

Abstract

The dissertation *Let the Words Dance. The Rhetorical Function in the Creation of Choreographic Works on the Example of the Dance Performance „Lithos” Choreographed by Jacek Owczarek* by Paweł Skalski represents an original integration of rhetorical theory with the practice of dance theater. The author examines the potential of rhetorical tools for analyzing both the creative process and the choreographic work itself. The central hypothesis posits that a dance performance, as a cultural text, can be interpreted as a rhetorical message with a persuasive function. Specifically, the author emphasizes the significance of emotions, imagination, and rhetorical figures in both the creative process and the audience's reception of a performance.

The analysis is grounded in the *Lithos* performance choreographed by Jacek Owczarek. The author bases his study on detailed documentation of the creative process, participant observation, and numerous interviews with the creators and dancers. Owczarek's method, described as “movement-driven creation,” relies on improvisation as a core creative tool and on the deliberate abandonment of preconceptions to explore new movement forms.

The author analyzes how elements such as amplification, multimodality, character work, and intentional unawareness form the foundation of movement creation, which is subsequently organized into more complex structures. Key concepts, such as movement phrasing, are examined through the lens of classical rhetorical categories. The dissertation demonstrates how improvisation, within this method, functions as a cohesive creative tool.

The study reveals that rhetorical tools are particularly valuable in examining the creative process and choreographic works. Analyzing emotions, imagination, and rhetorical figures allows for a deeper understanding of dance performances and highlights their impact on audiences. The author argues that contemporary dance theater, despite its often abstract nature, fulfills a communicative function. Its rhetorical analysis enables a nuanced exploration of the relationships between the creator, the artwork, and the audience.

The dissertation is interdisciplinary in nature, presenting a novel approach to the theory and practice of dance theater. The application of rhetorical tools opens new research opportunities, bridging aesthetic analysis with a communication-focused perspective. The author convincingly argues that rhetoric can become a critical tool not only for researchers but also for choreographers, providing new methods for analyzing and designing dance performances. Consequently, the study paves the way for further exploration of the relationships between movement, rhetoric, imagination, and cultural communication.

Keywords:

choreography, improvisation, rhetorical criticism, contemporary dance, dance theater, rhetoric