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LIFE AND CREATIVITY OF LESIA UKRAINKA THROUGH THE PRISM OF CHOREOGRAPHIC ART: SCREEN AND STAGE DISCOURSE**Halyna Pohrebniak**

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to show the close ties between Lesia Ukrainka's literary works and choreographic, musical, stage, and audiovisual arts and outline the directorial means of adapting poetic texts by means of screen, musical, stage, and choreographic arts. **Research methodology.** The article uses general scientific methods (induction, deduction, comprehensive art historical analysis, synthesis). This made it possible to comprehensively analyze the historical and cultural background of the problem under study. The study used the methods of systematization and generalization to argue for the originality of the phenomenon of choreography in the context of the stage, music, and screen arts. **The scientific novelty** of the research is to clarify the specifics of directorial activity through the coverage of the film adaptation of Lesia Ukrainka's literary works using the means of choreographic art. **Conclusions.** It is substantiated that the use of expressive means by directors and choreographers that provide the chronology of image creation (long shots, intra-frame editing, acoustic, light and shadow effects) is evidence of a high degree of skill in screen, stage, and choreographic art. It is proved that the screen creativity of directors contributes to the wide popularization of ballet, stage, and musical art.

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Problem Statement

The lively interest in the life and work of Lesia Ukrainka has not disappeared for many decades. The creative heritage of

the poetess and her unique personality are of interest to the general public, scientists, and representatives of various types of art, in particular, stage, screen, and choreography. Another proof of the

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significant attention paid to the figure of the writer is the ballet performance "Lesia", created by "Ukrainian choreographer Artem Shoshin to Franz Schubert's music" (Kachkovska, 2025). The premiere of the performance took place in January 2025.

It should be noted that dance (despite the writer's poor health) has always occupied a significant place in Lesia Ukrainka's life. Therefore, in many of her works, the characters are related to choreography and have their own bodily "code of expressiveness" (Zabuzhko, 2007, p.178). The study of this problem, in our opinion, requires new scientific explorations in the field of stage, screen and choreographic art. After all, the poetess's literary works were adapted to the plane of the stage and screen using the expressive means of these arts.

Recent research and publications analysis

O. Afonina, V. Aksiutina, O. Babii, L. L. Dolkhov, M. Korostelova, I. Morozova, A. Pashchenko, A. Pidlipska, M. Pohrebniak, D. Sharikov L., K. Stanislavska, Yu. Stanishevskiy L. Tarasenko Vyshotravka devoted their research to the problems of adapting ballet performances in screen and stage space. Over the 130 years of cinema's existence, artists from many countries worldwide have created dozens of films dedicated to the work of ballet premieres, prominent choreographers, and ballet troupes. M. Korostelova (2018, p.1) points out that "an important direction of modern research is to consider the relationship between traditions and innovations in the context of the general development of choreography (phylogenetic perspective) and the specific process of interpretations in reconstructions, revisions, and productions by postmodernist ballet masters (onto-

genetic perspective)". The researcher is convinced that "a detailed understanding of various artistic processes that have taken place in the ballet theatre in recent decades will contribute to the identification of modern trends in choreographic art and the prediction of vectors for its further development" (Korostelova, 2018, p.1). V. Aksiutina (2021), in the article "The Aesthetic Category of the Comic in the Musical Characterization of Characters (on the Example of Yuri Shevchenko's Ballet "Pinocchio and the Magic Violin")" examines the synthetic nature of ballet in the context of musical, stage, and screen arts. O. Afonina (2020), in the article "The Musical Basis of Modern Ukrainian Ballets", writes that composer Volodymyr Shevchenko, in the new ballet "Chasing Two Hares", chooses "as the leitmotif of the ballet the song by Vadym Homoliaka to the words of Yevhen Kravchenko A. Canary Flies in the Sky from the famous film Chasing Two Hares.

L. Vyshotravka (2020, p.136), in the article "On the history of the film adaptation of the first Ukrainian television ballet film Lilia, explores the historical and cultural origins of the appearance of ballet on the screen. The author points out that "in the era of silent cinema, the first experience recording dance movements on film belonged to choreographers L. Myasin, M. Grekhm, V. Koralli. In 1908, cinematographer O. Drankov filmed a performance by I. Chistyakov's troupe and released it for wide distribution under "Pierre and Pieretta." The researcher notes that "with the development of television, dance was actively involved in developing a new means of mass communication." The researcher also adds that "from the Soviet television experience, it is known that the first dance numbers appeared on television in documenta-

ry recordings as early as the turn of the 1930s and 1940s. Scenes and fragments from ballet performances were recorded primarily for newsreels. In Ukraine, these were "Soviet Ukraine", "Youth of Ukraine", "Art of Ukraine", "Ukraine Today", "Mill", and "Pioneer" produced by the Ukrkinokhronika studio (Vyshotravka, 2020, p.137).

A. Pashchenko (2014), in the article "Motives and Images of the Kobzar", writes that Lilia is the first Ukrainian film ballet that became a model of the genre and gained recognition in the USSR and abroad". The author analyzes ballet productions adapted for the screen, in particular, the film-ballet Lilia, and also points out that despite the fact that "the film quite successfully conveyed the dance using cinematic means: a change of plans, a beautifully shot nature, a successful colour solution <...>, Lilia did not avoid the phoney elements of the landscape – a painted sky, an artificial tree on the heroine's grave, etc.; individual scenes are marked by theatricality, in particular, the episode of the uprising" (Pashchenko, 2014).

The purpose of the article To identify connections between the literary works of Lesia Ukrainka and choreographic, musical, stage and audiovisual art and to determine directorial methods of adapting poetic texts through the means of ballet, theater and screen.

Main research material

In the early years of cinema, filmmakers tried to capture dances, ballets, or choreographic numbers on film. In 1894, T. Edison filmed the story The Snake Dance performed by dancer A. Whitford-Moore and demonstrated it using a Kinetoscope of his production. J. Melies invited the Italian ballerina P. Legnani to the filming

of the film Cinderella in 1899. He successfully used fragments from the ballet of the same name in the experimental film. Despite the low mobility of the camera and the difficulty in synchronizing the dance and musical accompaniment, throughout the history of silent cinema, artists often included choreography and ballet in films.

For the first time in Ukraine, ballet culture was presented on screen in 1956 in the film Lilia. The film was based on such poetic works by T. Shevchenko as the ballad Lilia and the ballads and poems Mermaid, Drowned, Osika, and Nevolyk. The film ballet became "a model of the genre, gaining recognition both in the USSR and abroad" (Pashchenko, 2014).

The ballet Lilia was created in 1939 by composer K. Dankevych and laid the foundations for the integration into ballet art of "national literary classics, in particular, the works of Taras Shevchenko, Lesia Ukrainka, Ivan Franko, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, Oles Honchar. In different interpretations, the performance Lilia was embodied on the Kyiv stage several times: 1940 – the first production by Halyna Berezova; 1945 – a revival with scenery by Anatolii Petrytskyi" (Tarasenko, 2014, p.82). The famous ballet master V. Vronskyi, director V. Lapoknysh, and prominent ballet dancers E. Ershov, R. Kliavina, A. Arkadyev, V. Kalinovska, and O. Segal were involved in the film adaptation of the 1956 ballet work.

After the film-ballet Lilia was released, Lilia's ballet performance appeared on stage many times. Let us recall that "the last production was carried out by ballet master Valeryi Kovtun during the independence of Ukraine, in 2003, and the renewal of the performance took place now" (Tarasenko, 2014, p.83). This performance stands out significantly from the previ-

ous ones in terms of dance dramaturgy and ideological content. The directors highlighted the lyricism of the ballet music, which corresponds to the beauty and grandeur of Taras Shevchenko's romantic poetry. The choreographer changed the ballet aesthetics, "saw the work from a different angle and emphasized the folk poetic melody that permeates K. Dankovysh's music" (Tarasenko, 2014, p.83).

Dance occupied a significant place in Lesia Ukrainka's life and work. O. Kosach-Kryvyniuk (1970, p.42), in the monograph "Lesia Ukrainka: Chronology of Life and Creativity", wrote that in her childhood, Lesia "loved dancing very much <...> later she often said that when she heard music for dancing, she felt very sad". O. Zabuzhko, in the monograph "Notre Dame d'Ukraine: Ukrainian Woman in the Conflict of Mythologies", shares her observations that "dance does not appear by chance in the works of the outstanding poetess, but is an expression of the inner expression of her characters. These include, in particular, Nerissa's Bacchic dance before Maecenas (Orgy), Anna's fandango with Don Juan at the ball at the de Alvarez's (The Stone Master), Oksana's solo "sanzharivka" (Boiaryna), Mavka's "wild dances" with Perelesnyk (Forest Song), the "krutiak" and "buckwheat" dances of the servants in the manor's yard (Pryazn), Liuba Hoshchynska's waltz with a veil Blue Rose in the madness scene (As You Said: Love is a Ballerina! So, I am a Ballerina)" (Zabuzhko, 2007, p.178).

The verse play Forest Song by Lesia Ukrainka has been shown many times (with the involvement of choreography) both on the Ukrainian theatre stage and the screen. In 1936, the composer M. Skorulskyi created a ballet score for three acts based on a libretto by the ballerina N. Skorulska. The poetic text of the writer

also aroused the interest of film directors. Filmmakers have been interested in this work for the 20th and 21st centuries. The work of the outstanding poetess is so full of precise and capacious cinematic visions that until a specific time, filmmakers successfully conveyed the unique atmosphere and spirit of drama-extravaganza in screen images-interpretations using plastic screen means.

In 1961, theatre director V. Ivchenko successfully adapted the play Forest Song, but he initially staged it at the M. Zankovetska Ukrainian Drama Theater. While working on the play Forest Song, the director recalled that he was afraid of "transforming a dream into a prop" and thought about translating the work into cinematic language (Pashchenko, 2013). To work on the film, the director invited the young ballerina R. Nedashkivska to play the leading role. The young actress did not yet have the proper acting experience; she was replaced by the graceful ballet plastic of the young dancer, which became key in creating Mavka's artistic image. The ballet choreography in the adaptation of the poetic text for the screen and the exquisite skill of the operator, O. Prokopenko, determined the film's success with viewers and critics. It was a kind of screen hymn to the art of ballet. A. Pashchenko (2013), in the article "Viktor Ivchenko as an Expressor of the Moods of the Thaw and Stagnation, writes that this director is "one of the iconic figures in Ukrainian cinema, the educator of an entire cinematic generation <...> The film versions of the plays Nazar Stodolia and Forest Song belong to a peculiar trend that combined two arts – cinema and theatre – and which was criticized as a combination of their shortcomings: "theatricality" (primarily the conventionality of acting, scenery) on the one hand and the lack of live contact with the viewer –

on the other". The researcher articulates the idea that "in domestic cinema, it flourished due to the lack of creative personnel, so the cinema space was filled with filmed concerts, performances, even circus performances <...> If at first performances with such attributes unsuitable for cinema, such as harsh makeup and theatrical scenery, were transferred to film, then later they began to use the possibilities of cinema: full-scale filming, different shooting points, etc." (Pashchenko, 2013).

Later, animators turned to Lesia Ukrainka's poetic work, and for a good reason, because from Latin – *anima* translates as soul, and in the French language – *animation* means animation. This corresponds to the spirituality of the outstanding poetess's poetry. In 1976, Alla Hrachova, director of the Kyivnaukfilm studio, took up the animated film adaptation. She tells a tragic love story in a short animated film and initially uses the so-called "translation technique". The animated story is powerfully saturated with numerous episodes based on ballet choreography (incendiary dances of forest dwellers, a whirlwind-like dance of Mavka and Perelesnyk, various ballet movements of the main character in different frames and Mavka's passionate dance, romantic and tragic dances of Mavka and Lukash). The director presents an animated film, where he makes the characters' ballet plasticity key, not the play's poetic text. Moreover, it is no coincidence that O. Zabuzhko (2007, p.178), in the monograph "Notre Dame d Ukraine: Ukrainian Woman in the Conflict of Mythologies", indicates that the poetess deliberately uses the bodily code of expressiveness of the characters in her works. The researcher is convinced that "all this is in no way decorative scenes to enliven the action, but the most direct body language of the characters, without reading

the semantics of which, one cannot hope for a full understanding of the text".

Yuriy Illienko, one of the founders of the Ukrainian directorial model of auteur cinema, also turns to the philosophical, poetic work of Lesia Ukrainka. Starting work on the film *Forest Song. Mavka* in 1981, the director manifested his creative tasks in the following way: "In Lesia Ukrainka's drama, I am primarily interested in the moral and philosophical aspect. I want to reveal the reality of the world of an abandoned farm, a forest, and people's lives as if from the inside. The element of people and the element of the forest in our film should be merged; nature will be the environment for the dramatic arguments of the characters' behaviour. That is why it is so important that the director himself be near the camera" (Illienko, 1982, p.4). Working on the film *Forest Song. Mavka*, the director, also shows a special interest in the fundamental categories of being "Life", "Death", and "Immortality". The director tried to convey on the screen the drama of life and spirit, their eternal confrontation, their fatal duel. Henri Bergson (2010, p.146) wrote that "the life of the spirit", "the life of the body" is inaccessible to the intellect. However, if having gathered courage, the intellect touches the living, then here it acts with the cruelty, steadfastness and rudeness of a tool that is not at all adapted for such use".

In the context of our reflections, let us analyze the scene of Uncle Lev's death. The director's solution of the episode is as close as possible to the poet's writing style. An older man feels the approach of death and comes to an equally old tree – an oak. Nature in the image of the Forester helped Uncle Lev: he died with a smile on his face, but at the last minute, he became young. The image of a person who entered the cycle of nature with

dignity works flawlessly for the content of the film work, for the disclosure of the eternal theme of Death – Immortality for philosophy and art. According to the director's plan, Mavka will often save her beloved Lukash from death.

In the film *Forest Song*. Mavka, the director, deliberately violated the canons of drama and transformed the genre of Lesia Ukrainka's literary work into a cinematic parable-drama about transformation, the purification of a person through love, and his path to responsibility for his feelings and actions. In the monograph "Paradigm of Cinema", Y. Illienko wrote that "genre (as a type of artistic work – dramatic, lyrical, epic and all their varieties) is the code that forms the symbolic material and the system of meaning when implementing the script on the stage of the play" (Illienko, 1999, p.179).

In the prologue of the film *Forest Song*. Mavka, the director, also changes the plot of the literary work. He will force the forest beauty to pull the drowning Lukash from the swamp. Mavka will fearlessly rush towards danger on a spring night to save Lukash's weak, vulnerable life. Closer to the finale, the author-director will again unfold the action in the swamp, but already in a snowy one. The role of the material environment here is equivalent to the function performed by the characters. The natural environment dissolves the characters' dramas and experiences them together. O. Musiienko (2009, p.211), in the monograph "Ukrainian Cinema: Texts and Contexts", indicates that "critics have repeatedly reproached the director for the lack of a "dialogue" between nature and the heroes of the film". In the sad winter season, Lukash transforms into a werewolf, wanders around a frozen pond, and atones for his betrayal of Mavka's love. In the finale of the film, the au-

thor-director gives the news of the closeness and inevitability of compassion and mercy; he shows how a flowering branch flies across the entire gloomy landscape – this is the eternally alive Mavka, reborn and rushing to the one she still loves.

In the film *Forest Song*. Mavka, the director-author, demonstrates the moral rebirth of Lukash, who lived and did not pay for his actions with spiritual efforts. Thanks to the sacrifice of the forest princess, he wakes up and sees clearly because the awakening of the soul cannot but give rise to pangs of conscience. The hero dies because he cannot bear the constant guilt before Mavka, whom he betrayed. It seems that the director could have ended this – death is the payment for a sin committed by a person. However, the master introduces a seemingly "random" episode into the film's finale. In fact, he makes it a key, supporting one, designed to carry the philosophical pathos of the work. The Forester appears in the snowy thickets. He mysteriously beckons a boy sitting in a cart. With childlike trust, the little one steps towards the Spirit of the Forest takes Lukash's flute from him, and, not yet skillfully but willingly, tries to play – life continues.

In the film *Forest Song* Mavka, Y. Illienko was sensitive to the sound of each frame and their combination. The director consciously gave the role of a decisive factor to colour plasticity. Sometimes, the feeling of screen reality disappeared, and the characters appeared as picturesque action elements next to nature. At first glance, the author seems to rely entirely on his artistic and aesthetic sense and presents such an improvisation of film colours that does not require any preliminary tests. Hence, the spontaneity of expression and fluidity of the image, which is characteristic of his films, behind which lies the master's re-

fined perfection and sensitivity to the subtlest shades of the colour scale, which become the most important components of the dramatic action (Pohrebniak, 2012, pp.80-81). A. Pashchenko (2010, p.19) in the article "The Mythological Dimension of Illienko's Films" indicates that "the cosmos of Y. Illienko's works is built around the figures of the heroes: their internal state determines the colour scheme, the landscape".

Y. Illienko tried to present the plasticity of the film *Forest Song. Mavka* combines the elements of human existence and the elements of the forest's colours. The director wanted the forest in each frame to be either intensely saturated with colours or sinister and to represent an organic environment for the existence of dramatic arguments for the characters' behaviour. Moreover, this corresponded to his creative style. O. Musiienko (2011, p.211), in the article "Landscape in the figurative system of the cinema of Y. Illienko", writes that, as in the poetic play by Lesia Ukrainka, "four seasons pass on the screen. These are the seasons of human life – bright, hopeful youth, the exuberant flowering of mature feelings, their sad autumn fading and the fierce cold of winter, which nevertheless carries the promise of revival and renewal". However, we note that the author-director's immersion in the development of the characters of the aforementioned film did not allow the colour to gain the power of polyphonic sound to become a stimulus, a catalyst for audience interest. It is a pity, but the director "did not optimally synchronise the colour and semantic solution for the visual and semantic culture of the film. The deeply philosophical content of the work artificially and, contrary to the filmmaker's efforts, separately dominates over its external form" (Pogrebnyak, 2012, p. 81).

In the film *Forest Song. Mavka*, the characters do not perform ballet movements or dance, but they are immersed by the director-author and the cameraman in ballet-choreographic compositions performed by the camera. Once, Polish film theorist Janusz Gazda (1980, p.131) noted the filigree camera work of Yuri Illienko in the film "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors": "The camera dances at a crazy pace, falls from a tree, flies through the forest thickets, bleeds together with the hero, penetrates the mist, is a pendulum, a dancer, a spinning top that spins without memory. Moreover, sometimes the camera suddenly freezes – always in a pretentiously composed frame, to allow the viewer to think in the beautiful landscape, decorated with a village fence, the interior of a Hutsul hut or inn". The master gives the camera the same "crazy" pace of dance technology in the film *Forest Song. Mavka*.

Unfortunately, most experts who wrote about the film believed that the creative declarations of the director-author were not implemented by him properly. In particular, L. Briukhovetska (2006, p.51), in the article "Directing by Yuri Illienko", wrote that the film *Forest Song. Mavka* became an example of a lack of contact with the literary source: Illienko was closer to the epic, not the lyrics. In the end, it was the director's feeling that changed – the image and the plasticity of his "Forest Song" were a shadow of "The Evening Before Ivan Kupala", "The White Bird with a Black Sign".

In the 21st century, Ukrainian feature film and animation directors are addressing the poet's poetic play *Forest Song*. Thus, in 2020, viewers were treated to an unexpected reading of Lesia Ukrainka's famous work in Olesia Shliakhtych's ballet film "Forest Song" (directed by Volodymyr Tykhyi). The new key to interpreting the neo-romantic ide-

al of the poetic play "Forest Song" was "not music (Lukash's flute), but dance, passionate and energetic" (Drozdovskyi, 2020). It is worth noting that "the directors combined three locations: recordings of the performance, filming of rehearsals and dances in a real forest. Everything so that the viewer could feel the main characters and completely immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the theatre" (In Kyiv, 2020). It is indicative and highly gratifying that the ballet film (a syncretic and relatively rare genre in the modern screen space) impresses with its incredible "play of bodies, the energy of dancers, who are presented in three locations, the film reflects three dimensions of physical and metaphysical existence: choreography rehearsal, performance in the "black square" of the Opera Theater stage, and reincarnation in the mystical world of the "Volyn primaeval forest" by Lesia Ukrainka" (Drozdovskyi, 2020). In our opinion, this unique ballet film should definitely be presented at international film festivals, where the world art community will undoubtedly appreciate it.

In 2023, the animated film *Mavka. Forest Song* will finally be released on the world screen (Animatsiynyi film, 2023). The animators tried to create a high-tech feature film that would find its fans both in Ukraine and abroad. They sought to appear in the world's leading film markets and obtain the right to wide international distribution, and they succeeded. After all, despite the problematic war conditions, the Animagrad studio (FILM.UA Group) continued to work on the cartoon. While working on the screen project, the participants recorded a video message for the world community "with personal stories about where and under what conditions the war caught them and how they were able to return to creating cartoons" (Po-

pry viinu, "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2022). It is important to add that in the difficult conditions of wartime hardship, the film project *Mavka. Forest Song* was a priority in the distribution package of FILM.UA Group. The information that "since the beginning of work on the project, the rights to show the animated film have been purchased by distributors in more than 20 countries in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa" is extremely valuable, and in addition, the team of filmmakers is currently "actively negotiating the sale of rights to other territories, seeking to cover the markets of the USA and China, as well as conclude agreements with the largest streaming platforms so that "Mavka" would be known all over the world" (Popry viinu, "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2022).

One of the film's producers, I. Kostyuk indicated in an interview that in 2023, the project *Mavka. Forest Song* became "the most successful film in the history of independent Ukraine; it collected about 150 million hryvnias at the national box office. The cartoon was released in 148 countries alongside Hollywood films, and almost four million viewers saw it abroad" (Multifilm "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2024). The producer added that it is impossible to overestimate the contribution of this cartoon to the process of exporting Ukrainian culture abroad. We brought our unique heroine from our mythology, from our literature to 148 countries <...> All these countries saw our cultural heritage" (Multifilm "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2024).

Let us recall that the idea of producing such an animated film based on the famous drama extravaganza (in which, in addition to the characters created by Lesia Ukrainka, the authors introduce other mythological heroes) arose among the producers (I. Kostyuk, A. Yeliseeva, E. Olesov) back in 2014. However, only

at the end of 2020 did the project win the ninth competition for financial support from the State Agency of Ukraine for Cinema of Ukraine and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Animation film, 2023). According to the leading animation publication "Animation Magazine", the project was presented at the most significant animation forum in Europe, Cartoon Movie, in which Ukrainian filmmakers were involved for the first time and received several positive reviews and suggestions. In addition, the main character of the animated film Mavka graced the March cover of this publication (the official partner of the event), which was widely distributed at the forum, particularly in Bordeaux, France. It is gratifying to note that this approach was part of a "thought-out campaign that provided the team of Ukrainian filmmakers with an effective pitch and impetus for project development" (Ideiu multfilmu "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2015) because the project was presented at the pitching within the framework of the Kyiv Media Week media forum (Ukrainskyi multfilm vrazyv, 2017).

Let us recall that while the work on the animation project was ongoing (and primarily in close cooperation with the ballet dancers), the filmmakers constantly reported to the future audience that "real Ukrainian nature reserves became the prototypes of the main locations of the cartoon: the village of Vylkove, the Tunnel of Love in Klevan, the Butsky Canyon and the Carpathians" (Ideiu multfilmu "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2015). The production studio "Animagrad (FILM.UA Group)" presented a backstage video from the filming of the animated film "Mavka. Forest Song", which combined the modern and the eternal, the Slavic and the universal, a piercing love story and humour, action and fantasy (Ideiu multfilmu "Mavka.

Lisova pisnia", 2015) with the participation of the prima ballerina of the National Opera, People's Artist of Ukraine Kateryna Kukhar. After all, it is known that "Kateryna Kukhar performs the role of Mavka in the production of the classical ballet "Forest Song" on the stage of the National Opera of Ukraine, so the image of the forest nymph has long been familiar to her" (Komanda multfilmu, 2021). It is not surprising that it was this "famous dancer who added grace to the main character of the cartoon," transferring "her plasticity, ballet gait, facial expressions and gestures" to the animated Mavka (Ideiu multfilmu "Mavka. Lisova pisnia", 2015). Let us recall that "they worked so conscientiously on the character of Mavka that they created an unprecedented creative collaboration around her for animation. Three Ukrainian artists joined the incarnation of Berehynia Lis on the screen. Actress Natalka Denysenko voiced the main character, singer Khrystyna Soloviy, and sang in two official film soundtracks. Prima ballerina of the National Opera and People's Artist of Ukraine, Kateryna Kukhar, endowed Mavka with movements and plasticity (Animated Film, 2023).

In one of the interviews, Kateryna Kukhar said that she loves Lesia Ukrainka's drama-extravaganza, which is a diamond of the national code. The ballerina said that during the filming of the video references, she had to combine three images, the first of which was Mavka, disembodied, balletic, with a special grace (because she is the soul of the forest, something completely elusive, such that you can "see" only in your imagination). In the second image, a convinced dancer, Mavka, is more alive and spiritualized and should be endowed with a human essence. In the end, the third image of Mavka, the performer, was supposed to

play as a dramatic actress, organically presenting facial expressions and gestures. The dancer noted that emotions are usually exaggerated in ballet performances, so the audience notices them even on the third tier. When the camera is very close, the performer has to find a fine line between clearly expressed emotion and naturalness (Kateryna Kukhar, 2019).

We would like to point out that the ballerina, invited by the filmmakers to the set, carefully "recreated Mavka's movements and emotions required by the cartoon script, which the project's animators later reconstructed in a "3D model of the main character." It is noteworthy that the aforementioned project was truly the first "case in the history of Ukrainian animation when a professional ballet dancer participated in the work on the image of a cartoon character" (Komanda multfilmu, 2021). Another producer of the film *Mavka*. Forest Song Anna Yeliseeva believes that "the bright collaboration between the creative team of "Mavka" and Kateryna Kukhar (2019) is a unique example of the joint work of two similar branches of art, which, surprisingly, very rarely launch partnership projects. Moreover, the fact that the ballet *Mavka* has turned into an animated one adds to the cartoon the real charm of refined ballet plasticity. It turns the ballet into an incredible creative manifestation of *Mavka's Universe* in our real world".

The premiere in 2025 of the ballet performance "Lesia" by Artem Shoshin once again proves the importance of dance in the life and work of Lesia Ukrainka, where choreographic episodes "are in no way decorative scenes to enliven the action, but the most direct body language of the characters, without reading the semantics of which, one cannot hope for a full understanding of the text" (Zabuzhko, 2007, p.178).

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It is no coincidence that using Franz Schubert's Fourth and Eighth Symphonies (perhaps his most emotional works), choreographer Artem Shoshyn managed to subtly convey the various emotions and feelings of the main character, Lesia Ukrainka, and in the language of neoclassical ballet and music, tell about "significant events of her fate and creativity" (Holynska, 2025). Let us recall that Lesia Ukrainka was once fascinated by the music of this Austrian composer. The production designer installed three large mirror screens on the stage, which reflected real and imaginary life, real heroes and fictional symbolic characters, particularly *Mavka*, *Rusalka*, and *Death* (performed by the soloist of the National Opera Ilya Morozov). These characters reflect the close relationship between the poetess's life and work. O. Golynska (2025), in the article "The premiere of the ballet-biography "Lesia" by Art Ballet Company took place in Kyiv", indicates that in the exquisite ballet performance "the main role of Lesia (Larysa Kosach) was stunningly performed by Natalia Matsak, prima ballerina of the National Opera of Ukraine <...> It should be noted that the emotional-romantic duet of Lesia – Serhiy (Nataliya Matsak – Serhiy Kryvokon) is the decoration of the ballet. However, the performance, full of tenderness and hope, gradually displays

the heroine's bitter experience. This loss <...> The birth of the poem "Obsessed". A. Shoshyn said in one of his interviews that "ballet is the perfect way to tell this story because the language of dance can convey absolutely everything: emotions, passions, the dynamics of life" (Kachkovska, 2025). The choreographer is convinced that the language of dance is the most emotional of all artistic languages. The choreographer also points out that through the beauty of movement, music and stage art, ballet dancers can reveal the outstanding figure of Lesia Ukrainko in a new way (Kachkovska, 2025). Such considerations of the ballet master confirm the opinion of O. Zabu-zhko (2007, p.178) that "dance in Lesia Ukrainka is always symbolic, in her discourse it plays the same role as gesture – signum in knightly medieval culture – it is just as "complementary" to the word (the word itself is not enough!) and just as eloquently points to "ritualised corporeality", or rather to the generic cultural belonging of the dancing body".

Conclusions

The article outlines the features of the art of directing as a universal and multi-vector variety of artistic and aesthetic activity, and this is demonstrated by the researcher using the example of the work of such directors as V. Lapoknysh, V. Ivchenko, A. Hrachova, Yu. Illienko, O. Shlyakhtych, O. Ruban, V. Tykhyi, A. Shoshyn. The researcher clarified the mutual influence and mutual enrichment of stage, musical, choreographic, screen arts and literature in the use of visual and expressive means, in particular, the use in screen directing of a palette of stage art techniques (facial expression; character plasticity; direct appeals of heroes to

the viewer; a hypothetical "fourth" wall between the audience and performers; frontal mise-en-scene; in-frame editing to create coherent chronologically consecutive episodes).

It is proven that the adaptation of literary works on the screen using ballet art is currently reaching a new level in Ukraine, touching not only on the artistic and aesthetic principles of creating a cultural product but also on the business aspects of modern creative industries. Proof of this is the success of the distribution of the full-length animated film *Mavka in Ukraine* and abroad. *Forest Song*, directed by O. Ruban. It is shown that this success was facilitated by a broad promotional campaign of the project, built in accordance with the interaction set up by the producers with such influential participants in the animation market as The Walt Disney Company (Germany, Switzerland and Austria), the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, CANAL +, TF1 International, Super RTL). It is argued that choreographer "Kateryna Kukhar is a symbol of modern Ukrainian ballet, a star of the National Opera participated in the filming of a social art video dedicated to the presentation of the "Mavchyn Oberig" pendant, the director and author of the idea of which was the famous Ukrainian designer Olga Navrotska. Moreover, this video was a successful start to the cooperation between the ballerina and *Mavka* as a brand". All this convincingly proves the undeniable fact of the organicity and urgent need to use ballet tools in screen directing and once again testifies to the limitless possibilities for developing screen aesthetics through the subtle interaction of literature, music, stage, screen, and choreographic art.

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ЖИТТЯ І ТВОРЧІСТЬ ЛЕСІ УКРАЇНКИ КРІЗЬ ПРИЗМУ ХОРЕОГРАФІЧНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА: ЕКРАННО-СЦЕНІЧНИЙ ДИСКУРС

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Анотація

Мета дослідження – показати тісні зв'язки між літературними творами Лесі Українки та хореографічним, музичним, сценічним й аудіовізуальним мистецтвом, окреслити режисерські засоби адаптації віршованих текстів засобами екранного, музичного, сценічного, хореографічного мистецтва. **Методологія дослідження.** В статті було використано загальнонаукові методи (індукція, дедукція, комплексний мистецтвознавчий аналіз, синтез), що дало можливість різнобічно вивчити історико-культурне підґрунтя досліджуваної проблеми, а також застосовано методи систематизації та узагальнення – для аргументації самобутності феномену хореографії в контексті сценічного, музичного, екранного мистецтва. **Наукова новизна** полягає у з'ясуванні специфіки режисерської діяльності через дослідження особливостей екранізації літературних творів Лесі Українки з використанням засобів хореографічного мистецтва. **Висновки.** Обґрунтовано, що використання режисерами та хореографами виражальних засобів, які забезпечують хронологію творення образу (довгі кадри, внутрішньокадровий монтаж, акустичні та світлотіньові ефекти), є свідченням високого ступеня майстерності в екранному, сценічному, хореографічному мистецтві. Доведено, що екранна творчість режисерів сприяє широкій популяризації балетного, сценічного, музичного мистецтва.

Ключові слова: екранні мистецтва; сценічна культура; режисер; хореографія; танець; балет; музичне мистецтво

