VI International Forum for Doctoral Candidates in East European Art History, Berlin, 3rd May 2019, organized by the Chair of East European Art History, Humboldt University Berlin

Luidmila Arlanova¹, Polikarp Kolesov², Daria Muller Velasquez³

Art and Design School, National Research University Higher School of Economics

Suspiria: Physical Stress and Style of Dancing Witches

Abstract. — The horror film genre has been evoking fear since the end of the 19th century. According to Glenn Walters (2004) study in the Journal of Media Psychology, three main factors make horror movies attractive: tension, materiality and unrealism. In the film Suspiria (2018), which is a remake of the classic horror film directed by Dario Argento (1977), these elements are revealed through the prism of the art-house movies in a special way. The new Suspiria tells about grim, rainy and unsettled Berlin circa 1977, the same year Dario's original Suspiria was released.

The current research is divided into three sections: Mechanisms of formation of fear through the body; Costumes and Set-Design and Dance and Ritual.

The first section of the study tells about the mechanisms of the formation of fear through the body.

By analyzing the ideology of horror and how it was historically changed in accordance with contemporary cultural problems, such as a sexual differences, nuclear war and mass destruction,

the study sheds a light on specific fears, exploited by specific horror films, that give the audience sharp, but controlled sensations, and thus offer liberation, a catharsis of our collective and individual fears. The approach to the body as a grotesque (according to M. Bakhtin) is implemented in the research, where one of the most important aspects is the permanent violation of boundaries.

The second section of the study is devoted to costumes and set-design. Italian designer Giulia Piersanti was responsible for the costume design on Suspiria. Inspired by the works of Louise

¹ *Luidmila Arlanova*, PhD student, Art and Design School, National Research University Higher School of Economics; <u>larlanova@hse.ru</u>

Approved topic of thesis: Influence of the new physical norm on the typology and style of modern jewelry ² *Polikarp Kolesov*, PhD student, Art and Design School, National Research University Higher School of Economics; <u>pkolesov@hse.ru</u>

Approved topic of thesis: The Anthropology of Contemporary Art: Rites of North nations and their elements in modern performing arts of non-tribal societies

³ Daria Muller Velasquez, PhD student, Art and Design School, National Research University Higher School of Economics; <u>dmuller@hse.ru</u>

Approved topic of thesis: "Made in Italy" phenomenon in Italian design and constructions of national identity

Bourgeois, she developed special prints with unique ornaments: from a distance, the ornaments look like flowers, but while you observe them up close, the drawings appear in the form of arms, legs, breasts and vaginas. The costume designer took her inspiration from Sibylle, a popular fashion and culture magazine in the GDR, or West German fashion and culture magazine which many people called a socialist version of Vogue. Almost every piece in Suspiria was custom-made, with shoes designed by Francesco Russo and Sergio Rossi, and much of the printed fabric were created on a factory that works with Italian famous brand Prada. The choice of brands is analyzed in this section, a frame analysis with the stylistics of the original film by Dario Argento is conducted, and the influence of Made in Italy megabrand on contemporary cinema is explained.

The third section of the study is focused on contemporary dance. The language of movements, with which fear is shown and formed in a picture, plays a special role in building communication between witch heroines. The research reveals the hidden implications of the picture to the masters and pioneers of contemporary dance. While recognizing the valuable contributions of key figures such as Martha Graham, Mary Wigman and Pina Bausch, the work also emphasizes the anthropological connection of modern dance with ritual practices. Echoes of each of these choreographers are seen in the image of Madame Blank, the protagonist of the Dance Academy Helena Marcos, performed by Tilda Swinton. The study gives an explanation of the relatedness of the witch theme of the film with the radical dance artists of the 20th century; it analyzes the work of "Volk" (Louvre, 2013). Finally, the plausible results demonstrate why dance could be considered as a multi-faceted art form, combining aesthetic categories and physical and emotional sufferings, and why it becomes an instrument of communication, intimidation and manifestation of power inside and outside this picture. Moreover, the research portrays the connection between ritual practices and modern dance and shows how the epicenter of the artistic expressions during the conquest of life stages is formed in this connection as the mechanism of overcoming fear.