it performed on their behalf.”⁵²⁸ The previous sentence is a broad statement that would need to be analysed more closely so as to not disrespect any culture from the southern African region. Aukema posits that the ritual of rain making takes place next to rock shelters or in caves with the use of clay pots. The ritual is usually done by the chief with the help of a rain doctor to “appeal to the ancestors.”⁵²⁹ Human body parts were something of importance to rain medicine. This was seen as illegal under colonial law. Paeper mentioned that she heard that people do not meet the real Rain Queen, only an impersonator of her.⁵³⁰ Paeper learnt that the purpose, of the Rain Queen was to “induce rain, and the people in fact believed that she could achieve this by invoking the gods in a sacred ceremony on the mountain. It was a ceremony nobody was ever allowed to witness, and those who did were punished by death.”⁵³¹

The ballet of *The Rain Queen* is about a Venda community in a drought asking the Rain Queen “to make magic and bring the rain.”⁵³² In a trance, four ancestors appear to the Rain Queen and tell her that in order to bring rain she must “fetch charms of cunning, fertility and strength. Unknown to her, the fourth charm is the life of her lover.”⁵³³ Once her lover has brought her all the charms that she is aware of he dies and when she cries over his death, rain starts to fall from the sky.⁵³⁴ This is something that Davison and Mahashe label as being romanticised in “literature, film and journalism.”⁵³⁵ One can posit that Staff and Poole understood the romanticised notion of the Rain Queen. Staff’s interest in the topic was likely

⁵²⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 237.

⁵²⁸ J. Aukema, ‘Rain-Making: A Thousand Year-Old Ritual?’, *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 150 (44), 1989, p. 71.

⁵²⁹ J. Aukema, ‘Rain-Making: A Thousand Year-Old Ritual?’, *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 150 (44), 1989, p. 71.

⁵³⁰ J. Aukema, ‘Rain-Making: A Thousand Year-Old Ritual?’, *The South African Archaeological Bulletin* 150 (44), 1989, pp. 70-71; G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. 334.

⁵³¹ G. Rosen, “Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...”, p. 334.

⁵³² M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 239.

⁵³³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 239.

⁵³⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 239.

⁵³⁵ P. Davison & G. Mahashe, ‘Visualising the Realm of a Rain-Queen: The Production and Circulation of Eileen and Jack Krieg’s Lobedu Fieldwork Photographs from the 1930s’, *Kronos* 38, 2012, p. 63.

to have stemmed from some form of internal curiosity and exposure to such ideas from his environment.

Nongause (sic) was choreographed by Gary Burne in 1973 for PACT ballet.⁵³⁶ The story of Nongqawuse, a prophetess, takes place in the 1800s when cattle disease and drought plagued the Eastern Cape.⁵³⁷ In either 1856 or 1857, after the defeat of the amaXhosa and the colonisation of their land, young Nongqawuse's influence as a prophetess grew. Her followers sought war by obeying her commands. They prevented agricultural cultivation and ate slain cattle.⁵³⁸ Due to colonial historiography, the influence of the prophetesses' power over the people became known as 'the Cattle-Killing Delusion.'⁵³⁹ *Nongause* was meant to portray an 'African' adaptation (or contextualisation) of Macbeth.⁵⁴⁰ It was lengthy and had mixed reactions from audiences.⁵⁴¹ Gary Burne was the principal dancer for the ballet.⁵⁴² It was described at the time as "an African dance drama in ten scenes, based on the nationalist suicide of the Xhosa tribe (sic) in 1834."⁵⁴³ The date 1834 is an error of fact (1856/57). The ballet was set to rock music and was considered to be an Afro-rock drama.⁵⁴⁴ *Nongause* was presented as a 'psychic' prophetess, who is visited in a field by the spirits of her ancestors who order her to "burn [her] crops, kill all [her] animals and fast for fourteen days. On the fourteenth day, the sun will rise in the west and [her] oppressors will be driven into the sea."⁵⁴⁵ The dancers appear to be painted to look black and are dressed in culturally appropriated Xhosa clothing and jewellery.⁵⁴⁶ Grut states that the ballet eventually toured to Cape Town but again, it had a mixed reaction from audiences.⁵⁴⁷

⁵³⁶ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 288-289.

⁵³⁷ H. Bradford & M. Qotole, 'Ingxoxo enkulu ngoNongqawuse (A Great Debate about Nongqawuse's Era)', 2008, *Kronos* 34, pp. 66-67.

⁵³⁸ H. Bradford & M. Qotole, 'Ingxoxo enkulu ngoNongqawuse (A Great Debate about Nongqawuse's Era)', 2008, *Kronos* 34, pp. 66-67.

⁵³⁹ H. Bradford & M. Qotole, 'Ingxoxo enkulu ngoNongqawuse (A Great Debate about Nongqawuse's Era)', 2008, *Kronos* 34, pp. 66-67.

⁵⁴⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 288-289.

⁵⁴¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 359.

⁵⁴² J. Allyn, *Dance for Life: Ballet in South Africa*, p. 151.

⁵⁴³ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 288-289.

⁵⁴⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 288-289.

⁵⁴⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 288.

⁵⁴⁶ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 288-289.

⁵⁴⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 289.



Image 12: “NONGAUSE.”⁵⁴⁸ Photographer: Bob Martin and Nan Melville, Dancer: Anon.

As previously stated, Grut mentions that *Nongause* was a long ballet, which was one of the reasons behind audiences not praising the ballet.⁵⁴⁹ However, both CAPAB and PACT Ballet were formed on the basis of Eurocentric visions and explored what writer Germaine Glueck stated had “indigenous threads with distinction.”⁵⁵⁰ Frank Staff’s dancers in *Raka* were not in favour of white dancers being painted brown as if the group of people were “merely primitive and anonymous- a more successful approach to this subject.”⁵⁵¹ This is something that can potentially be analysed based on the true nature of the story of *Raka*. Once again, CAPAB’s claim to being multi-racial can be questioned. In 2008, the story of Nongqawuse was used again in an Opera titled *Poet and Prophetess* (a story about Swedish poet Bengt Linder and Xhosa prophetess Nongqawuse).⁵⁵²

The year after the release of political prisoner, Nelson Mandela, the Inaugural Performance of the National Dance Company of Bophuthatswana (26th of April 1991) took place.⁵⁵³ Ballets performed included *Exagorazo* (choreographed by Janet Froman), *His and Hers* (Ruth Inglestone) and *Mantis* (Sonje Majo). For the purposes of this research, the ballet *Mantis* will

⁵⁴⁸ Republic of South Africa, U. Stark(e.d.), 1983, *Decade 2: PACT/TRUK 1963-1983*.

⁵⁴⁹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, pp. 289-290.

⁵⁵⁰ G. Glueck, ‘A NEW DANCE VISION FROM BOPHUTHATSWANA’, *Scenaria*, p. 17.

⁵⁵¹ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 290.

⁵⁵² S. du Toit, ‘Swede harmonies: Collaboration brings SA and Sweden together in song’, *Sunday Independent*, p. 25.

⁵⁵³ Ar(ts)chive Room 221, Wits School of Arts 1 Smuts Avenue (Hereafter WSA), Braamfontein Johannesburg. Box sourced for S.J. Meewes by Tammy Ballantyne Webber. Anon, ‘Bophuthatswana Arts Council: Inaugural Performance of the National Dance Company of Bophuthatswana 26th of April 1991 19:30’, 1991.

be discussed. It was based on the artwork by Walter Battiss of the same name. He painted the artwork in 1966. Battiss became interested in rock art through the works of Erich Meyer (a distant relative of Dorothea Bleek). Through studying the artwork of the San, Battiss became aware of the deep spirituality connected to their artwork. His painting 'Mantis' represented a more linear, Western concept of time while the San understanding of time was cyclical. The Mantis in Khoisan culture is known as a juxtaposed figure who is a creator and but is also a human. As previously mentioned, the Mantis is a symbol of life and death.⁵⁵⁴ Thus, Battiss's painting is "a metaphor both of life itself and of timelessness."⁵⁵⁵ It is quoted that in the ballet:

No Bushman Music is used as such. Instead, a traditional Xhosa song 'Iph' indlela, as well as 'Skulumayela' and 'Bhaqanga,' two songs made famous by the marimba band Amampondo, are integrated with the free atonal style of the composer, creating a musical dichotomy with its own significance.⁵⁵⁶

The costumes were designed by Marianne Smith. By 1991, Sonje had choreographed *Beloved Country* for the inaugural opening of NAPAC and *Seamoves* for the inaugural opening of PACT Dance Company.⁵⁵⁷ Through these productions, it can be stated that ballet in South Africa still had an interest in engaging with Afrocentric themes, even before the removal of the apartheid regime.

The ballet *Incwadi* (2000) was performed by the State Theatre Ballet and choreographed by Sue Kirkland. The costumes were designed by Carol Vollet Kingston (an American designer) who had worked with famous choreographers such as Alvin Ailey and Choo-San Goh. A grant was also given for the production by the Choo-San Goh and Robert H. Magee Foundation. The grant was a result of a 1999 Choo-San Goh Award for Choreography.⁵⁵⁸ Kirkland was approached by the artistic director of STB to choreograph something "...uniquely South African that would appeal to an international audience."⁵⁵⁹ She described

⁵⁵⁴ WSA Anon, 'Bophuthatswana Arts Council: Inaugural Performance of the National Dance Company of Bophuthatswana 26th of April 1991 19:30', 1991, p. 9; A. Duffey, 'Erich Meyer, Walter Battiss and San rock art', *de arte* 74 (41), 2006, pp. 20 & 30 -31.

⁵⁵⁵ A. Duffey, 'Erich Meyer, Walter Battiss and San rock art', *de arte* 74 (41), 2006, p. 31.

⁵⁵⁶ WSA. Anon, 'Bophuthatswana Arts Council: Inaugural Performance of the National Dance Company of Bophuthatswana 26th of April 1991 19:30', p. 9.

⁵⁵⁷ WSA, 'Bophuthatswana Arts Council: Inaugural Performance of the National Dance Company of Bophuthatswana 26th of April 1991 19:30', p. 8.

⁵⁵⁸ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3; J. Hurwitz, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 2.

⁵⁵⁹ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3.

the experience as “liberating and terrifying”⁵⁶⁰ and eventually she found inspiration from the South African Zulu culture. Kirkland took an idea from the symbolism of beads in Zulu culture. The ballet *Incwadi* was based on the love story from a Zulu love letter in beads. Colours in the ballet, from the costumes to the stage were dependent on Kirkland’s choice which represented themes of “faithfulness, tears and longing, jealousy, wealth and strength, loneliness and disappointment, and love and purity.”⁵⁶¹ The designer stated that:

Beading, real beading would not work for classical ballet: the flow and drape of “lightness” appropriate to that kind of dance, is at odds with the weight and rigid line- the narrowly controlled undulations that real beadwork secures. So to create the impression of beading, without actuality, is a most interesting technical challenge for the artist.⁵⁶²

An image of the dancers’ costumes is attached below. Kirkland chose music from Azumah (who performed traditional Zulu music) and another group of performers called Amampondo.⁵⁶³ She admits that she tried to create a South African style with that of the typical classical technique.²⁴⁹ In her attempt to do so, she remembered her African Dance classes from when she studied with the UCT School of Dance. She did acknowledge that there was a difference between South African dance and other African countries cultural dances.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶⁰ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3.

⁵⁶¹ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3.

⁵⁶² C.V. Kingston, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 4.

⁵⁶³ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3

⁵⁶⁴ S. Kirkland, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3.

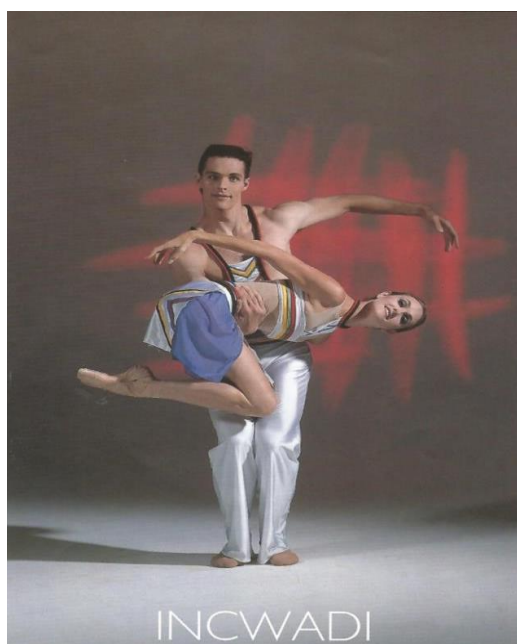


Image 13: “Angela Malan and Ian MacDonald” 2000, Photographer: Edzard Meyberg.⁵⁶⁵

The Mzansi Ballet put on a version of *The Nutcracker* in 2008. A theme was derived from the Kalahari in conjunction with Khoisan Myths to adapt the tale and to give it a local feel. The myths needed to be respected because they play an important part in Khoisan culture. Through analysis and interpretation mythology can be understood to have meaning at its core. The Kalahari was an area where hunter-gathering peoples and societies were situated, as supported by archaeology. The hunter-gathering peoples are not ahistorical. The work of original composer for the ballet, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, was still used. The CEO, Esther Nasser and the Artistic Director, Dirk Bardenhorst both agreed that they wanted to make the ballet South African. The choreographers were Adele Blank and David Gouldie with Andrew Botha as the costume designer. Members from the SAX (Sport and Art Exchange, which was to close shortly corrupt administration) sports program (based in Irene, Centurion) were cast as baobab trees and other kinds of indigenous species. The role of Uncle Drosselmeyer was played by Kitty Phetla, a woman in pointe shoes. The cast consisted of Reike Sato, Nicole McCreedy and Carmen Harris who played Clara. Fritz, Clara’s brother, was played by Thamdumzi Moyakhe. In this production, the soldier was replaced by the sun which was danced by Michael Revie, Craig Arnolds and Marc Goldberg. The classic Sugar Plum Fairy was replaced by the Moon which was danced by Nicole McCreedy and Reika Sato. As previously mentioned, children from SAX’s Ballet and Dance Academy also participated.

⁵⁶⁵ J. Hurwitz, *State Theatre Ballet: Incwadi, The Dream & Lambarena*, 2000, p. 3.

The production was held at Gold Reef City in November.⁵⁶⁶ It can be seen as a response in the balletic community to a rise in African history within South Africa.

Conclusion

Job refers to Grut when discussing Poole's understanding of what 'indigenous' dance is and why she felt that South African ballet dancers lacked a skill set in this area. She credits her understanding to the socialisation of individuals in apartheid society which was built on racist values.⁵⁶⁷ Job states that such "racist ideas were perhaps unconsciously assimilated into ballet."⁵⁶⁸ She notes that Poole was not accepting of cultural appropriation and states her own view that: "White people re-enacting the stories associated with Black culture could be considered negative, whereas Black people portraying the customs associated with White culture, such as dancing a ballet born in the court of a French king in the 1600s, could be positive."⁵⁶⁹

Based on a more contemporary context, Job is of the opinion that Poole would have had a different opinion on the matter if he were still alive in the 21st century.⁵⁷⁰ It is clear that ballet in South Africa has been in constant conversation with its environment, which has stemmed from an interest in African history and ideas of merging African and European cultures. Lize Kriel quotes Joan Cass who said:

...separating dance styles like "ballet", "modern dance", "modern ballet", and "avantgarde" was useful in dealing with the past. This is no longer necessary. In present, all styles are intermingled, not only in one company's repertory, but within a single choreographic work.⁵⁷¹

Therefore, separating ideas of ballet into Eurocentric or Afrocentric may not be necessary in the current South African context. To elaborate, the work of Jensen uses an example of the

⁵⁶⁶ J. Solway & R. B. Lee, 'Foragers, Genuine or Spurious?: Situating the Kalahari San in History', *Current Anthropology* 33 (1), 1992, p. 188; A. Sichel, 'Nuttin' but the Mzansi Truth', *Star*, p. 1.

⁵⁶⁷ J. F. Job, "Butoh-Ballet", p. 80.

⁵⁶⁸ J. F. Job, "Butoh-Ballet", p. 80.

⁵⁶⁹ J. F. Job, "Butoh-Ballet", p. 82.

⁵⁷⁰ J. F. Job, "Butoh-Ballet", p. 82.

⁵⁷¹ L. Kriel, 'The State Theatre Dance Company and the shaping of contemporary dance in South Africa.', *Historia* 46 (1), 2001, pp. 159-160.

choreographer Alonzo King. He does not remove the artform from the initial “ballet-blanc”⁵⁷² but chooses musical compositions and dancers from Africa, Japan, Morocco, China and India. Through this he creates a universal aesthetic on a global scale. Jensen states that his ballets are not a fusion of different styles- nor are they multi-cultural.⁵⁷³ They represent heterogeneity⁵⁷⁴ meaning that they have “diversity.”⁵⁷⁵ This idea of heterogeneity can be applied to South African ballet as the works and performances discussed have been shown to have engaged with diverse Afrocentric themes which combined with the once labelled Eurocentric performing art.

After observing the selected South African ballets mentioned such as *Raka, Princess of the Shadows (Seilatsatsi), Mantis Moon, The Rain Queen, Nongause, Mantis, Incwadi* and *The Nutcracker* it is clear that ballet in South Africa has constantly tried to address an inherent question of ‘what is South African?’. The balletic community has engaged with Afrocentric themes which can be an indication of South African society trying to merge Eurocentrism with Afrocentrism which the apartheid regime had previously limited through the forms of petty and grand apartheid measures. Questions surrounding ‘what is South African?’ are still being asked in society due to a divide between tradition and modernity in the current context.⁵⁷⁶ Based on the research that has been summarised and explored in this chapter, it can be argued that South African Ballets have been a hub of creativity and uniqueness based on their responsiveness to the South African historical environment and context. The constant engagement between ideas of Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism have indeed increased diversity in the performing arts which indicates a constant discussion between the two on what can be labelled as South African.

⁵⁷² J. N. Jensen, ‘Outlines for a Global Ballet Aesthetic’, *Dance Chronicle* 31 (3), 2008, p. 373.

⁵⁷³ J. N. Jensen, ‘Outlines for a Global Ballet Aesthetic’, *Dance Chronicle* 31 (3), 2008, p. 373.

⁵⁷⁴ J. N. Jensen, ‘Outlines for a Global Ballet Aesthetic’, *Dance Chronicle* 31 (3), 2008, p. 373.

⁵⁷⁵ Oxford English Dictionary Online, <https://www-oed-com.uplib.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/86452?redirectedFrom=heterogeneity#eid>, 2019. Accessed: 11th November 2019.

⁵⁷⁶ S. Friedman, ‘Preface’ in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. vii.

Chapter Five

Analysing Ballet in post-apartheid South Africa

“South African dancers have the sun in them.”

Umberto Brunelleschi.⁵⁷⁷

Based on the secondary literature, authors such as Glasstone, Friedman et al. and Job have all noted that little acknowledgement was given to the historical context of apartheid prior the post-apartheid era. This lack of engagement has changed over the years with the work of the above-mentioned authors. In order to observe ballet’s connection to the changing environment and how “political events, [have] pioneered social change,”⁵⁷⁸ it is important to note the shifts that began to occur when petty and grand apartheid measures were removed from South African society, although this has already been touched on in preceding chapters.

The performing arts, and in this context ballet, have constantly responded to the political, class and race stratification⁵⁷⁹ that defined South Africa for many years. Artists now face a context that needs them to find ways to perform and create content for a diverse audience while still being respectful of such diversity.⁵⁸⁰ Peffer quoted Wally Serote as saying “a people’s culture is the expression of their awareness of their conditions of existence.”⁵⁸¹ By keeping this in mind, one can see the responsiveness that the ballet community has had to its constantly evolving environment. Therefore, this chapter will look at groups like the Johannesburg Youth Ballet, Dance for All and The Soweto Dance Project as examples of the balletic community moving with the South African climate and its changes. Towards the end of the chapter the examples of Kitty Phetla’s *The Dying Swan*, and Dada Masilo’s *Swan Lake* (from *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*) will be used to discuss how South Africans are defining a unique balletic aesthetic. In so doing, they fit into a longer tradition of South African ballets, as has been examined in the previous chapter.

⁵⁷⁷ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 42.

⁵⁷⁸ G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs (e.d.s), ‘Introduction’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa*, p. 2.

⁵⁷⁹ H. Wulff, ‘Ethereal expression: Paradoxes of baller as a global physical culture’, 2008, *Ethnography* 9 (4), pp. 519-520.

⁵⁸⁰ G.V. Davis & A. Fuchs (e.d.s), ‘Introduction’ in *Theatre and Change in South Africa* p. 11.

⁵⁸¹ J. Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, p. 83.

Johannesburg Youth Ballet, Dance for All and The Soweto Dance Project

Audrey King, one of the founding members of the Johannesburg Ballet in 1960 (which was integrated into PACT Ballet in 1963) founded the Johannesburg Youth Ballet in 1976.⁵⁸² King put together a racially diverse group of dancers from “all walks of life.”⁵⁸³ It is important to note that when King put together this ballet group, petty apartheid measures had already been removed from South African legislation and society. Some of the company’s past members include Melody Putu, Ian MacDonald and Moya Michael.⁵⁸⁴

King, seen below with some of her students (Image 15), was a Cecchetti ballet teacher and had the idea for the Johannesburg Youth Ballet after she was invited to bring a group of performers to the Aberdeen International Festival of Youth Orchestras and Performing Arts in Scotland.⁵⁸⁵ The Festival’s conditions were that groups who participated had to be multiracial.⁵⁸⁶ The JYB also performed in London and Israel prior to the Festival.⁵⁸⁷ An image of the programme from the festival can be seen below. The image comes from the ballet programme which was obtained at the 40th Anniversary performance of the JYB at the University of Johannesburg Arts Centre Theatre in 2017. A short documentary film called *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* was made for the occasion.⁵⁸⁸ The short film was directed by Christiaan Kritzinger with original music by Nik Sakellarides. The film provided by the JYB shows past students who discuss their memories of touring and what it was like to be part of a multi-racial dance group.⁵⁸⁹ The Aberdeen International Festival is discussed in the film by two past students who participated in the

⁵⁸² Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁵⁸³ Jean Beckley Chairperson of JYB, *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzinger.

⁵⁸⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 185; A.C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 169.

⁵⁸⁵ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2; M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 185.

⁵⁸⁶ *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzinger.

⁵⁸⁷ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁵⁸⁸ Anon, ‘The Ripple Maker: The Story of the Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 4.

⁵⁸⁹ Anon, ‘The Ripple Maker: The Story of the Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 4; *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzinger.

event, Lynette Peterson and Leslie Mongezi, who performed in King's *Waratah* for the festival.⁵⁹⁰

Waratah was a ballet inspired by the events of a shipwreck that happened in the Eastern Cape.⁵⁹¹ The shipwreck occurred on July 27th 1909.⁵⁹² Before the location of the *Waratah* was found many years later in the Eastern Cape, it was only known that it had sunk somewhere between Durban and the Cape.⁵⁹³ The music was composed by Stefans Grové.⁵⁹⁴ The story follows a young girl who is shipwrecked in the Eastern Cape and is raised by a Xhosa community until she is fourteen years old.⁵⁹⁵ It should be noted that the description of this story was found in a programme from when the group performed the ballet in Rome. Therefore, it is possible that the English translation describing the ballet could be inaccurate. The young girl becomes divided between the customs and rituals of the community who raised her and by the culture of her heritage to which she returns in the story. When there is a drought, and after various rain rituals are conducted, "the diviner...decides that having a white child in their midst must be the cause of the drought and she should be sacrificed."⁵⁹⁶ In exploring this theme, there was a strong correlation with Frank Staff's and David Poole's *The Rain Queen* from 1973.⁵⁹⁷ Nomvula, who is *Waratah*'s sister, takes her to a white farmer in the middle of the night to save her. The story then follows *Waratah* and her journey living with the whites. When drought returns, she experiences post-traumatic stress remembering the Diviner who wanted to have her sacrificed. When rain does return, the white village dances "a Tickey Draai (traditional white S.A. dance)."⁵⁹⁸ *Waratah* "reverts to her African way of dancing- which shocks the village."⁵⁹⁹ A young white man named André, of Dutch

⁵⁹⁰ *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzingler.

⁵⁹¹ Anon, 'A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet' in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁵⁹² Anon, 1909. 'The Loss of the Warratah', *The Times*, https://www.newspapers.com/image/?clipping_id=24189605&fcfToken=eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJmcmVILXZpZXctaWQiOiJmZmMjE4NDIxLCJpYXQiOiJlNzIyNzEzMTgsImV4cCI6MTU3MjMjM1NzcxOH0.KO9F0DisFUyR6AgUyIU8ce5ia4JwXD6IicCIOLdlMgA, Accessed: 28th of October 2019; J. Harris, *Without Trace: The Last Voyages of Eight Ships*, p. 128.

⁵⁹³ Fairplay Publications Limited, 'Fairplay Weekly Shipping Journal: Volume 150', p. 70.

⁵⁹⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 187; WSA Found in beige suitcase donated by CEO of JYB. Anon, 'Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet', 1979.

⁵⁹⁵ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 185; WSA. Anon, 'Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet', 1979.

⁵⁹⁶ WSA. Anon, 'Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet', 1979.

⁵⁹⁷ A. Beukes, *Capab ballet/Kruik-ballet: 21 years/21 jaar 1963-1984*, p. 76; G. Rosen, "Frank Staff and his role in South African Ballet and Musical Theatre from 1955-1959...", p. 335.

⁵⁹⁸ WSA. Anon, 'Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet', 1979.

⁵⁹⁹ WSA. Anon, 'Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet', 1979.

heritage, admits that he loves Waratah during a “Op-sitting (Candle Dance)”⁶⁰⁰ and proposes marriage to her. However, Waratah is already betrothed to a Xhosa youth named Zalenu. In the end, Waratah decides to marry André despite her betrothal to Zalenu.⁶⁰¹ Waratah’s choice is one that can be open to observation and interpretation. Waratah was likely too afraid to go back to the Xhosa group of people as she was seen as having prevented the rain from coming. Her guilt is perhaps what made her stay in the white village. In the post-apartheid context one can observe that Waratah chose to stay with her ‘designated culture.’ She made this decision based on where she was insinuated to really belong. The story of Waratah is one that is responsive to the South African post-apartheid context. King’s ballet spoke of the need to find identity and belonging in a society previously structured by segregation, just as the characters are specified according to their culture in the story.

In *The Ripple Maker*, Lynette Peterson mentions that “The 1976 riots had also just about ended when this re-audition for JYB started. So, it all just sort of rolled from the 1976 riots into the JYB 1977 first overseas tour.”⁶⁰² The Soweto Uprisings that Peterson refers to are described by Welsh as a turning point in South African apartheid history.⁶⁰³ At the memorial services held in 1979 in honour of the uprisings, a drama group produced a play about the death of Hector Peterson, Steve Biko and Solomon Mahlangu.⁶⁰⁴ This can be seen as a broader example of how the performing arts in South Africa have been responsive to the South African environment. Leslie Mongezi points out that he was sent with the JYB to go and represent a multi-racial country while many people at home were struggling. He mentions in the film that: “I had to deal with myself and I had to overcome my own prejudice and bias.”⁶⁰⁵ Mongezi recalls a sense of freedom that accompanied not being classified as a race while just being there with other people. Peterson remembered it as a pleasurable experience to be surrounded by different cultures and dancers from different areas. She mentioned that she was used to just going to ballet classes in the coloured community. The

⁶⁰⁰ WSA. Anon, ‘Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet’, 1979.

⁶⁰¹ WSA. Anon, ‘Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet’, 1979.

⁶⁰² Lynette Peterson founding member, *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzing.

⁶⁰³ Demonstrations that were held by school students in 1976 to protest the apartheid regime. Many school students experienced police violence during this time. The death of student Hector Peterson occurred after police “opened fire” (G. Baines, 2007: p.286) on the students with the picture of Peterson in his final moments being the only photograph of the event by Sam Nzima (G. Baines, 2007: p.286).

⁶⁰⁴ D. Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, p. vii – viii; Anon, ‘PUTCO BUS STONED’, *Post*, p. 1.

⁶⁰⁵ Leslie Mongezi founding member, *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzing.

artistic director of JYB in 2017, Mark Hawkins, stated in the short film that new South African stories needed to be told through the voice of ballet. When the group performed the ballet again in Rome in 1979, the programme described the ballet as an impressionist ballet showing the “physical and psychological problems caused by a blending of the extremes of Black and White cultures in the person of an only survivor.”⁶⁰⁶

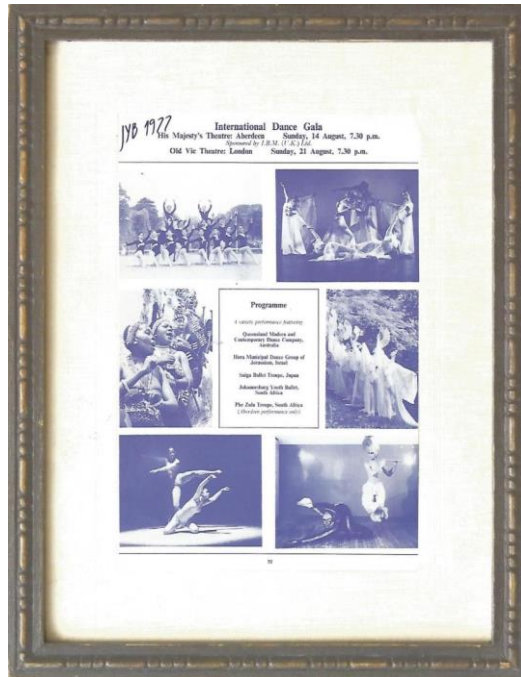


Image 14: Programme for the multi-racial International Dance Gala in Aberdeen, 1977. Found in the ballet programme (on the back of the programme) of JYB’s 40th Anniversary performance titled *Ruby Celebration*.⁶⁰⁷



Image 15: From *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzinger. Dancers: unknown, photographer: unknown, n.d.⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰⁶ WSA. Anon, ‘Lucille Leavitt presenta: Johannesburg Youth Ballet’, 1979.

⁶⁰⁷ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017, 2017*.

⁶⁰⁸ *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzinger.

Grut disagrees that JYB was one of the first multi-racial dance groups in South Africa⁶⁰⁹ by stating: “The University of Cape Town Ballet has always been multi-racial, however, without making an issue of it.”⁶¹⁰ Grut was the ballet history lecturer for the University of Cape Town’s School of Dance until 1977, and this definitely made her defend the institution.⁶¹¹ The idea that UCT Ballet was always multi-racial has been countered in previous arguments. As Glasstone states: “It would be less than honest not to admit that there existed a sort of tacit ‘hierarchy of pigmentation. “The lighter-skinned ‘coloureds’ tended to fare better than those of a darker hue.”⁶¹² Roos acknowledges that once the SPABs were established, only whites were given the chance to become professional artists (actors, musicians, opera singers and dancers).⁶¹³ Dame Margot Fonteyn, who was a past pupil of Audrey King from when they had both lived in Shanghai,⁶¹⁴ became the honorary president of the JYB after the Aberdeen International Festival of Youth Orchestras and Performing Arts.⁶¹⁵ The JYB toured other countries as well including Israel (1979) and the Republic of China (1981).⁶¹⁶ The JYB also performed locally around South Africa at events like the Grahamstown Festival.⁶¹⁷ In 1989, Bruce Simpson produced the company’s first classical ballet production, *Sleeping Beauty Act III*.⁶¹⁸ In 1997, the JYB celebrated its 21st Anniversary. At this event King said:

It makes me happy to know that what started out as an almost impossible dream of mine during the years of apartheid, has survived so long, and that the Company is still giving dancers and choreographers an opportunity to present their talents to the public. Thank you for remembering me on this occasion. I only wish I could be with you for at least one performance.⁶¹⁹

⁶⁰⁹ *The Ripple Maker: The Story of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016* (2017) Christian Kritzingler.

⁶¹⁰ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 187.

⁶¹¹ J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, p. 75.

⁶¹² R. Glasstone, *Dulcie Howes: Pioneer of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 101.

⁶¹³ H. Roos, 2014. ‘Remembering to Forget the Eoan Group – The Legacy of an Opera Company from the Apartheid Era’, *South African Theatre Journal* 27 (1), p. 14.

⁶¹⁴ M. Grut, *The History of Ballet in South Africa*, p. 185.

⁶¹⁵ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁶¹⁶ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁶¹⁷ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁶¹⁸ Anon, ‘A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁶¹⁹ Anon, ‘The Ripple Maker: The Story of the Johannesburg Youth Ballet 1976-2016’ in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 4.

In 2013, the JYB was also the first youth company to open the National Arts Festival.⁶²⁰

CAPAB's 25th anniversary was in 1988, and in honour of this, the year before, a project was launched called Nico for All.⁶²¹ The project was to provide lecturing and training in the arts.⁶²² The idea originally came from David Poole who, as artistic director of CAPAB in the 1960s, created the Ballet for All project aimed at educational development in South Africa, specifically in Gugulethu and Nyanga.⁶²³ Phyllis Spira and Philip Boyd used to head the programme which was later renamed Dance for All. Boyd had a desire to teach in the Gugulethu township as he felt that he had led a privileged life with access to dance education. Paeper (Director of CAPAB) gave Boyd permission to run Dance for All but could not provide him with funding.⁶²⁴

An image has been attached below from when the project was first established. Funding for the project was given by First National Bank, Avis, Stellenbosch Farmer's Winery and Southern Life Association.⁶²⁵ Former principal dancer with the English National Ballet, Angela DeMello, who was associated with the organisation and taught dancers with the Dance for All⁶²⁶ noted in 2011 that dance in South Africa was moving towards:

...the cusp of explosion. Many people are trying to follow old traditions. They think ballet is what you have to see, but dance and dancers are evolving. Somebody needs to create something unique, a syllabus to suit the bodies here. The Cubans did it many years ago, so can we.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁰ Anon, 'A History of The Johannesburg Youth Ballet' in *The Johannesburg Youth Ballet: Ruby Celebration 40th Anniversary season 2017*, 2017, p. 2.

⁶²¹ Anon, 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project', *Scenaria*, p. 31.

⁶²² Anon, 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project', *Scenaria*, p. 31

⁶²³ D. Hathaway, 'Ex-royal ballet stars take local students back to basics', *The Cape Times*, p. 10; G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 27.

⁶²⁴ D. Hathaway, 'Ex-royal ballet stars take local students back to basics', *The Cape Times*, p. 10; G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 21.

⁶²⁵ Anon, 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project', *Scenaria*, p. 31

⁶²⁶ D. Hathaway, 'Ex-royal ballet stars take local students back to basics', *The Cape Times*, p. 10; S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p.17.

⁶²⁷ D. Hathaway, 'Ex-royal ballet stars take local students back to basics', *The Cape Times*, p. 10.



Image 16: Photographer: Anon, from the magazine article 'CAPAB's Nico For All Project' in *Scenaria* magazine from the December 1987, issue number 83. ⁶²⁸

The overall purpose of Dance for All was to provide training for people who would not otherwise have had any opportunities to be trained in the arts in disadvantaged communities. Boyd recalls that he wanted to make ballet “as popular as sport.”⁶²⁹ What can be used as an arguably striking example of the effect of race and class division would be Philip Boyd who “would step on theatre stage in costume – every inch a prince – and by day, enter a township to teach the foundations of ballet.”⁶³⁰ The stark contrast is a result of “racial and economic inequalities”⁶³¹ that were brought about by petty and grand apartheid measures. It was also believed that “the value of the arts as bridge-builder in the cultural patchwork of South Africa”⁶³² was something that members of CAPAB felt strongly about. The group aimed to “make intellectual and spiritual enrichment of the arts accessible to a broader spectrum of society.”⁶³³ There had already been several coloured ballet dancers with black dancers being scarcer. Boyd’s solution to this problem was to train black dancers.⁶³⁴ Initially Boyd could only teach the children by demonstrating what he wanted them to do as he could not speak

⁶²⁸ Anon, ‘CAPAB’s Nico For All Project’, *Scenaria*, p. 32.

⁶²⁹ G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 15.

⁶³⁰ G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 21.

⁶³¹ D. Mills, *Dance and Politics: Moving Beyond Boundaries*, p. 81.

⁶³² Anon, ‘CAPAB’s Nico For All Project’, *Scenaria*, p. 31.

⁶³³ Anon, ‘CAPAB’s Nico For All Project’, *Scenaria*, p. 31

⁶³⁴ G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 15.

much isiXhosa.⁶³⁵ He also mentioned his hope that the children would find career opportunities through the performing arts. To Boyd “the formerly white face of ballet in South Africa had already been changing.”⁶³⁶

The Soweto Dance project was launched first in 1992 by Carly Dibakwane.⁶³⁷ Badenhorst and Thabiso Pule relaunched the project again in Meadowlands in 2017 with a renovated studio.⁶³⁸ The program is currently being run by Douglas Sekete.⁶³⁹ Badenhorst stated on an SABC Morning Live interview from October 2017, that the community was not opposed to the project and that Cuban ballet teachers gave demonstrations. Pule addressed the stigma, especially against male dancers that do ballet, and said that it was something that Dibakwane was against because ballet had taught him to be disciplined and to constantly want to learn more.⁶⁴⁰ Badenhorst believed that time was of the essence in growing the youth into future dancers, and wanted to encourage potential dancers as soon as possible.⁶⁴¹

Another example of a group from Soweto performing a production in the post-apartheid context is the production of *Tlhaselo* (1996), performed by the Soweto Dance Company. Remarkably, the township dancers portrayed the struggle of the Afrikaners in the concentration camps used during the Anglo-Boer or South African War.⁶⁴² That very year, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki’s delivered his famous “‘I am an African!’” address which started the “‘African Renaissance.’”⁶⁴³ Topics such as “‘cultural exchange, the ‘emancipation of African woman from patriarchy’, the mobilisation of youth, the broadening, deepening and sustenance of democracy, and the initiation of sustainable economic development”⁶⁴⁴ were

⁶³⁵ G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 17.

⁶³⁶ G. Warren-Brown, *Pieces of a Dream*, p. 15.

⁶³⁷ A. C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 171.

⁶³⁸ SABC Digital News, 2017. *Soweto Dance Project launched*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=544&v=S5Dw0Y6CSPM, Accessed: 8th April 2019.

⁶³⁹ A. C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 171.

⁶⁴⁰ SABC Digital News, 2017. *Soweto Dance Project launched*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=544&v=S5Dw0Y6CSPM, Accessed: 8th April 2019.

⁶⁴¹ SABC Digital News, 2017. *Soweto Dance Project launched*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=544&v=S5Dw0Y6CSPM, Accessed: 8th April 2019; J. F. Job, “‘Butoh-Ballet’”, p. 85.

⁶⁴² L. Kriel, ‘The State Theatre Dance Company and the shaping of contemporary dance in South Africa.’ *Historia* 46 (1), 2001, p. 163.

⁶⁴³ P. Vale & S. Maseko, ‘South Africa and the African Renaissance’, *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 74 (2), 1998, p. 274.

⁶⁴⁴ P. Vale & S. Maseko, ‘South Africa and the African Renaissance’, *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 74 (2), 1998, p. 274.

encouraged by Mbeki. His call for cultural exchange can be seen as a way of removing racial politics, and as an opportunity to encourage “cultural transformation.”⁶⁴⁵

Therefore, by observing groups such as JYB, Dance for All and the Soweto Dance Project it can be argued that ballet in South Africa constantly engaged with the post-apartheid context particularly regarding questions of community. By looking at the example of JYB’s *Waratah* and its overseas tours as a multi-racial company, the beginning of the transition from apartheid to a post-apartheid context can be seen. The examples of Mongezi and Peterson engage with the broader historical environment in South Africa and their response to it. The establishment of Dance for All and the Soweto Dance Project were derived from an awareness of the effect that the apartheid system had had on targeted communities. Dance for All and the Soweto Dance Project potentially indicate that the ballet community has always been aware their environment and have responded to it. In the post-apartheid context, a desire to uplift disadvantaged communities has been the result of constant engagement with, and awareness of, the historical environment of South Africa on the part of the community.

South African Ballet in the 21st Century: Another take on The Dying Swan and Swan Lake

When reflecting on the role that Anna Pavlova played in increasing ballet’s popularity in South Africa with the *Dying Swan*, one can see how South Africans, in the post-apartheid context, have taken the *Dying Swan* and reinvented it for themselves. Authors such as Job and Johnstone note this has been the case for the arts including ballet, opera and contemporary dance. As mentioned previously, Phetla performed the *Dying Swan* when a grant was given to Mzansi Ballet in 2013.⁶⁴⁶ Phetla's role in the *Dying Swan* is significant because, as she herself has said: “Worldwide *Dying Swan* is done in a pink tutu, pink tights and pink pointe shoes. I’m black, have a black tutu, black tights and black pointe shoes.”⁶⁴⁷ She performed the solo for Nelson Mandela and the Dutch Royal Family in 2002 and she was also the first black dancer to perform the *Dying Swan* in Russia, in 2012.⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁵ S. Andreasson, ‘Confronting the settler legacy: Indigenisation and transformation in South Africa and Zimbabwe’, *Political Geography* 29, 2010, p. 424.

⁶⁴⁶ P. Schwartz, ‘Pirouetting in Step with the World.’ *Mail and Guardian*, p. 4.

⁶⁴⁷ *21 Icons: Kitty Phetla* (2014), Adrien Steirn.

⁶⁴⁸ *21 Icons: Kitty Phetla* (2014), Adrien Steirn; Anon, 2013. <http://21icons.com/kitty-phetla/>, Accessed: 29th October 2018; K. Johnstone, ‘Some Notes on Assembly: Choreography as a materialising practice of thinking

Based on the example of Phetla in the *Dying Swan*, further discussion around the growing topic of identity in the performing arts can be highlighted. Steven Van Wyk notes two examples of black ballet choreographers in the post-apartheid context, Dada Masilo and Mamela Nyamza. Both have created adaptations of the ballet *Swan Lake* from a “shopping trolley.”⁶⁴⁹ The “shopping trolley”⁶⁵⁰ is what Van Wyk uses to describe the cultural diversity in South Africa which inspires a unique kind of creativity in the performing arts, because of a variety of bodies from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds.⁶⁵¹ History has allowed choreographers to redetermine ballet aesthetic and cultural property.⁶⁵² In a 2012 newspaper article titled ‘Committing Swanicide in the Name of Art’, Sichel notes that Masilo found “African rhythms in Tchaikovsky and Saint-Saëns.”⁶⁵³ Masilo created a reimagined *Swan Lake* to demonstrate outdated gender roles and the effects of the separate development policies from the apartheid Era.⁶⁵⁴ In post-apartheid South Africa, ballet is often still linked to white culture. *Swan Lake*, as Van Wyk puts it, has been a “useful site at which to deconstruct conventions of whiteness in dance.”⁶⁵⁵ It is a famous ballet that is generally associated with an emphasis on the female performance and the endurance that the role requires.⁶⁵⁶

Masilo’s *Swan Lake* required eleven black women of differing heights and body figures. This was done likely, because the ballet (as part of a classical canon) was associated with the whiteness and the slender ‘ballerina figure.’⁶⁵⁷ There were only two white dancers in Masilo’s *Swan Lake*. Like many Classical ballets, it initially focuses on heteronormative

and decolonial options for contemporary dance’, in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Confluences 9*, 2017, p. 135; J. Job, ‘Butoh: Decolonising Opera’, in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Confluences 9*, 2017, p. 108.

⁶⁴⁹ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance.’ In S. Friedman (e.d.) *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 46; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵⁰ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’..., p. 46; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵¹ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’..., p. 46; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵² S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’..., p. 46; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵³ A. C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 141.

⁶⁵⁴ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’... p. 44; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵⁵ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’..., p. 35; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.25.

⁶⁵⁶ C. Clarke & C. Crisp, *How to Enjoy Ballet*, p. 19.

⁶⁵⁷ S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’..., pp. 40-41 & 47; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.26.

characters. Prince Siegfried, in Masilo's version of the ballet, was to be a closeted homosexual. The white dancers played the role of Siegfried's parents and they show him how to use balletic mime.⁶⁵⁸ Masilo and her company toured in France where she was aware they may be "objectified as exotic black bodies."⁶⁵⁹ Masilo and her company's performance of *Swan Lake*, is seen as a point of exchange for South African society in the post-colonial and decolonial.⁶⁶⁰ Decolonising ballet in the country has focused on the individual and how individual expression can be found within a South African balletic style.⁶⁶¹

If one compares the first image of Anna Pavlova as *The Dying Swan* in the dissertation, and with the images of Masilo and Phetla in their contexts, the impact of politics on South African society can be seen in the South African dancing aesthetics. Through Phetla and Masilo's context as individuals, one can notice their unique portrayals of a classical ballet where they identify their own Afrocentric voice in a Eurocentric sport or artform. The South African Prima Ballerina, Phyllis Spira, believed that the "dancer's body is an instrument"⁶⁶² where tradition could be a platform for innovation.⁶⁶³ The examples of Phetla and Masilo, who have each taken ballet and reimagined it themselves, can be a demonstration of taking a traditionally European artform and complementing it with their own South African voice. Thus, they were can be seen as having been at the forefront of innovation and decoloniality.

⁶⁵⁸ S. Van Wyk, 'Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance'..., p. 45; S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p.26.

⁶⁵⁹ A. C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 143.

⁶⁶⁰ S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p.26.

⁶⁶¹ L. Loots, 'Learning to Speak in my Mother Tongue: Ruminating on Contemporary Decolonising Dance Practices for Myself and my African Continent.' in *Confluences 9: Deciphering Dance Pedagogy in the 21st century*, p. 5; S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p.26.

⁶⁶² A. Botha, *Phyllis Spira: A Tribute*, p. 152.

⁶⁶³ D. Mills, *Dance and Politics: Moving Beyond Boundaries*, p. 79; A. Botha, *Phyllis Spira: A Tribute*, p. 152.



Image 17: “A Ballerina: The Black Swan.” Photographer: Adrian Steirn, ballet dancer: Kitty Phetla, <http://21icons.com/kitty-phetla/>, Accessed: 29th October 2018.



Image 18: ““I want to open up conversations about issues like homophobia and domestic violence, because those are realities at home,” said Dada Masilo, who plays Odette in her version of “Swan Lake.” John Hogg.” Photographer: Unkonwn, dancer: Dada Masilo, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/02/arts/dance/dada-masilo-turnstchaikovsky-on-his-head-in-swan-lake.html>, Accessed: 2nd November 2019.

South Africa meets the Alonso method

As Job has observed, *butoh* has been a way of thinking to remove ballet from a European tone in South Africa. Another example to consider is the Cuban South African Ballet Exchange which was initiated by Dirk Badenhorst in 2009.⁶⁶⁴ The Cuban South African teaching exchange resulted in the establishment of a school in 2009 which was also initiated

⁶⁶⁴ A.C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 168.

by Badenhorst.⁶⁶⁵ In 2011, Badenhorst still saw ballet as a “white elitist art form.”⁶⁶⁶ The link to Cuba was something that has been attributed to their unique take on ballet according to Badenhorst. He views Cuban bodies to have “wider hips than traditional European or Asian dancers, so their style suits better the African body structure.”⁶⁶⁷ However, this is a broad statement and can be seen as one which stereotypes the African body. What Badenhorst likely sees in Cuban dancers is the way that they have been taught to think about themselves as dancers, as opposed to the emphasis placed on aesthetics that other Western balletic methods promote. According to Stones, Badenhorst elaborated on this by stating that:

Russian, French and British ballet schools only accommodate super-skinny dancers.... We all like super-skinny, but if you have slightly wider hips and you can do jumps and turns and have the talent it shouldn't mean that you aren't allowed to do it. The Cubans allow for that and have trained some amazing black dancers.⁶⁶⁸

As Alicia Alonso said: “A ballet school has its foundation, first of all, in a country's national culture and in the talent unique to a people to express itself in dance.”⁶⁶⁹ The aesthetic that Alonso mentions is something she believes to have been absorbed into the Alonso Method over time.⁶⁷⁰ According to Dafkin, Green, Kerr, Oliver, McKinnon, Wood and Woodiwiss,⁶⁷¹ ballet is an artform or sport that requires “skill and balance to achieve aesthetic performance.”⁶⁷² Although methodologies of ballet vary, there are standardised positions defined in the sport or artform. This can therefore be seen as evidence to support the statement that different ballet methodologies demand a type of an aesthetic that is part of a country's national culture.⁶⁷³ The founders of the Alonso method, Alicia, her ex-husband

⁶⁶⁵ A.C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 168.

⁶⁶⁶ WSA. In box with Mzansi ballet sources (sourced by T. Ballantyne Webber for S.J. Meewes). L. Stones, ‘Blistering Hot Ballet’, *The Sunday Independent*, p. 3.

⁶⁶⁷ WSA In box with Mzansi ballet sources (sourced by T. Ballantyne Webber for S.J. Meewes). L. Stones, ‘Blistering Hot Ballet’, *The Sunday Independent*, p. 3.

⁶⁶⁸ WSA In box with Mzansi ballet sources (sourced by T. Ballantyne Webber for S.J. Meewes). L. Stones, ‘Blistering Hot Ballet’, *The Sunday Independent*, p. 3.

⁶⁶⁹ A. Alonso, ‘Foreword’ in *Cuban Ballet* by O. Roca, p. 8.

⁶⁷⁰ A. Alonso, ‘Foreword’ in O. Rocco, *Cuban Ballet*, p. 8; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review”, pp. 16 – 17.

⁶⁷¹ C. Dafkin et. al., ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’, *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences* 22 (3:2), 2016, p. 883.

⁶⁷² C. Dafkin et al., ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’, *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences* 22 (3:2), 2016, p. 883.

⁶⁷³ C. Dafkin et al., ‘Analysis of Balance and Body Positioning in Ballerinas with Different Levels of Skill’, *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences* 22 (3:2), 2016, pp. 883-884; A. Alonso, ‘Foreword’ in *Cuban Ballet* by O. Roca, p. 8.

Fernando, and her brother-in-law, Alberto,⁶⁷⁴ were trained from multiple ballet methods⁶⁷⁵ including “the Russian Vaganova method, the American Balanchine method, Danish Bournonville method, Italian Cecchetti method as well as the French and British Royal Academy of Dance training.”⁶⁷⁶ The Alonso method teaches ballet as a continuous flow of movement rather than as pieces of steps finally put together to make a picture.⁶⁷⁷

As described by Tomé, Alicia believed that musicality was the foundation of Cuban ballet aesthetics.⁶⁷⁸ Alicia credited the influence on Cuban culture from African and Spanish culture, which resulted in dancers listening to the melody of the music instead of the rhythm. This is something that Alonso described as a “national collective aesthetic.” Fernando believed that dance was something that held significance in the Cuban culture as the Spanish influence, he believed, gave them a passion for dance. His view was that the African roots in Cuban culture, imparted a need to show feelings through music which was achieved through dance.⁶⁷⁹ Tomé observes and mentions that a national aesthetic is the result of what the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would call ‘habitus’. Individuals in a society are socialised to possess a certain demeanour and body language allows for the formation of a national sense of a culture which individuals absorb as “habitual” behaviour.⁶⁸⁰ Therefore, to draw a comparison, ballet in South Africa should speak to the greater meaning of South African society. This national culture, it can be argued, has not developed yet, or is at least something that has yet to be recognised. It is a topic that is open for debate and academic study.⁶⁸¹ However, it has been the argument of this dissertation that South African ballet has been responsive to the South African context through its history

⁶⁷⁴ Anon, 2016. <http://www.almadanceschool.com/the-cuban-method/>, Accessed: 5th December 2018.

⁶⁷⁵ Anon, ‘Fernando Alonso: Cuba’s master ballet teacher’, *Dance Magazine*, p. 74; Anon, 2016. <http://www.almadanceschool.com/the-cuban-method/>, Accessed: 5th December 2018.

⁶⁷⁶ S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 18; Anon, ‘Fernando Alonso: Cuba’s master ballet teacher’, *Dance Magazine*, p. 74;

Anon, 2016. <http://www.almadanceschool.com/the-cuban-method/>, Accessed: 5th December 2018.

⁶⁷⁷ L. Tomé, “‘Music in the Blood’: Performance and Discourse of Musicality in Cuban Ballet Aesthetics”, 2013, *Dance Chronicle* 36 (2), p. 225; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 18.

⁶⁷⁸ L. Tomé, “‘Music in the Blood’: Performance and Discourse of Musicality in Cuban Ballet Aesthetics”, 2013, *Dance Chronicle* 36 (2), pp. 225-226; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 18.

⁶⁷⁹ Anon, ‘Fernando Alonso: Cuba’s master ballet teacher’, *Dance Magazine*, p. 74; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 18.

⁶⁸⁰ L. Tomé, “‘Music in the Blood’: Performance and Discourse of Musicality in Cuban Ballet Aesthetics”, 2013, *Dance Chronicle* 36 (2), p. 228.

⁶⁸¹ S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 18.

Badenhorst's school started in 2009 with the Dance Factory and then moved to the Joburg Ballet in 2013. Alonso herself visited South Africa in 2013 as a result of the exchange.⁶⁸² In an interview about ballet in South Africa in 2018, Badenhorst described his journey with ballet and how he received a passion for growing young dancers in South Africa.⁶⁸³ In 2016, he implemented a project called Cudanza, a cooperation between Cuba and South Africa to go into townships like "Soweto, Orange Farm"⁶⁸⁴ to grow black teachers from townships throughout the country and to give children with talent a chance to have a career in dance. Badenhorst advocates for the Cuban ballet method as he says that it has the ability to encompass many different bodies with different shapes, which can bring out the best out in every build.⁶⁸⁵ In a 2018 interview with *Sawubona* magazine, Badenhorst said that: "Ballet in South Africa is simply not transforming fast enough."⁶⁸⁶ Examples of Badenhorst's attempts to transform the classic artform include productions from 2018 such as *When Ballet Meets Jazz*, featuring a jazz version of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*,⁶⁸⁷ and *Bengingazi*, which tells the story of a man who dances Pantsula in Soweto and then meets a classical ballet dancer. Badenhorst says of *Bengingazi* that it was a production that he thought could be taken outside the country to display what South African dance can offer to the performing arts.⁶⁸⁸ The performance will be touring abroad in 2020. The relationship with Cuba and South Africa remains strong and was celebrated recently in July 2019.⁶⁸⁹

The Alonso method is a style that has reinvented itself and is derived from an Afro-Spanish culture. As such, it provides a powerful precedent. South African ballet has used this example in its efforts to develop a balletic method that will speak of a diverse but unified South African culture.

⁶⁸² A.C. Sichel, *Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance*, p. 168.

⁶⁸³ Die Groot Ontbyt, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSg8YmDxEt0>, Accessed: 3rd of November 2019.

⁶⁸⁴ Die Groot Ontbyt, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSg8YmDxEt0>, Accessed: 3rd of November 2019.

⁶⁸⁵ Die Groot Ontbyt, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSg8YmDxEt0>, Accessed: 3rd of November 2019.

⁶⁸⁶ Anon, 'Blurring Colour Lines', *Sawubona*, p. 92; *Cuban Ballet*, p. 8; S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p. 19.

⁶⁸⁷ Die Groot Ontbyt, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSg8YmDxEt0>, Accessed: 3rd of November 2019.

⁶⁸⁸ Die Groot Ontbyt, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSg8YmDxEt0>, Accessed: 3rd of November 2019.

⁶⁸⁹ Anon, 2019. <https://www.thediplomaticsociety.co.za/home/16-home/2805-cuba-and-south-africa-celebrate-cooperation-in-ballet>, Accessed: 14th September 2019; S.J. Meewes, "The Journey of Ballet in South Africa's History: A Literature Review", p. 18.

Decolonising Ballet

Decoloniality as an ideology consistently changes based on the environment in which it is situated. The origin of decoloniality can be traced to the Americas where social structure and stratification relied heavily on race because of colonialism.⁶⁹⁰ Decoloniality is a way of thinking that has been the result of the “slave trade, imperialism and colonialism.”⁶⁹¹ These Western forms of ideology and dominance over countries such as those in Africa, can still be seen in the economic, political and cultural life.⁶⁹² The purpose of decoloniality is to make those impacted by Western ideology aware of such dominance and to remove the hierarchies placed on the affected countries. The aim is to remove “strict racial, gendered and geo-political hierarchies”.⁶⁹³ Johnstone notes that the Argentinian theorist, Walter D. Mignolo, describes the decolonial artist as not wishing to succeed, but rather to bring a creative representation of themselves that is critical of imposed societal constructs. As ballet has been responsive to the environment it may be stated that ballet is an expression of post-coloniality and decoloniality in South Africa. As those impacted by Western dominance discover their own voice and culture, they are reimagining themselves as distinct from Western paradigms. While post-apartheid theatre still produces performances from Western Euro-American canons it has also tried to address South African realities.⁶⁹⁴

For individuals, this means that they can be aware of different ways to see themselves. This can also be applied to various societal elements impacted by past colonial structures such as race and gender.⁶⁹⁵ Decolonising South African ballet does not necessarily mean replacing white dancers with black dancers, nor does it require the merging of ballet with other dance

⁶⁹⁰ W. Mignolo & E. Walsh, *On decoloniality: concepts, analytics, praxis*, p. 16.

⁶⁹¹ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Decoloniality as the future of Africa’, *History Compass* 13 (10), 2015, p. 488.

⁶⁹² A. Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 3; N. wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, p. 4.; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.15.

⁶⁹³ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Decoloniality as the future of Africa’, *History Compass* 13 (10), 2015, p. 488; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.16.

⁶⁹⁴ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Decoloniality as the future of Africa’, *History Compass* 13 (10), 2015, p. 488; J. F. Job, ‘Butoh-Ballet’, pp. 6-7; K. Johnstone, ‘Some Notes on Assembly: Choreography as a materialising practice of thinking and decolonial options for contemporary dance’, in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Confluences* 9, 2017, p. 135; S. Van Wyk, ‘Ballet Blanc to Ballet Black: Performing Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South African Dance’... p. 44; S. Sörgel, *Dancing Postcolonialism: The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica*, p. 43; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, pp.16 & 25.

⁶⁹⁵ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Decoloniality as the future of Africa’, *History Compass* 13 (10), 2015, p. 489; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.16.

methodologies and practices.⁶⁹⁶ As Job has stated, she used the ideology of *butoh*, not *butoh* itself, to allow the dancer to re-invent and re-imagine him or herself.⁶⁹⁷ This search for independent expression that Job identifies speaks to a need to discover what is South African. If one were to consider Camus' opinion that communities are constantly defining individuals through political lenses, it is possible to place South Africa into his theory.⁶⁹⁸

Samuel notes that dance in South Africa is about the Other and is a result of “cultural forces such as apartheid and colonialism.”⁶⁹⁹ The question of ballet, as well as the performing arts as a whole, adapting to a post-apartheid South Africa is something that has been constantly acknowledged. In order for this adaptation to occur, there must be a “process of self-discovery that is expressed by the evolution of a people’s culture.”⁷⁰⁰ As early as 1990, Barbara Masekela (head of the ANC Cultural Desk at the Grahamstown Festival), mentioned in a speech that South African culture can be seen as something “flexible, resilient and accretive.”⁷⁰¹ She defined it as something already being labelled as hegemonic and individualistic in the changing environment of pre-democratic South Africa.⁷⁰²

The idea of hegemony of culture, drawing on the social theory of Antonio Gramsci, allows for one to reflect on the domination of culture through Afrikaner nationalism and before that, colonialism, in the years and centuries preceding democratic South Africa. In addition, Michel Foucault’s work also describes aspects of the dominance of certain cultures over others from the history of colonialism. As has been demonstrated, ballet cannot be understood without acknowledging colonial and apartheid history and how it has affected the performing arts.⁷⁰³ Zhuwawo and Chivandikwa use Foucault’s theory to establish how the social dominance of one culture over another can influence the way a body moves in an

⁶⁹⁶ J. F. Job, ‘Butoh-Ballet’, pp. 6-7; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p.16.

⁶⁹⁷ J. F. Job, “Butoh-Ballet”, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁹⁸ J. R. LeBlanc, ‘Art and Politics in Albert Camus: Beauty as Defiance and Art as a Spiritual Quest’, *Literature and Theology* 13 (2), 1999, p. 127.

⁶⁹⁹ G.M. Samuel, “Dancing the Other in South Africa”, p. vii. (Doctor of Philosophy, UCT, 2008)

⁷⁰⁰ S. Sörgel, *Dancing Postcolonialism: The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica*, p. 43.

⁷⁰¹ B. Masekela, ‘Culture in the New South Africa’, *Scenaria*, pp. 4-5; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19.

⁷⁰² B. Masekela, ‘Culture in the New South Africa’, *Scenaria*, pp. 4-5; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19.

⁷⁰³ L. Loots, ‘Voicing the unspoken: Culturally Connecting Race, Gender and a Nation in Women’s Choreographic and Dance Practices in Post-Apartheid South Africa’ In S. Friedman (e.d.) *Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories*, p. 53; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19; G.M. Samuel, “Dancing the Other in South Africa”, p. 62.

artform such as dance.⁷⁰⁴ The dissertation has demonstrated that, historically, ballet is an art form or sport that has been influenced by the political atmosphere, which is where significant power dynamics can be seen.⁷⁰⁵

Power and hegemony are evident when a person is taught to dance, and a certain aesthetic is implemented by the teacher, which dancers adopt and sometimes do adapt to.⁷⁰⁶ Loots states that:

...to only watch white dancers performing ballet in the social construction of this being “high art” and therefore valuable, contains the point of resistance within it that this is a construction created and normalised to support certain racial, gendered and social constructs of dance history and practice in South Africa that support a specific economic and racial privileging.⁷⁰⁷

In acknowledgment of Loots’ sentiment and recalling Masekela’s speech, it is evident that that artists have to be aware of the need to interpret the values of democracy and to find new ways of movement.⁷⁰⁸ Arguably, this is something that Badenhorst has noticed over the years in the ballet community. He recognises a need for a methodology that will suit a South African voice that is not associated with the Western world.

An article written by American historian, Daniel Magaziner, discusses the views of artist Selby Mvusi.⁷⁰⁹ He was an influential father of thought for “postcolonial African creativity.”⁷¹⁰ Mvusi’s views were that artistic schools of thought tended to look too much at the past and not enough towards the future.⁷¹¹ Mvusi had many questions including “What was the relationship between the pre-colonial African past and the postcolonial African

⁷⁰⁴ A. Zhuwawo & N. Chivandikwa, ‘Body politics in Zimbabwe: The African Body in Ballet Training’, 2017, pp. 35-37; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19.

⁷⁰⁵ F. Job, ‘Butoh-Ballet’, p. 25; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19.

⁷⁰⁶ A. Zhuwawo & N. Chivandikwa, ‘Body politics in Zimbabwe: The African Body in Ballet Training’, in S. Friedman (e.d.) *Confluences* 9, 2017, p. 35 & 36; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 19.

⁷⁰⁷ L. Loots, ‘Voicing the unspoken: Culturally Connecting Race, Gender and a Nation in Women’s Choreographic and Dance Practices in Post-Apartheid South Africa’, p. 53; S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 20.

⁷⁰⁸ S.J. Meewes, “The Journey of Ballet in South Africa’s History: A Literature Review”, p. 20.

⁷⁰⁹ D. Magaziner, ‘Designing Knowledge in Postcolonial Africa: A South African Abroad’, *Kronos* 41, 2015, p. 265.

⁷¹⁰ D. Magaziner, ‘Designing Knowledge in Postcolonial Africa: A South African Abroad’, *Kronos* 41, 2015, p. 265.

⁷¹¹ D. Magaziner, ‘Designing Knowledge in Postcolonial Africa: A South African Abroad’, *Kronos* 41, 2015, p. 266.

future? What, more fundamentally, did ‘Africa’ mean?”⁷¹² His general opinion of being African “was to live openly and creatively without knowing what being an African”⁷¹³ means. Johnstone notes from the scholar Lepecki that the “creative practice is rigorous of not knowing.”⁷¹⁴

Conclusion

The removal of apartheid legislation was a significant turning point in South African history. However, the effects of apartheid can still be seen as certain communities remain disadvantaged due to the societal structure imposed by the aforementioned system. King’s JYB ballet *Waratah* indicates the responsiveness of individual creativity to that specific context. *Waratah* engaged with themes that are now at the heart of post-apartheid discourse. Dance for All and the Soweto Dance Project are also examples of how the ballet community has responded to their environment. These two projects were established because the ballet community had an awareness of the effects of the apartheid regime on certain communities. Badenhorst’s identification for a balletic method outside of the Eurocentric aesthetic speaks of a greater need for a unified South African voice and ballet method. Thus, dancers like Phetla and Masilo have taken the theme of *Swan Lake*, a classical ballet, and have reinvented themselves to give their own unique perspectives on the ballet. This reinvention or reimagination is something that can be viewed as decoloniality.

⁷¹² D. Magaziner, ‘Designing Knowledge in Postcolonial Africa: A South African Abroad’, *Kronos* 41, 2015, p. 267.

⁷¹³ D. Magaziner, ‘Designing Knowledge in Postcolonial Africa: A South African Abroad’, *Kronos* 41, 2015, p. 267.

⁷¹⁴ K. Johnstone, ‘Some Notes on Assembly: Choreography as a materialising practice of thinking and decolonial options for contemporary dance’, p. 140.

Conclusion

“A ballet school has its foundation, first of all, in a country’s national culture and in the talent unique to a people to express itself in dance.”

Alicia Alonso⁷¹⁵

Ballet has been shown as being responsive to the changing environment of South African society. Various factors throughout history have influenced the balletic and performing arts community. Through the observations of the beginnings of ballet in South Africa, the case studies of Cape Town and Johannesburg, South African ballets with Afrocentric themes and ballet in the post-apartheid context, it has been demonstrated that the South African ballet community has consistently engaged with various elements present in its immediate context.

In chapter one, the European origins of ballet were acknowledged. The arrival of ballet in South Africa as a result of colonialism was addressed. Later, the arrival of Anna Pavlova with her version of *The Dying Swan* which increased ballet’s popularity was linked to the formation of small balletic groups. Subsidy applications from the 1950s were used as examples to show how the early political context of apartheid impacted the performing arts in the search for funding.

Chapter two looked at a brief history of CAPAB and CTCB where it was shown that race was something not overtly discussed and was a contradictory topic in the organisation. The third chapter observed the development of ballet in the Transvaal region and showed that the company’s close proximity to Pretoria allowed them to receive more grants and funding which increased dependency on government funding. Without the independence which CTCB had always had because of other financial contributors such as the Dulcie Howes Trust, PACT turned STB had to increase its private and corporate funding after being established for a significant amount of years. The lack of funding and corruption by members of the State Theatre organisation, led to its closure in 2000. The formation of SABT in 2001 rebuilt ballet in a positive light and continues to do so as the Joburg Ballet.

Chapter four discussed ballets choreographed during and after apartheid. These ballets are nuanced and contain Afrocentric themes which speaks to a constant question in South African performing arts history, namely, where do South African artists find a collective South African voice and expression for a diverse South African audience? The first iconic

⁷¹⁵ A. Alonso, ‘Foreword’ in *Cuban Ballet* by O. Roca, p. 8.

South African ballet *Raka* (1967) conveyed the apartheid government's contradictory acceptance of a story about a unified community. The potential ballet story *Princess of the Shadows* (*Seilatsatsi*) (1970) (Haupt) based on a Sotho legend affirmed the ballet community's desire to engage with and adapt to Afrocentric themes in ballet to connect with a larger part of South African society that was prevented from intermixing. *Mantis Moon* (1970) demonstrated a further desire on the part of Staff as a choreographer to engage with African history and stories. Other examples were *The Rain Queen* (1971) and *Nongause* (1973) (Burne). *Mantis* (1981) was based on Walter Battiss's painting of the same name, was a fusion of Afrocentric and Eurocentric art and can perhaps best be labelled as South African art where the merging of such elements created a unique individual expression. Similarly, with *Incwadi* (2000) Kirkland found a middle ground to fuse Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism through the use and symbolism of colours inspired by the Zulu culture. The last ballet, *The Nutcracker* (2008) returned to the theme of Khoisan myths, which can also be seen as representative of the new South African ballet tradition.

The final chapter discussed ballet in the post-apartheid period. This chapter continues to convey the responsiveness of the balletic community by looking at groups formed after apartheid such as Dance for All, JYB and the Soweto Dance Project. Dance for All's initial, and current cause was to uplift dancers in disadvantaged communities and to give them access to dance education which is relatively expensive. It seems that JYB was the first known multi-racial ballet company in South Africa. To end the chapter, examples of *The Dying Swan* (Phetla's version) and *Swan Lake* which is another Tchaikovsky classic (re-choreographed by Masilo) are used to demonstrate how individuals in the balletic community have responded to the post-apartheid context. The ideas of these ballets indicate a community moving past a Western paradigm with a focus on individual interpretation.

It may be argued that the growth of a uniquely South African balletic method and South African stories in ballet have been stunted because there is potentially still a colonial paradigm associated with the art. However, this is in the process of changing now as ballet continues to be responsive to its environment. The performing arts as a whole in South Africa, as noted by fellow scholars, are playing an important part in South African history as they reflect the changes in South African society through the stories in the performances that they produce. South African ballet dancers most importantly, speak of the peoples' individual creativity and aesthetic which places the South African arts on the verge of something extraordinary.

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