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Diaghilev's Ballets Russes: Dance Meets Art

1/6/2015

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1. Entrance to Málaga's old tobacco factory 2. **Start of Spring** by Ivan Yendogurov, 1885 3. Traditional Russian icon 4. Entrance to the Colección del Museo Ruso

Quadruple whammy. Scored 3 of the 8 Creative Habits with a visit to Málaga's new Russian Museum.

Málaga is really becoming the **new southern art capital** and the Russian Museum's first exhibition - **Russian Art: From Icons to the 20th Century** has made it stand out even more on the map. Not to mention that there was also an exhibition of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes showing alongside!

If you've been reading my blog for a while, you'll know that the early 20th century art scene is *my thing*. Especially the incredible collaboration and **cross-fertilisation** between different creative disciplines.

So I was one happy bunny when I got to Colección del Museo Ruso (housed in Málaga's beautiful old tobacco factory) and discovered that it was holding a second concurrent exhibition: The Era of Diaghilev.

Diaghilev - cross-pollination of ideas

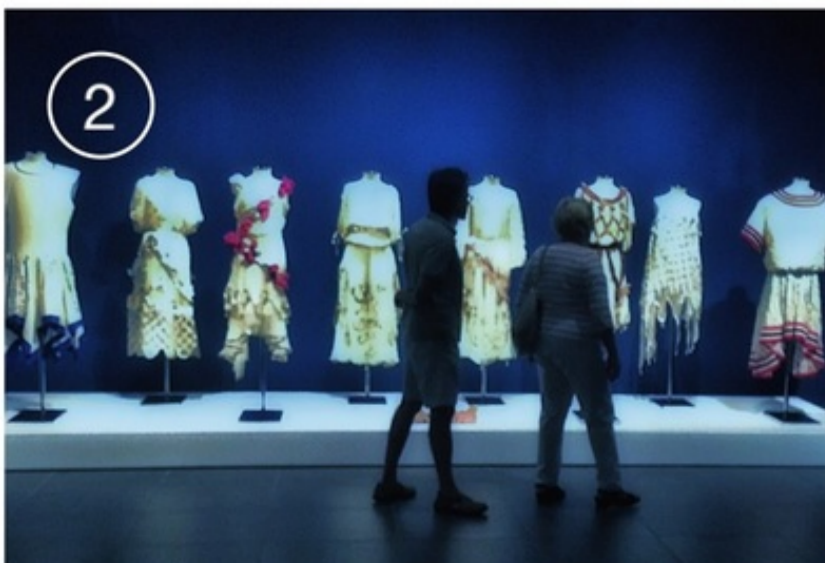
Diaghilev was Mr Cross-fertilisation. His dance company, the Ballets Russes, (which he founded in Paris in 1909) epitomises the spirit of collaboration in the early 20th century art world.

During its existence, Ballets Russes showcased more than 130 original costumes, set designs, paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, photographs, and posters.

Diaghilev commissioned scores from composers of the ilk of Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Erik Satie.

He featured the most innovative dancers: Fokine, Nijinsky, Massine, Nijinska, and Balanchine. Dancers that dramatically expanded the vocabulary of movement.

He even got Jean Cocteau to write the scenes.



1. **Supper** by León Bakst, 1902
2. Ballets Russes costumes on display in the Diaghilev exhibition
3. **White Frost** by Natalia Goncharova, 1910-11
4. Costume design by León Bakst for the Ballets Russes

Futurism, Cubism and Surrealism on the Ballet Stage.

Diaghilev enlisted the most avant-garde artists of his time to create sets and costumes for his productions. The list of his set designers reads like a Who's Who of early 20th century art: Benois, Bakst (who took **Chagall** with him to Paris to work on the sets), **Miró**, **Matisse**, Picasso, Goncharova, de Chirico, Derain, Delaunay, **Dalí**. Artists who brought Futurism, Cubism and Surrealism to the ballet stage.

The result? Dynamic, breathtaking set designs accompanied by bold, imaginative costumes. And a public that was shocked and thrilled in equal measure.

By cross-pollinating Russian traditions with avant-garde Western art, Diaghilev fostered a musical, choreographic and visual revolution that changed ballet - and maybe, art, forever.



1. Natalia Goncharova's squid costume for production of Sadko
2. Sets and Costumes by Picasso for Jean Cocteau's The Parade
3. De Chirico's costume designs and stage sets for Diaghilev's **Le Bal**, 1929
4. Costume by Matisse

Brush up on *your* Creative Habits

Wondering which three of the 8 Creative Habits I put into action with this trip? The answer is:

5. Observe
6. Reflect and Evaluate
8. Engage with the Art World.

Start engaging with yours!

Before you go!