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Sport in the Lives of the Artists

Raluca MINEA[1]*

Abstract

This paper aims to highlight the connection between sport and art. Sport has been an inspiration for artists in all periods of history, at first in a contemplative manner, and then in the context of the evolution of the new artistic fields, both in visual arts and in theatre and dance. The connection with sport field has developed since the artist got more and more involved in specific activities, and moreover, has become a necessity to compensate the abilities acquired through static actions. More than that, artists in general are prone to injuries of the spine due to the bad postures held for long periods of time during work.

Keywords: sport, artist, history, art, perception.

1. Introduction

The present study highlights the connection of sports with art from numerous perspectives: sport as a source of inspiration for artists, the involvement of sport in artistic activities and vice versa, the involvement of the artist in sports activities, the latter aspect representing a necessity in the life of the artists. For the contemporary artist, with the evolution of new artistic branches, both in the visual arts and in theatre and dance, the link with sport has evolved in terms of his involvement in specific activities, and, moreover, it has become a necessity, as shown by a study mentioned in the following lines, comprising statistics achieved after questioning groups of students belonging to the Faculty of Music, Visual Arts and Design and

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Theatre of the "George Enescu" National University of Arts regarding the link between their field of activity and sport.

2. Theoretical Background

Although art and sports are two distinct fields, one can write a lot about the limits and interconnections between them. A history of sport was elaborated by G. Neţa and Flavia Rusu in 1998 [1] and many writings followed. On the role of sport in the education and training of the artists, Ana Cristina Leşe carried out several documented studies [2]. There are no studies to highlight the link between art and sport other than Valentina Ciomag's study, Physical Exercise through Dance and Cristina Lese's works, which follows this link from several perspectives.

3. Argument of the paper

The present study aims to bring to light a new approach regarding the interferences between the two areas of universal culture, trying to highlight the role and benefits that sport can bring to the life of artists, and vice versa, art in the world of sports. Artists in general are prone to injuries of the spine due to the bad postures held for long periods of time during work. Both incorrect postures but also the correct ones held over long periods of time will cause severe muscle contractions with negative consequences on the normal functionality of the organism.

4. The links between sport and art

4.1. The sport - source of inspiration for the artists

The sport has been a source of inspiration for the artists since ancient times to the present. People were represented in cave paintings in various activities based on sport: running, dancing or spear throwing. The material evidences that attest the presence and the importance of sporting activities in that period exist, but are few. Several studies came to us, carried out by anthropologists, sociologists and ethnographers, based on the data provided by archaeology and anthropology.

In the Antiquity, there were numerous sculptures and paintings on ceramic pottery representing athletes, either engaged in competitions or preparing for them, concentrating on the effort. Greeks practiced sport nude, thus offering artists the opportunity to study the human body in full motion.

The structure and the proportions of the human body were studied by the artists in an intuitive way at first, then resumed in the Renaissance in an analytical way, with the development of the first studies of anatomy [3]. The concepts of Antiquity were taken again into consideration regarding which the human personality was cultivated in all its physical, spiritual and moral aspects. The Renaissance artists created extensive works with characters in different positions, previously studied in several sketches. With the Renaissance, physical education was brought back into the preoccupations of the cultivated man, subsequently introduced as a subject in a school program at the end of the eighteenth century [4].

4.2. The involvement of sport in the artistic activities

For the contemporary artist, in the context of the evolution of new artistic fields, both in arts and in theatre and dance, the connection with sport has evolved in terms of its involvement in specific activities. Sport was at the base of the theatrical training, to help the actor to assimilate the role and to communicate it physically. The dance took different forms, which are defined by body language. There are many types such as: classical dance, modern dance, contemporary dance, modern jazz dance, folk dance, sportive dance, theme dance, character dance, all these styles involving physical exercise carried out consistently. Practicing dance has a great influence on the harmonious development of both the body and mind [5]. There are also other sporting disciplines with more pronounced artistic feature that mainly aim at the education of body expressiveness employing artistic means of communication through expression (rhythmic and gymnastics and sports, aerobics, artistic skating, artistic swimming, etc.). The body technique, used in rendering the body aesthetics specific to each disciplines, is extremely varied and complex.

4.3. The sport - a necessity in the life of the artists

In her study [6], Ana Cristina Lese -Lecturer Ph. D. at the Faculty of Visual Arts and Design at UAGE Iasi- wonders why is physical exercise necessary in an art student's daily program, and she finds answers in the influence of the physical exercises on improving the deficiencies of the column, psychophysical stimulation, the acquisition of acrobatic elements by students in acting, the opportunity for group knowledge and manifestation.

As evidenced by a study conducted by Ana Cristina Leşe, including statistics obtained from interviewing several groups of students belonging to the Faculty of Music, Visual Arts and Design and Theatre at the National University of Arts "George Enescu", regarding the link between their

activity and sports, it can be stated that physical exercise has become a necessity for the artists [7]. Sport contributes to increase the effort resistance of the artists, but also helps to correct physical postures, maintained for hours, day after day, in specific work positions, which lead to the installation of some physical deficiencies with physiological implications.

The action undertaken by her was done in a workshop, having as main goal informing the students of the spine deviations that can appear as a result of bad postures of the body for long periods of time. Another priority was to showcase a series of corrective and preventative physical exercises related to some conditions of the vertebral column.

The results of the tests shows us that a large number of young people as well as their parents did not know of the existence of a deviation of the vertebral column, its cause or for how long it has been a problem. Also, there has been recorded a high number of students (9 of 60 students that have been tested) with problems of static balance (score 0). The highest number of spine disorders were registered at III year students (11 cases out of 60) indicating the higher number of hours spend on professional practice in a position that was deficient [8].

5. Conclusions

From sport as a source of inspiration for art and artists to the role of sport in the life of artists and in their creations there are no distances but rather bridges created by the diversity of the artistic fields. In this context, the sport comes to the artist's support not only as a source of inspiration, but also as a mean to maintaining a good health. The concerns for the health of the artists must be made public through reports from the society and education system through the dissemination of information and practical methods.

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