

Discuss how Diaghilev talent for nurturing and developing individual, dancers choreographers and composers is reflected in the work that you have studied? (40)

Diaghilev had an indisputable talent for nurturing and developing the skills and talents, with whom he worked. He discovered through his noble work ethics, dancers, choreographers and composers with natural talent which he stimulated, helping to form a well-established and renowned company and rejuvenating the world of ballet, and indeed dance. In the work of "Pulcinella" this is evident through the choreographer and principle dancer Massine, the dancer Karsavina and the composer Stravinsky. These members of the company were practically unknown before their collaboration with the Ballet Russe. It was through Diaghilev talent for nurturing and developing, even to an extent manipulating the talents with whom he collaborated, set these artists to worldwide acclaim, both in the Ballet Russe and the careers that would follow.

Diaghilev produced some of the most original and successful choreographers of the twentieth century; including; Fokine, Nijinsky, Balanchine, Nijnska and Massine. Leonide Massine, the choreographer of the ballet "Pulcinella" was an unknown actor, when Diaghilev first employed him. However, Diaghilev turned him into one of the best dancers and choreographers of the twentieth century. Massine trained at the imperial school, where early success seemed to suggest success in the field of acting, as opposed to dancing and choreography. Massine improved at Enrico Cecchetti and in 1914 was employed by Diaghilev as a dancer and then in 1915 was promoted to choreographer. Through Diaghilev, Massine was quickly given an artistic and cultural education, which allowed his natural ability to develop quickly and fully. In the work of "Pulcinella" Diaghilev and Massine, spent time in Naples, Italy where Massine re-aquainted himself with the art of commedia dell'arte puppet shows, which had stimulated his imagination on previous visits. Diaghilev encouraged him to undertake research and in the Royal Palace Library he found a number of commedia dell'arte scenarios and notation, which he showed to Diaghilev, who decided to commission a ballet on commedia dell'arte. Massine and Diaghilev then created the narrative for the ballet and Massine began work on the choreography. Massine was renowned for the demi-character style of his dancing as opposed to the strict ballet vocabulary that had dictated the world of ballet over the past centuries. Through Diaghilev encouragement, he sought to create a neo-classicism of ballet, which lay the boundaries for modern dance, through his use of angular movements and rhythmic combinations, which required fast and precise footwork. Massine, also played the lead role of "Pulcinella" whom he characterised as "a typical Neapolitan rogue... I (Massine) used every possible flourish, twist and turn to suggest the unscrupulousness and ambiguity of Pulcinella's character." This was demonstrated "....."

Admired for his spontaneity and energy of his dance, and smooth interpretations Massine left his own imprint on the role of Pulcinella, which demonstrated the beauty and expressiveness that Diaghilev had helped to stimulate. After creating seventeen ballets for the Ballet Russe, Massine went on to have world wide acclaim, working with the Roxy Theatre in New York; Iba Rubenstein's company; to be a ballet master and artistic director of the Ballet Russe Monte Carlo; owned his own company and choreographed for a number of different companies and dancers, including Fred Ashton. The natural gifts, which Diaghilev helped him to achieve, led him to wide world acclaim, as one of the most famous choreographers of the twentieth century.

The Ballet Russe from the 1910's to the 1930's spelled out magic to the general public and even today evoke visions of theatrical excitement. The dancers of the Ballet Russe carved their way into legend for example, Karsavina, Nijinsky and Pavlova, and have enhanced the capabilities of many modern dancers such as Makarova and Nureyev. In the work of "Pulcinella" the dancer Karsavina, played the principal female role of Pimpinella, Pulcinella's mistress. She was one of the rare talents of the Ballet Russe, a true testament to her excellent ability, was despite the changing face of the Ballet Russe and the number different choreographers over the time period of the Ballet Russe, she remained, accompanying the company from the beginning to end. She was trained in the Imperial Theatre, and although had an excellent technical ability, Diaghilev helped to stimulate her dance genius. He encouraged her to try new or 'modern' roles such as Pimpinella, which were arising during the choreography of Massine. She managed, through Diaghilev stimulation to turn every role that she played into poetry. Each ballet role was independent of pure technicalities, being classical or neo-classical roles such as Pimpinella. Equipped with delicate femininity romantic beauty and cordial spontaneity, she marked the beginning of the modern dancer, who was able to work successfully work with choreographers transposing their ideas into movement

compositional devices. Her technical and the artistic qualities, which Diaghilev help to stimulated, enabled her to create a range of different characters, but each one with a sensitivity and respect. She later contributed to the successes of the English ballet, coming out of retirement to give lectures and advice on her interpretations of the lead roles and how to recreate them into real life. She helped to influence and stimulate the talents of Frederick Ashton and Margot Fonteyn, who have since become two of the leading dancers in the English ballet.

Diaghilev also helped to stimulate the gifts of the Russian composer Stravinsky, who became one of the best-known composers and musicians of the twentieth century. Previous to any Ballet Russe publicity, Stravinsky was practically unknown. The early pieces of his work did not in fact show a great deal of promise and definitely did not predict the great scale of his career, which was to begin with his collaboration with the Ballet Russe from 1909. Diaghilev presented Stravinsky, with the scores, which he had been collecting from some time, from around Naples, which had been attributed to the composer Pergolesi, who had been part of the Baroque era, and the dawning of the classical era. Stravinsky was moved by Pergolesi music and sought to assemble the pieces. He sought out pieces, which were appropriate for dancing and underpinned the ballet scenario. The pieces chosen and their orchestration, underscored the mood of Massine's ballet and helped to move along the action, for example, the plaintive Serenta that follow the overture fitted Cavellio and Florindo's love sick declarations beneath the balconies of Rossetta and Prundenza. In several cases Stravinsky only used sections of the music and in others he linked parts of the original score and added his own style by subtle dislocations of harmony, dislocations of rhythms, harmony and other elements. The result being a modern score, in which the music of Pergolesi is achieved but with a modern touch. Through the work of 'Pulcinella' Diaghilev stimulated Stravinsky into his neo-classical period which was to last until the 1950's. Through arranging the scores of Pergolesi he gained an insight into Western Classicism, which contrasted with the Russian elements that he had been used to working with. Stravinsky, himself stated that he saw the work of Pulcinella has being his "discovery of the past, the epiphany through which, the wholeness of my late work became possible. It was a backward look, of course—the first of many love affairs in that direction—but it was a look in the mirror too." Through Diaghilev, Stravinsky was launched to international acclaim and through his encouragement entered the most prosperous and well-acclaimed phases of his career. He in fact felt so in debt to Diaghilev that he wished to be buried near him.

Diaghilev was an extra-ordinary man, who as an impresino had the remarkable ability to see hidden natural abilities and stimulated them. This is evident in 'Pulcinella' through the development and stimulation of Karsavina, Massine and Stravinsky, all of whom no doubly owe their careers and international acclaim to Diaghilev, whose appreciation of the new and modern, led him to shape his talents for the new twentieth century, as ballet left the roots of the romantic era for a more modernistic approach.