

The First Azerbaijan Theater Designers

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Abstract

In the article, the authors talk about the first designers of theatrical art in Azerbaijan, analyze their life and work and compares them with each other. They explore the reasons why each artist is unique and inimitable. The authors also analyze the influence of the artists-designers of the last century of Azerbaijan on other Transcaucasian countries. The article talks about the success and creativity of the first designers of Azerbaijan, not only thanks to sketches, but also about the quality of their work, the support of famous people of that time, but also about the creative environment in Azerbaijan in those economic and political difficult years. In the article, the authors talk about the support of artists to each other, the exchange of experience and the positive impact of healthy criticism on creativity. Each artist mentioned in the article, thanks to his diligence and talent, inscribed his name in the history of Azerbaijani art in golden letters. Their creativity and life experience can be a great example for every young designer.

Keywords: the first azerbaijan theatre artists; azim azimzadeh; oskar schmerling, joseph rotter, bahruz kangarli

Introduction

The authors conducted a study about the first theatrical artists of Azerbaijan in the last century. Well-known Azerbaijani designers, such as Azim Azimzadeh, Oscar Schmerling, Joseph Rotter, Bahruz Kangarli opened the exciting world of theatrical imaginative thinking for the designers of Transcaucasia. They created a school and a new direction in the art of scenery and theater clothing. In conclusion, the authors suggest that students use the experience and work of the first Azerbaijani theater designers in teaching the art of theater design.

Research Methods and Materials

The research methods and materials used historical facts extracted from books and magazines, as well as from Internet resources. The authors are also the artists and therefore this topic is closer to them, they are well versed in the materials and various sketches of the artists of Azerbaijan, as well as the whole world, which formed the basis of the object under study. The study was based primarily on the work of the great designers of the beginning of the 20th century Azerbaijan. The authors mainly studied sketches, exhibitions and works of Azerbaijani theater designers of the 20th century.

The authors have consistently studied theater design masters since the beginning of the 20th century. The authors compared designers and their styles, as well as the criteria by which they were so in demand at that time. The researchers came to the conclusion that the time and place, as well as the economic situation of the countries plays a huge role in theatrical art. Also, famous personalities, actors and singers, composers, editors played a huge role in the ascent of the meters of theatrical art.

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Strangely enough for the Caucasus, and especially not an integral part of the Caucasus, fashion design, despite the fact that it existed for a long time, the data about the great masters who instilled clothes for men in the Caucasus into the fashion of the Transcaucasia, and especially in Azerbaijan, remained a long time in the past and their names unfortunately not exactly preserved in the archives. We can find in archival data, in the letters of famous writers, musicians, some memories of some kind of clothing master, but with this the information ends and, unfortunately, it is not possible to find direct evidence. In the stories of the

great designer, master of carpet art, Professor Latif Karimov, there were many references to the dressmakers of the Karabakh zone, where hats called "Bukhara" or "Cukha" clothes and other priceless national clothes of Azerbaijan were embroidered to order.

Studying the letters written by the great Azerbaijani cartoonist Azim Azimzadeh with the great writer, founder of the magazine "Molla Nasraddin" Jalil Mammadguluzade, it is found from author a lot of interesting things for art science. Interesting information emerges from these letters and stories, which lead us to the first fashion designers of Azerbaijan. It turns out that for the first opera house of the great composer of Azerbaijan Uzeyir Gadzhibekov, the design of clothes was done by the cartoonist Azim Azimzadeh, and for another opera called "If not that one, then this one", sketches for clothes were created by the first painter of Azerbaijan, Bahruz Kangarli. Surprising facts are revealed when they searched information in the Institute of Manuscripts of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In this article, the author would like to raise the curtain on the theater of those times and highlight those faces and characters that played an integral role in the formation and development of the theatre design in Azerbaijan, but of course in the entire Caucasus and Transcaucasia.

Theatrical sketches by Azim Azimzadeh are narrative compositions. His sketches are rather strong realistic generalization that penetrates the psychology of the depicted character, as if enlivening his biography. The artist fully reflected the sketches made on both historical and everyday subjects, and created complete copies. Azim Azimzadeh who is well acquainted with the rich traditions of theatrical art, every time knew how to prove that he was a unique artist in creating fonts both in watercolor and in pencil. In 1919, Azim Azimzadeh worked in the magazine, named "Zanbur", when the musical comedy "If not that one, then this one" was staged at the Baku Theater. At the suggestion of Uzeyir Gadzhibekov, the artist was invited to provide sketches of scenery and costumes for this performance. The compositional works entrusted to Azim Azimzadeh by the brilliant composer were not limited to this, the artist was also entrusted with the composition of the opera "Shah Abbas" and "Khurshud Banu", prepared for staging in 1921. Paintings depicting the main and secondary characters of both plays were subsequently studied in the collection of the theater museum [15].

In the development of theatrical and decorative art, sketches of costumes by A. Azimzadeh for a number of

theatrical performances, "Leyli and Majnun" by I. Seyidov (U. Hajibeyli), "Sevil" (F. Amirov), "Koroglu" by A. Fataliyev "Artists working in the field of theatrical painting" (U. Hajibeyli), operas "Bakhadir and Sona" (S. Aleskerov), "Gulshan" by A. Almaszade (S. Gadzhibekov), "Garaja gyz" (A. Abbasov) dawn" (A. Mammadkhanly), "Othello" (W. Shakespeare), "Vagif" (S. Vurgun), "The song remained in the mountains" (I. Efendiyev), "Pale flowers (J. Jabbarli) by I. Akhundov, "Sheikh Sanan" (H. Javid), "Javanshir" (M. Hussein), "Kandchi gizi" (M. Ibragimov) by S. Sharifzadeh and others are especially noteworthy for the artistic ideas they give to dramatic performances [16].

Even if their names are accepted as artists of the caricature genre, we believe that even before Azim Azimzadeh's activity in "Molla Nasreddin" magazine, two artists of Jewish origin who studied in Germany laid the foundation of design in Azerbaijan first. So, these two artists were directly engaged in design activities both on the stage of the theater and in the magazines. Although there is enough information about the first of them in scientific works, it is almost difficult to find information about the second artist. The first artist is Oskar Schmerling. Oskar Schmerling studied at the Munich Art Academy in Munich, Germany. Later, he worked for a long time in Georgia, and for some time in Azerbaijan, he edited and enriched magazine, named "Mollah Nasreddin" with caricature drawings of various themes. Another artist, Josef Rotter, also studied at the aforementioned Munich Art Academy, and for some time he was admired by his paintings in "Molla Nasreddin" magazine. Both artists have different working styles and we would like to talk about them briefly. Our real goal is to investigate the contributions of these artists to Azerbaijani culture in the field of design. First of all, let's start with the fact that, thanks to his classical realistic style and work technique, Joseph Rotter differed many times from the artists who worked at that time in the Caucasus, graphic style and mainly his technique. This was probably due to the fact that he was a student at the Munich school. At that moment, classes at the Munich Academy of Arts were held in a completely different style, and the classical style has somewhat lost its role and faded into the background. In search of their style, students sometimes even went too far, making their work completely unrecognizable to the audience. We believe that this style of learning has many disadvantages. Since both artists were graduates of this Academy, we wrote to the Academy and tried to collect information about the education of

artists from the archive. Take a look at the online Archive of the Munich Art Academy: "The portrait of Molla Nasreddin, painted by Shmerling, was published in the magazine Molla Nasreddin in different situations for many years with different subjects. In Schmerling's interpretation, the wisdom and foresight of Molla Nasreddin, high civil qualities were embodied in life with great skill. his paintings, the inner world of Molla Nasreddin, as well as external signs, are national, depicted in accordance with caloric content and oriental customs. In a word, the portrait of the main character of the Azerbaijani folk satire Molla Nasreddin is the discovery of a German artist. Oscar Schmerling [1].

Unfortunately, we were unable to find students under the names of Josef Rotter and Oskar Schmerling in the archive called "Martielbücher". The archive records the names, surnames, duration of training, class names and even teachers of all students who have studied here since the beginning of the 19th century. We wrote a letter to the Academy about the fact that the names of the two mentioned artists could not be found. In response, we were presented with two versions. The first version - at that time, most students of Jewish origin deliberately changed their names and surnames, because they lived in German society, as well as in Tsarist Russia, so that it would not be known that they were of Jewish origin. The second version - part of the archival documents was burned during the Second World War. Perhaps because they were of Jewish origin, their pictures and information were destroyed by the German Nazis. We have officially received these two versions from the German Academy of Painting. Unfortunately, we could not find any information about the activities of these two artists in Germany. However, they, and especially the richest work of Oscar Schmerling, undoubtedly had a great influence on Azerbaijani design. Oscar Schmerling worked as an artist in the Molla Nasreddin magazine at the invitation of Jalil Mammadguluzadeh. However, he published not only caricature drawings, but also handled all the design of the magazine. It should also be noted that Oscar Schmerling worked for some time in the cities of Khankendi and Shusha, where he also worked as a theater designer. Despite the fact that the origin of the art of satirical graphics in Azerbaijan coincided with the 16th-17th centuries, the caricature genre of this art became widespread at the beginning of the 20th century [3]. The role of the magazine Molla Nasreddin, well-known in the Muslim East, is indisputable. Since 1906, the editor of the magazine

"Molla Nasreddin" Jalil Mammadguluzadeh gathered famous writers of his time (M.A. Sabir, A. Hagverdiev, M. S. Ordubadi, A. Nazmi, A. Gamkusal) and invited skilled caricaturists. Azerbaijani and foreign cartoonists who worked in the magazine "Molla Nasreddin" in different years created wonderful works of art. The first foreign artist of the magazine was O. Shmerling, later the artist I. Rotter, a German Jew by nationality, the founder of the genre of Azerbaijani caricature - A. Azimzadeh, R. Telengator, working under the nickname Beno, V. Chamanzaminli, A. Ibragimzadeh, H. Musaev, I. Akhundov, G. Khalikov, A. Hajiyev, K. Dorsh, Kh. Aliyev and others collaborated with the magazine [1]. Indeed, the role of foreign cartoonists in the creation of the magazine should be especially noted. Speaking about the first foreign cartoonists, one should definitely mention Oscar Shmerling, J. Mammadguluzadeh's closest associate. Oskar Ivanovich Schmerling was born on July 1, 1863 in Tbilisi. (But some sources write that he was born on July 13. In his letter to J. Mammadguluzade in 1925, he says that he is already 63 years old, which means that he was born in 1862, not 1863.

Oskar Schmerling's grandfather - Theodore Zalchman, came to Georgia from Germany at the beginning of the 19th century (at that time several families from Germany had already moved to Georgia), settled in Azureti (formerly Elizabetal), and then moved to Tbilisi, where he was engaged in beer production. Soon he became famous as a manufacturing businessman. Four children were born to him: Albert, Henrietta, Matilda and Maria. Later, Matilda Zalchman married Ivan Shmerling. One of their 5 children was Oskar Ivanovich Shmerling.

Oskar Ivanovich Shmerling is regarded as an artist who laid the foundation of Georgian painting. Oskar Schmerling received his first education at the Tbilisi Realni school and published his personal satirical magazine "Koho" (Mosquito) from his student days. Later, he collaborated with the Russian-language "Falang" magazine. In 1883, he taught art at the art gymnasium, which was popular at that time in Georgia. Shmerling, who graduated from Realni school, came to Petersburg in 1884. At the Petersburg Art Academy, the artist studies as a free listener in Villevalde's class. Bogdan (Gottfried) Pavlovich Villevalde (1818-1903) was known as a famous artist-batalist of his time. He had a great influence on the creativity of Oskar Schmerling. Talented young people studying at the St. Petersburg Art Academy, their aura could not help but influenced the spiritual development of Oskar

Schmerling as well. Oskar Shmerling graduated from the St. Petersburg Art Academy with a silver medal. In 1891, he left for Munich to study at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Bavaria (currently called the Munich Academy of Fine Arts) to study under the batalist artist Franz Alekseyevich Rubaud (1856-1928).

It should be noted that at that time many artists took different nicknames. The fact that information about Oskar Schmerling is not found in the electronic archive of the Munich Academy of Arts is because he worked under a pseudonym or because the devastating World War II did not bypass the archives of the Academy. Especially the fact that Oskar Schmerling is a Jew by nationality makes us think about this [1]. According to some sources, Oskar Schmerling lived in Khankendi for some time and drew sketches for theater performances. As noted by the Georgian researcher Chogoshvili Nino Levanovna, Oskar Schmerling headed the art department of the Ministry of Education during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1921) [10].

We were able to read four letters written by Oskar Shmerling to Jalil Mammadguluzadeh in the years 1921-1927 in the Azerbaijan Manuscript Archive. It is clear from these letters that he is very busy with his creative work and thanks Jalil Mammadguluzadeh for inviting him to "Molla Nasreddin" again, however, the artist who writes about domestic problems notes that he will need an apartment if he works in Baku. In one of the letters, he expressed his disappointment at the weakness of the "Khatabala" magazine, where he worked for a while, and thanked fate for not leaving him unemployed [1]. Oskar Schmerling had two children: his son Edgar Schmerling - a photojournalist, a victim of repression in the 1930s, and his daughter Rene Schmerling (an artist, later a doctor of art, who became famous as one of the famous researchers of Georgian art), Oskar Schmerling was especially proud of his daughter. and he wrote about his daughter with joy in his letters. Granddaughter Alla Shmerling, an engineer by profession, lives in Georgia, preserves the works of her grandfather and aunt in her personal archive and periodically exhibits them at various events. Professor Isa Habibeyli, doctor of philological sciences, writes: "Oscar Shmerling is really one of the founders of satirical graphics, caricature art, and book graphics in the South Caucasus. Under the influence of his attractive and deep-content caricatures, this type of art emerged and developed widely in Azerbaijan, Central Asia, Turkey and Iran [6]. Another artist, Iosif Rotter, who made numerous contributions to Azerbaijan

design, in turn enriched "Molla Nasreddin" magazine with his famous line drawing style. Later, other Azerbaijani artists were inspired by his stroke style. In general, Iosif/Joseph Rotter's set has a real Munich school feel. It is clear from his works that he received excellent higher education and was an educated artist. Rotter Joseph, a German by nationality, also studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and lived in Tbilisi for some time. In 1906-1914 he took an active part in the activities of the magazine "Molla Nasreddin". The artist's caricature "There was a day, there was no day" (1907, N-13) was dedicated to the Armenian-Muslim conflict, which we have been suffering for centuries. Here the artist exposes the colonial policy of Russia, which he calls "Fitneyi-Iblisi Malun" in fomenting the conflict [14]. After many investigations, it is known that Joseph Rotter was repressed. His final resting place is in Asino, Soviet Russia. Here are the victims of repressions at the Resurrection cemetery, Tomsk region, Asinovsky district, in 1937-1950, the camp / prison cemetery - a special resettlement cemetery [13]. It is very likely that Joseph Rotter was deported here by the Soviet administration during the war, since only Lithuanians, Estonians and Germans were deported to this region, as he was considered a German. Currently, there is a museum dedicated to the victims of repressions in the city of Asino.

Next to the great artists of his time, the young artist Bahruz Kangarli enters the design scene. In 1883, the Nakhchivan Theater opened its doors to the public with the performance of M.F. Akhundzadeh "Monsieur Jordan and Dervish Mastali Shah." In 1912, Bahruz Kangerli began his career as a theater artist, providing an artistic composition for U. Hajibeyli's musical comedy "O olmasin, bu olsun" in the Nakhchivan theater. From 1912 to 1918, the artist painted large-scale panels for more than 40 performances by N. Vazirov "Pakhlanani-zamane", "Haji Gambar", "Misibeti-Fakhreddin", A. Hagverdiyev "Hungry Boys" on the stage The Nakhchivan Theater provided scenography and costume designs. The artist was an unsurpassed connoisseur of national folk costumes. He created many sketches of costumes that characterize the characters of the works he created, attracting the viewer with their historical integrity, national color, saturation of colors, patterns, and decorations. The artistic compositions given by B. Kangerli to these performances were excellent examples of Azerbaijani theatrical and decorative art.

In June 1917, Aligulu Gamkusar, together with members of the El Mirgosu Drama Society, boldly

staged the tragicomedy "The Dead" by J. Mammadguluzadeh. The play "The Dead" staged in Nakhchivan based on the artistic composition of B. Kangerly becomes a significant event. Ali Kakhramanov, head of the music and theater department of the Institute of Art, Language and Literature of the Nakhchivan branch of ANAS, Ph.D. in art history, writes: "The talented realist artist B. Kangarli penetrates deeply into the essence of comic performances. in his works, and reveals the appearance and spiritual world of comic characters in his sketches., prepared the necessary decor and curtains for the stage, interpreted the ideas of playwrights in sketches of costumes with appropriate lines. That is why he skillfully created the scenography for the performances of The Dead, Hadji Kara, and Paris Jadoux. When the play "The Dead" was staged, the old Nakhchivan life really came to life on the stage. The design given by the famous artist to the work "Fairytale Witch" was also very interesting. The artist also painted a beautiful mountain landscape for the stage, which until recently was used on the stage of the Nakhchivan theater" [16]. Unfortunately, at that difficult economic time, it was also not easy for artists. Bahruz Kangarli died from a lung disease at the age of 30, but left a great legacy in the history of Azerbaijani art.

Artists such as Azim Azimzadeh, who created the first art school in Azerbaijan, Oscar Shmerling and Joseph Rotter, who made a huge contribution to Azerbaijan theatrical art, and the young, first Azerbaijani painter Bahruz Kangarli, played a huge role in the development of theatrical art design. They created several thousand sketches, decorations, clothes, so that they can also be officially called the first fashion designers of Azerbaijan. The creativity and life of such great masters should be an example for the rising generation and their work and creativity should be used in the teaching materials of the university. where art, design, drawing and painting come together.

Conclusion

1. The study was based primarily on the works of the great Azerbaijani artists of the early 20th century in Transcaucasia.

2. The researchers came to the conclusion that time and place, as well as the economic composition, play a huge role in the design of theatrical scenery and in the sketches of the artists' clothes.
3. Famous personalities, actors, singers and composers played a huge role in the ascent of the meters of theatrical art in Azerbaijan.
4. Sketches, drawings, choice of fabrics, sense of color, great experience and deep knowledge, volumes, sketches and much more, created by these famous designers, can serve as an excellent example for the younger generation and for students studying today in Azerbaijan.

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