



# **Ballet Klauss Vianna in Belo Horizonte (1958–1962): paths of a modernity for the Brazilian ballet**

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**ABSTRACT – The Ballet Klauss Vianna in Belo Horizonte (1958-1962): paths of a modernity to the Brazilian ballet** – The article seeks to discuss four choreographic creations by Klauss Vianna, between the years 1958 and 1962, when elaborating his own modern aesthetic for Brazilian ballet. Methodologically, images from 4 covers of programs by Ballet Klauss Vianna (BKV), photographs from 4 works that were part of these programs, oral testimonies, articles and journalistic criticism of the time, writings by Vianna, authors linked to Nouvelle Histoire, to Art criticism, among others, relating them. It is intended to highlight the potential of images as a relevant methodological tool for a possible understanding of the choreographic productions of Klauss Vianna in the dance historiography in Brazil.

Keywords: **Image. Dance. Historiography. Modern. Visual Arts. Klauss Vianna.**

**RÉSUMÉ – Le Ballet Klauss Vianna à Belo Horizonte (1958-1962): les chemins de la modernité pour le ballet brésilien** – L'article traite de quatre créations chorégraphiques de Klauss Vianna, entre les années 1958 et 1962, lors de l'élaboration de sa propre esthétique moderne pour le ballet brésilien. Méthodologiquement, images de quatre couvertures de programmes du Ballet Klauss Vianna (BKV), photographies de quatre œuvres qui faisaient partie de ces programmes, déclarations orales, articles et critiques journalistiques de l'époque, écrits de Vianna, auteurs liés à la Nouvelle Histoire, à la critique de l'Art, entre autres, les relatant. Il vise à mettre en évidence le potentiel des images en tant qu'outil méthodologique pertinent pour une éventuelle compréhension des productions chorégraphiques de Klauss Vianna dans l'historiographie de la danse au Brésil.

Mots-dés: **Image. Danse. Historiographie. Moderne. Arts Visuels. Klauss Vianna.**

**RESUMO – O Ballet Klauss Vianna em Belo Horizonte (1958-1962): caminhos de uma modernidade para o balé brasileiro** – O artigo discute quatro criações coreográficas de Klauss Vianna, entre os anos de 1958 e 1962, ao elaborar uma estética própria, moderna, para o balé brasileiro. Metodologicamente são analisadas as imagens de quatro capas de programas do Ballet Klauss Vianna (BKV), fotografias de quatro obras que integraram esses programas, depoimentos orais, matérias e crítica jornalística da época, escritos de Vianna, autores ligados à *Nouvelle Histoire*, à crítica de Arte, entre outros, relacionando-os. Pretende-se destacar o potencial das imagens como ferramenta metodológica relevante para uma possível compreensão das produções coreográficas de Klauss Vianna na historiografia da dança no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: **Imagem. Dança. Historiografia. Moderno. Artes Visuais. Klauss Vianna.**

## Preliminary Considerations

The several technological resources that we can rely on today have considerably expanded our possibilities of accessing information. Regarding the centralizing aspect of this text – the use of images as a tool to think about a possible historiography –, we can mention the films, videos, photos, paintings, drawings, engravings and virtual books that, transmitted over the internet on platforms and networks, have made many of these image contents accessible through devices such as computers and smartphones, among others.

Traditionally, dance is an art that is prominent for its presence materialized by the body of the performer acting in front of someone who observes them. That said, there is the question that, for many centuries, has concerned creators and researchers, which is the perpetuation of dance creations, their maintenance, recording and transmission, whether in the present or for a future that updates itself without pauses. Such questions, in turn, bring us closer to the efforts of several researchers concerned with thinking about a historiography for dance that also seeks to use these resources. Let us see, then.

Research in History underwent an important transformation from the early twentieth century, led by what came to be known as *Nouvelle Histoire*<sup>1</sup> (New History), through interdisciplinary partnerships between History and Social Sciences, resulting in researchers multiplying their research objects and the methods involved in them, thus generating a distinct historiographic production. Among these new research objects, images have increasingly come to be used by historians as a vestige of the past and, therefore, as a possible source for historical research. Considered in their various categories (static and moving images), their documental specificities are recognized so they can be treated as such, and not as a textual narrative, since, for many years, the value of written text was hegemonic in researches in History, as pointed out by Knauss (2008, p. 152):

The evidential character of historical research defined the notion of document as synonymous with historical source, thus demarcating its universe to the hegemony of written and official sources. This model was validated by the

scientific concept of document and translated the affirmation of the objectivity of knowledge as a given. It is in this sense that images were disregarded. In general, the possibility of using them as evidence did not favor their valuing by historiography, which restricted the use of images to situations in which written sources were not sufficient, as in the case of the study of Antiquity.

The analyses we make when studying the visual discourses of images can reveal the codes and rules produced within a certain culture. Accordingly, images can provide us with a means of accessing some ways of understanding and interpreting how a given culture sees the world, by means of the subjects that are part of it and the structures and interrelations in which they are involved (Barbosa; Cunha, 2006). Access to images, in addition to their objective aspects, the materiality of the source itself enables us to connect with subjective, symbolic, imaginary, and mentality elements in general. Furthermore, as emphasized by Le Goff (2003, p. 531), quoting Samaran: “The word ‘document’ must be taken in the broadest sense, written document, illustrated, transmitted by sound, *image*, or in any other way” [emphasis added].

On the other hand, the utilization of new genres of documentary sources does not forgo the need for their critique and verification, seeking to understand them according to the survey and evaluation of the contingencies of their construction making them a mirror of their time and place.

The contemporary critique of the scientific conception of history has also led to the critique of the corresponding conception of historical document, which is founded on the perspective that the records of the past that reach the present day are not innocent. The affirmation of the universe of the study of the history of representations, valued by studies of the history of the imaginary, historical anthropology and cultural history, imposed the definitive revision of the definition of document and the revaluation of images as sources of social and cultural representations. Accordingly, contemporary historiography, by overcoming the evidential notion of history, promoted a re-encounter with the study of images (Knauss, 2008, p. 153).

Thus, the work of a dance historian can advance *pari passu* with the procedures of historical research, building relationships, considering different perspectives and crossing of sources, drawing conclusions that can approach

or distance themselves from a given sense. This is consistent with the understanding of Pesavento (2003, p.31), that “The historian is the one who, based on traces left by the past, will research to discover how that would have happened, a process that involves interrelating, gathering, selecting, choosing, excluding.”

However, dance images will always be fragments of what was once staged, but, even so, they can constitute sources in the search for an update on the past. This is not a past as it really was, but something left over from it providing possibilities for its registration and analysis, seeking to build understandings about the creations and their authors, the milieu of their conception and their various contingencies, as pointed out by Velasco (2006, p. 3), arguing that images are like “[...] true visual certificates of what happened, of the past.”

As pointed out above, among the interdisciplinary partnerships built by historians, the presence of Visual Arts and photography occupy a special place in this dialogue, constituting one of the most powerful sources of resources for the research of images. Whether through works of painting, engraving, watercolors, sculptures, drawings, as well as photographic records, among other representations of dance scenes found in museums, collections, libraries and galleries, images provide us a particular contact with the fleetingness of an art that is registered at the moment. With a different function from that of making eternal what is naturally fleeting, extending its application, Visual Arts have long contributed to dance creations in the form of sets, costumes, props, visual production of playbills and promotional material as shown by the existing records from the Renaissance productions of court ballets,<sup>2</sup> the romantic and academic productions<sup>3</sup> of the 19th century, and the neoclassical creations of Russian Ballets by Serge de Diaghilev<sup>4</sup>, in the early 20th century, also encompassing the modern<sup>5</sup>, post -modern<sup>6</sup> and contemporary<sup>7</sup> dance productions, in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Based on my Master’s research *Dança Moderna e Educação da Sensibilidade: Belo Horizonte (1959 – 1975)* and Doctoral research *Klauss Vianna e o Ensino de Dança: uma Experiência Educativa em Movimento (1948 – 1990)*, in which I addressed, among other aspects, the general theme treated here,

taking as a starting point the observation and comparative analysis of images from 4 covers of Ballet Klauss Vianna (BKV) playbills, one with unknown author and the other 3 created by plastic artist Augusto Degois. We also used photographic images from these playbills showing 4 choreographies, highlighting aspects of them that are considered capable of pointing out aspects of the efforts of Vianna's creations in the construction of a specific, so-called modern aesthetic for Brazilian ballet, in the city of Belo Horizonte, from 1958 to 1962. To expand the analyses, I also use oral records, articles and journalistic criticism of the time, as well as Vianna's writings, pointing to correspondences between the images and information collected from the other cited sources, comparing them.

The construction of this idea of modernity is carried out by a whole set of factors that seek inspiration in modernist Brazilian literature, in the use of sound research, in the relations established with the group of intellectuals, writers, filmmakers and artists who were part of the so-called *Complemento Generation*, and the participation of his wife Angel Vianna (with a background in Plastic Arts), and by the use of matrix language based on classical ballet, which Vianna seeks to renew, advancing in the research for more expressive movements in order to achieve such goals.

### **Visual Arts Join Ballet: Augusto Degois and BKV, dialogues**

Having started his dance studies with dancer and teacher Carlos Leite (1914-1995), in Belo Horizonte, in 1948, Klauss Ribeiro Vianna<sup>8</sup> has always been restless in relation to the didactic procedures and movements he underwent while learning dance, seeking to modernize the language of ballet, bringing it closer to elements of his everyday experience and of his own time. That is how, at the end of 1958, he created his own amateur group, BKV – Ballet Klauss Vianna, having the opportunity to deepen and more effectively carry out his research on both technical and choreographic aspects and to develop the processes that, theoretically, he had been formalizing for some years, to modernize the classical technique as training and its danced expression. Through his work with students at his school and with others at more advanced levels, from Ballet de Minas Gerais – created and directed by Carlos



Leite –, Vianna composes his core of dancers, and, together with his wife and also a dancer, Angel Vianna, establish modern ballet in Belo Horizonte.

Between the foundation of the core in 1958 and its ending in 1962, Vianna carried out a series of important choreographic works, in which he was able to implement his ideas of what he expected for a possible modern-inspired Brazilian ballet, whose innovative characteristics are revealed in many ways, as we will see. Due to the limitations of this publication and of the possibilities of access, and even because of the inexistence – until the time of this research – of other possible sources, I will highlight 4, among Vianna's creations included in the analyzed programs, in which I believe I can recognize where his renewal proposals are most evident, namely: *Cobra Grande*; *Caso do Vestido*; *Arabela, a Donzela e o Mito* and *Marília de Dirceu*,

Attentive to his time, Vianna is part, in Belo Horizonte, of the so-called Complemento Generation, a group of intellectuals, literati, journalists, musicians, theater and dance artists, and filmmakers, whose activities were strengthened in the late 1950s, when, in February 1956, the literary magazine Complemento began to circulate, known as *the magazine of the new generation*, encompassing various artistic expressions that covered, according to film critic Carlos Denis for newspaper Estado de Minas (1956):

[...] poetry, singing, essays, critical notes, cinema, theater, music and plastic arts within the limited possibilities of the little magazine [...] it is valid as manifestations of our young people, awakening to intellectual life and wishing to express their literary and artistic manifestations according to the taste of each component [...].<sup>9</sup>

In this context, the Visual Arts, in Belo Horizonte<sup>10</sup>, had already for a long time established a dialogue with the innovations present in the so-called modern art, which would come to have an important influence on Vianna's works, mainly through the works of Augusto de Gois and Wilma Martins. Augusto Degois (spelling of his artistic name) – painter, draughtsman, tapestry maker and set designer – was an alumnus from the Guignard School<sup>11</sup>, former pupil of Edith Behring<sup>12</sup> and Guignard<sup>13</sup>, working in the creation of several sets for Vianna's choreographies, a practice he started with João Ceschiatti<sup>14</sup>. He also created illustrations for newspapers and magazines –

*Complemento* among them –, which led him to devise the graphic design of several BKV playbills. Wilma Martins – also one of the *Complemento* Generation artists – stood out in the field of illustration for newspapers and magazines, and in costume design for Klauss’ ballets (Ávila, 1997).

Augusto Degois’ creations for BKV playbills show the search for shared aesthetic elements, which guided Vianna’s research, assimilating other languages that could contribute not only to an update of ballet, but also so this update could somehow reflect a modern Brazilian ballet. According to Alvarenga (2002), Klauss always sought to work in an integrated way with the technical staff of his shows, favoring the similarity of the results of all creation in a fruitful exchange of ideas. Angel Vianna<sup>15</sup> says: “Degois [...] lived in our group [...] he understood a lot [...] not only the creation of the sets, but the integration of the set with the very choreographic work, and of this with the music research.”

Thus, Vianna’s modernity would bring him closer to the Modernist ideology of the Modern Art Week in 1922<sup>16</sup>, which, even while employing foreign influences, seeks their resignification with elements taken from the national culture, valuing our literature, our music and other arts. In addition to also valuing elements present in the popular cultural heritage distributed throughout the national territory, connecting the past with the present, a necessary bridge to modernly transform.

### ***Cobra Grande: regionalism is not necessarily folklore***

From 1959 to 1962, Augusto Degois’ creations for BKV seek a consonance with the modernity intended by Vianna, in sharp contrast to the playbill of the first BKV presentation – still without Degois’ contributions – back in 1958. In the aforementioned playbill (Figure 1) – whose conception as a creative work could not be verified –, it should also be noted the choreographer’s connection with another aesthetic universe, this one closer to his initial training, namely ballet, experienced with his teacher Carlos Leite. On the playbill cover, a simple and sober layout, on a smooth surface in pink tones, consists simply in a frame composed of three very thin juxtaposed lines in black. The two sets of vertical lines, which delineate the longest length of

the image, cross the set of horizontal lines near their ends, overlapping them. This vertical rectangle, whose dimensional pattern follows the principles of the golden ratio<sup>17</sup> of proportionality, encloses the following cursive text: *Apresentação do Ballett Klauss Vianna* [Ballett Klauss Vianna presentation] – it is noted that the word *Ballett* is spelled with two letters *t*. Below the text, a small line, with two lines of the same thickness as the lines on the frame, is under an element of a vegetal nature, two leaf stems that provide an air of lightness and harmony, giving a classic balance to the composition.

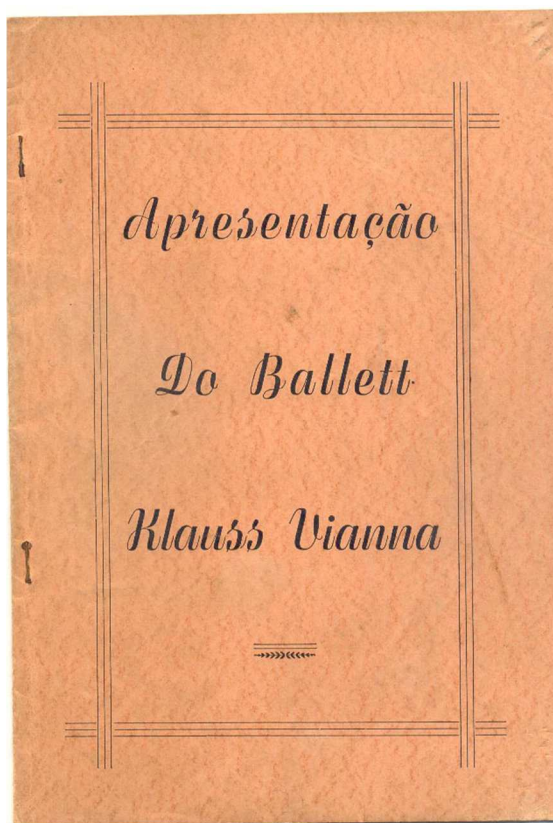


Figure 1 – Playbill of the first presentation of Ballet Klauss Vianna (1958)

Source – Author's collection.

Although the playbill<sup>18</sup> contained 4 choreographies, the highlight will be the revival of *Cobra Grande* (1955), originally created for Ballet of Minas Gerais, when Vianna was part of its cast – honoring Carlos Leite –, later



danced by BKV and also presented by Rio de Janeiro television network TV-Rio, in a Vianna revival for Ballet of Rio de Janeiro, in 1957<sup>19</sup>. In an interview<sup>20</sup>, talking about the fundamental aspects of his choreographic conception, Vianna informs us about the use of the modernist text *Cobra Norato*, by poet Raul Bopp, adapted by Vera Lúcia de Lima Coelho, with music by Lorenzo Fernandez and W. Henrique and costumes by Angel Vianna. Despite the use of an Amazonian legend, there is no adoption of a movement of folklore inspiration, which, according to him, would require another type of research on extraliterary sources and on the origin of folklore gestures, which deviated from the purposes of his work. Concerned with authenticity, he says that employment of this resource could only be successful “[...] after a long and laborious study of the sources of each of the themes and movements of the people’s dances, otherwise it will inevitably lead to a poor imitation with no meaning and no authenticity”<sup>21</sup>. By referring — in his essay *Pela Criação de um Ballet Brasileiro*<sup>22</sup> [For the creation of a Brazilian Ballet] (1952) — to initiatives seeking to create ballets with national elements, such as *Uirapuru* by Villa-Lobos, or even *Yara*, danced by foreign companies, he clarifies that this fact did not usher in a trend, being just an isolated fact, without major repercussions. Accordingly, and clearly acting to establish a legitimacy of the bases that would define — in the field of Brazilian dance — the style that would genuinely represent a national dance, he criticizes the work of other Brazilian dancers — based on his notion of *idea-movement*<sup>23</sup> — who attempted to follow this path. According to Vianna, these works were carried out without the necessary research, because for this to happen,

[...] it takes a lot of effort, study and culture, and, above all, honesty in the performances. As for the ballets by Eros Volúcia, Solano Trindade, Brasileira, etc., they are pure exploitation of the exotic and the burlesque without any more serious orientation, or a conception of dance within what I call the “idea-movement”<sup>24</sup>.

According to him, any renovation would only be accomplished, in fact, if based on an established technique, and this would be the classical technique. Eros Volúcia and other small groups of dancers who try to perform Brazilian dance “[...] have made a mistake by disregarding the classical

technique”<sup>25</sup>; their works do not provide “[...] dramatic or expression resources,” and their technique proves “very poor [...] anti-artistic – hence harmful – resources are used that prevent this genre from achieving a proper formal, refined and artistic development [...]”<sup>26</sup>. According to him, in Brazil, it is believed that “[...] a national ballet is one that has its roots in folklore dances, customs, legends and environments”<sup>27</sup>. Pointing to a different path in his choreographic research, he says that with his ballet he attempts at “[...] a more intelligent solution to the problem”<sup>28</sup>.

The *lundus*, *cateretês*, *frevos*, *maxixes*, *sambas* must be studied in their movements. But not exploited. We must discover the “why” of the movements of popular dances, because that is where the soul and meaning of that dance lie. However, until that is done, while we cannot have the tranquility and unconcern for this enormous study, we must avoid distorting the soul of the people<sup>29</sup>.

Consistently with his perspective of creating a modern ballet that would meet the requirements of a national expression, and, according to him, would represent the “[...] nature of our people and not their pseudo-folkloric exteriorities”<sup>30</sup>, he does not resort to folklore, as it would falsify their reality. Therefore, he says,

In an attempt to discover a Brazilian school, I feel the need for cultured national themes, which leads to forgetting folkloric and popular dances that, although valuable, hinder the vision of many and reduce their field of experience. This is, mainly, an issue of intellectual limitation. I use literature, sometimes, because of the need for the national theme and also because the material is ready-made, easier to feel. What I have to do, then, is to convey what I felt, using this style research I have been conducting<sup>31</sup>.



Figure 2 – Ballet Klaus Vianna, choreography for *Cobra Grande*, Francisco Nunes Theater (1958). Unknown author.

Source – Author's collection

Thus, Angel comments on the performances in Belo Horizonte, in the premiere of the work, in 1955:

It was a totally different ballet from that which was performed by Ballet de Minas Gerais; it was Klaus' first really modern choreography. There were 3 shamans, who were on a higher plane, playing drums; after the shamans, the Virgins entered, in two diagonals, [...] to be chosen by Cobra Grande [Large Snake]. Their movements were very straight, and there was, on Klaus' part, great concern about the quality of the movement that would be used in the choreography. Then, there was the choice of the virgin, which occurred through light; it was something that surprised me a lot, because he put a spotlight that was moving around the whole theater, using the whole space, with everyone following the light, until it hit the virgin [...] It was something, like... magic! [...] The snake chose the virgin, the light was Cobra Grande! It was followed by a ritual for preparation of the virgin, [...] the shamans descended, who danced with her, and, finally, being carried by them, she was thrown into the lake<sup>32</sup>.

I note the fact that, to date, I have not been able to obtain other photographic records of the staging that would provide further information about the design and expressiveness of the movements, which, in the available photo, seem more like a formal pose for a shooting. Thus, in addition to the use of music, by Brazilian authors, and to the theme (the poem *Cobra Norato*), the most representative elements of innovation are in the use of lighting, described in Angel's account, and the propositions announced by Vianna in his interview, seeking to value significances and meanings that are closer – according to him – “[...] to the people's soul,” based on his 1952 text, *Pela Criação de um Ballet Brasileiro* [For the Creation of a Brazilian Ballet]. Also according to Angel<sup>33</sup>, several dancers preferred not to dance the ballet, as it deviated too much from what they normally did. Pointe shoes were not worn and everything was performed with bare feet. Carlos Leite himself was surprised and happy, as it was the result of his pioneering work, which, in development, through his students, sought expansion.

By valuing the content in the creation of ballets, Vianna pursues greater expressiveness in the performance of movements by the dancer, their correct intention in conveying the message intended with the choreography. He forgoes a movement of effect – whether for virtuosity or a search for merely decorative beauty – in favor of the meaning that underlies and guides the objectification of movement, that is, he prioritizes the *idea* that motivates him, as a creation capable of making explicit, for those who see the *message* intended, enabling both emotional and intellectual enjoyment of the work of art by the spectator. Thus, Vianna gradually imposed himself in the Belo Horizonte cultural milieu, breaking with two traditions: that of classical ballet in its conventional European molds and the use of folklore. At the same time, he resorts to the classical technique and to national culture as sources of inspiration to introduce a new tradition, imparting new meaning to them.

### ***Caso do Vestido: a milestone in Brazilian choreographic creation***

In 1959, Augusto Degois joins the technical team of the new staging by BKV<sup>34</sup>, producing his first cover for a work by Vianna. Inspired by a homonymous poem by Minas Gerais poet Carlos Drummond, the *Caso do*

*Vestido* [The dress case] ballet actually had three versions<sup>35</sup>. In the poem, a woman recounts, to her daughters, how her husband left her for another woman, whose dress is hanging behind the door. In the first version (1955), the music by maestro J. Torres followed the choreography, with sets by Vicente de Abreu; in the later version (1959), the sets are designed by Alfredo Muci and the costumes by Ely-s-Ba-ot, the music by a choir that narrated Drummond's poem, with the choreography being danced in the dynamics of the words. The choir, composed of students from the University Theater, was directed by Giustino Marzano; in the definitive version, in 1960, the sets were designed by Augusto Degois, costumes were designed by Wilma Martins, and the choir, composed of students from the Experimental Theater, was no longer on stage, narrating the poem offstage, like an orchestra of voices.

According to Figure 3, there is a clear difference in relation to the first cover analyzed. Over an all white background, the text written in black, whose lines are very elongated vertically, draw purposely irregular letters, somewhat shaky, suggesting almost an improvised scribble that announces, at the bottom left, the object that justifies the creation, *ballet Klauss Vianna*, with the word *ballet* written in lowercase letters. Occupying the entire remaining right half, three quick lines delineate a body, forming a thin and suggestive sketch, in which arms, a lateral trunk and a lower limb are added to an ellipse – that locates the head region –, which leans to the left, forming a large arc with the whole ensemble, suggesting a subtle dynamics of a dancer in a dance pose. Synthetic and expressive message with sinuous lines. Here, we have a radical break with the figurative representation of the body in academic standards, with the form itself acquiring a more absolute value. It can be said that, given the impasse of the modern artist in valuing form, expressing oneself makes artistic creation very broad, confusing the observer, for, as clarified by Gullar (1997, p. 5), “[...] it is equally to express oneself, if any stroke is cast on the blank canvas; if two strokes are cast, we will have another expression; another work, if three strokes are cast, yet another and so on infinitely”.





Figure 3 – Ballet Klauss Vianna playbill (1959).

Source – Author's collection.

With the constant possibility of new readings for the same artistic object, present in modern art, these few strokes, however, do not fail to have an influence, in terms of their underlying proposal, the observer's imagination, on the physical pattern of the dancer: slender, elongated figure, without fat that is counterproductive for ballet aesthetics (a marked difference, when analyzing modern dance); there are no volumes, only lines, which, parallel to the word *ballet*, lead us to think of it as a reproduction in letters, of the idealized body of the performer. This reveals the major feature of modern artistic languages, which, also according to Gullar (1997, p. 31), “[...] contain, potentially, the capacity to generate new meanings.” It impressed me that the proposed image is very similar to the figures of the characters in the choreography in question, whose costumes basically consist of a tight leotard, flush with the body, without volumes, which seek to highlight the shapes of the bodies that dance and emphasize, in turn, the movement with its intrinsic

value of expressive power, distinguishable only by their colors, although the existing image is in black and white (Figure 4).



Figure 4 – Choreography for *Caso do Vestido* (1959), with Angel Vianna (standing) and Marilene Martins (below).

Photo: Iannini. Author's collection.

According to Vianna<sup>36</sup>, “[...] introspection is the key feeling” of this ballet, containing “[...] mainly closed movements and lines, inwards”<sup>37</sup>. Angel<sup>38</sup>, who danced the role of one of the mothers, recalls the differentiations that characterized the mistress’ movements as straight and with strong thrusts, which took outward a feeling of hers; while the mother’s movements were rounded and inward, suggesting an embrace.

Klauss’ choreographic script closely follows the poem, with plane divisions for understanding the plot. Avoiding a linearity of facts, past and present are mixed, with a duplication of the characters involved in the story, with the exception of the daughters and the father.

In order to understand the solutions I came up with, it is necessary to know the poem. The story is as follows: the mother explains to her daughters the case of the dress that belonged to a former mistress of her husband. One day the mistress came back already exhausted, abandoned and gave the wife that dress. I unfolded the poem into three planes in time: the first real plane, the present, with the mother and daughters; the second, a fictitious plane, a kind of return to the past or flashback with the husband, the mistress and the mother; and the third, still in flashback, when the mistress, regretful, returns and gives the dress to the mother. I used two dancers in the role of the mother, young and old, and two in the role of the mistress, also young and old. The passages from one time to another are achieved with the merged and identified movements of the two dancers, the young and the old, who, when separated, create two different planes, one in the present and the other in the past. When the mistress, already exhausted, returns to give the dress, a new plane is created through the same process of merging two dancers (Machado, 2001, p. 39) (Figure 5).



Figure 5 – Choreography for *Caso do Vestido* (1959), with three female duos representing the 3 different temporal and dramaturgical planes. Photo: Iannini. Author's collection.

The resources used in the choreography stood out for their boldness and unusual solutions in dance in Belo Horizonte, drawing attention. “Klauss conceived a modern choreography, with great dramatic power,” comments Machado (2001, p. 26), then a dancer in the group, and also quotes the

critique of actor and theater director J. Dângelo (Machado, 2001, p. 27): “Klauss had the necessary requirements and used them with admirable sensitivity, solving an issue of time, with spaces, and grasping the author’s poetic features in a choreography of admirable dramatic power.” Emphasizing aspects that distinguished it for its modernity, she says that

[...] the absence of music was the major innovation, but it was not the only one responsible for the importance of the performance. The spoken language meshed perfectly with the body language presented on stage. The new directions of dance in Minas were definitely established<sup>39</sup>.

When presented in São Paulo, at Teatro da Cultura Artística, on November 8, 1960, a critic<sup>40</sup> of the *O Estado de São Paulo* newspaper wrote: “Renovation in Minas [...] this modern descriptive “ballet” has proven, from the beginning, the professional honesty of the group of young dancers who visit us”; attentive to the quality of the movements used by Vianna in the research of each character, that is, in the pursuit of the idea-movement, he underscores the “[...] originality of the trunk and arms [...] fully achieved,” and the clear distinction, as a modern expression, avoiding the classical movement “[...] with original solutions that entirely deviate from classical ballet, and reach a high aesthetic level.”

Dancer Renné Gumiel, according to Angel<sup>41</sup>,

[...] attending the premiere [...] asked, surprised, where we [Klauss and Angel] had studied modern dance. To which we replied that nowhere, as we had never left Brazil. [...] Klauss, I gradually created, because we did not have much knowledge of modern dance; there are few shows in Belo Horizonte and, at most, we watch a movie in the cinema [...] when we have money, which is rare, we go to Rio to see a company performing there. She then said she was delighted with the masterpiece he had produced and in such a creative way.

However, in the 1959 version,

[...] some factors [...] harmed the performance and detracted much from the impact it could have caused [...] the interpretation of the poem by the members of the University Theater, under the direction of Giustino Marzano, was heavy, syncopated, removing much poetry from the text. [...] the choir was placed on stage [...] reducing the available space and interfering with the

plasticity of the movements. Furthermore, Alfredo Muci's set was not suitable, and the costumes were not felicitous. The clothes were made with heavy fabrics and poorly chosen colors (Machado, 2001, p. 26-27).

Attentive to the criticism and to the final purpose of his research, Vianna rethinks the choreography, making drastic changes: in the choir, sets, and costumes. According to Machado (2001), the heavy dresses were replaced with colored leotards – which had already been assumed by international modern dance –, removing the tutus and shoes, which completely broke with the traditional scheme. It was already a change – it dared to do something new and revolutionary –, but replacing music with the poetic rhythm of words was something totally novel, not only in the Belo Horizonte field of dance but also on the national context. It was Vianna's creative and insightful talent that flourished.

The colors of the leotards (Figure 6), created by Wilma Martins, characterized each character – the father, the mother, the daughters, and the mistress –, varying only in the tones that distinguished them in the past, lighter, and in the present, darker, and the colors of the daughters were a mixture of those used for the parents.





Figure 6 – Choreography for *Caso do Vestido* (1959), in an article in *O Cruzeiro* magazine, having, as background, the Pampulha region (Belo Horizonte). Note the different colors of the leotards worn by performers Marilena Amorin (green) and Marilene Martins (pink).

Photo – Luiz Alfredo. Author’s collection.

The scenography, marked by the simplicity of an abstract composition, according to Machado (2001, p. 32-33), helped “[...] to enhance the beauty of the movements,” and was divided by Degois into two planes: on the low plane, the present action, following the dialogues of the text; on the high plane, following the narrations, the imaginary, there occurred the actions of reconstruction of the past.

The background sound, as described by Angel Vianna<sup>42</sup>, was rethought by Vianna

[...] as a minstrel show, over Drummond’s text, with people providing different rhythms as he needed them, sometimes faster, sometimes slower... with repetitions of words, he repeated them! [...] In addition to repeating the movement, he repeated the word to emphasize that movement. The choir functioned as a spoken orchestra, and as everything has vibration, a movement vibrates as the voice vibrates, so it was a question and an answer [...] in an integrated way, the orchestra and the dance, that is, the choir and the dance, which had a defined question and a defined answer!

José Aurélio Vieira<sup>43</sup>, director of the choir at Teatro Experimental,

[...] employing only male voices, used technical resources to suggest female speeches, using the colors and intonations corresponding to each character [...] thus managing to obtain from the men the characteristics of the 4 vocal temperaments, interpreted and interconnected in the narration and in the ballet.

Critic João Marschner, from Estado de Minas newspaper<sup>44</sup>, showing the critical attention in following the works of the artists in the capital, wrote:

It was with this choreography that Klauss, last year, started a research in the literature sector as an inspiration for dance. This time with a costume designer of great sensitivity (Wilma Martins), Klauss depurated the work, freeing it from all elements foreign to the dance: these are bodies wrapped in leotards, bodies that present their silhouettes bare, just like Drummond's verses are bare. Any spectacular effect was removed [...] the choir, this time, was just a rhythmic event on which the dance is built [...] The students easily overcome the compound movements, presenting a *Caso do Vestido* in its entirety [...] the "Case" has now been integrated into the full domain of its performers [...].

Aside from all its relevance as a historical work in the field of dance in Belo Horizonte and even in Brazil, I consider this ballet also important as to another aspect, as Vianna called his creations *studies*, which clearly reveals the history of *Caso do Vestido*. The imperfect solutions, found in the first versions, are consistently corrected and brought to the public without fear of criticism and of the exposure of a work still under construction. The investigative spirit is shown in his various paths in search for a more adequate solution, not always pointed out, in his missteps, by the researcher. Observing, thus, this *conquest* of the *definitive* solution has, in my view, an educational and function guiding the determination and courage necessary in any really serious research. Making the choreographer's errors and path explicit, far from demonstrating the researcher's incapacity, shows the paths followed and the tenacity – a valuable virtue of a researcher – in finding the desired solution. Finally, thus – I think –, we can relate the sinuosity of the human figure, suggested by Degois' stroke on the playbill's white page, to the figures well delineated by the leotards that cover the performers' bodies in the photos,

and the scenario lines that draw the space, abstracting from the audience's imagination the multiple environments contained in Drummond's poem.

With *Caso do Vestido*, different artistic languages are interrelated, whose contributions substantiate the plenitude of an effort aimed at renewal. In this dialogue, the central core is the idea-movement, which is formalized in dance. The contributions of other arts become more than supports, merging in the work's message, which, without prejudice, knows how to dialogue, gathering differences in a harmonious plurality and bringing us closer to the absolute.

### ***Arabela, a donzela e o mito: the essence of a novel in 15 minutes***

In the following year, 1960, Degois' creation of for the BKV playbill<sup>45</sup> (Figure 7) comes close to a language that resembles the visual aesthetic used in concretist poetic writing<sup>46</sup> – thus connecting with a current that is being established at that moment in Brazil – associated to what can be called, in the field of Brazilian Visual Arts, Concretism, Neoconcretism or Geometric Abstractionism<sup>47</sup>. Probably inspired by the great representative of this aesthetic current, the Dutchman Piet Mondrian, – whose use of colors favored primary colors (yellow, magenta and blue), as well as non-colors, that is, white, black and gray –, Degois, in his conception, chooses the contrasting use of white and black, also introducing a very light gray. Thus, he used six rectangles of different dimensions juxtaposed and superimposed, whose layout, in addition to the use of three tones, generates its own rhythmicity, providing dynamism to the composition. The most vertical of these rectangles receives, inside, the text with misaligned letters, which, by suggesting movement, seem to dance. On the other hand, this unconventional layout of writing also forces the viewer to move from their passive position of observer who, formally, only holds a playbill of the show they are going to watch, having, however, to shift to the differentiated condition of someone who, in order to build comprehension of the writing, sees oneself physically involved in this act, moving hands, turning the playbill, to be able to read it, since what they should read is arranged perpendicularly to the expected horizontal line of a cursive script. In this dialogue of tones and geometric shapes based on the

concretism of the analyzed composition, Vianna reaffirms his purpose of modernity for his dance project, delving deeper into transformation efforts, presented here by the partner graphicness imprinted by the hands and artistic sensibility of Degois.



Figure 7 – Ballet Klauss Vianna playbill (1960).

Source – Author's collection.

It was through the novel *O Amanuense Belmiro* (1937), by Cyro dos Anjos, that Vianna continued the use of literary works as the theme of his ballets. The script was written by Jacques do Prado Brandão, the costumes were designed by Wilma Martins and the sets, by Augusto Degois. In the novel, Belmiro, a simple civil servant, has his life changed by the search for maiden Arabela, getting involved in a process in which reality and the myth of the woman are mixed. In the choreography, Vianna's boldness and

modernity were already evident in the soundtrack in the employment of “[...] recordings of the noise of a typewriter, the roar of a car engine, tuning of a violin and beats of a tambourine [...]”<sup>48</sup>. Thus, the author explains the adaptation of the novel:

It would be and is impossible to try to fit the entire novel by Cyro dos Anjos into a 15-minute ballet. It was a matter of extracting its essence and summarizing the plot. Thus, every aspect of Belmiro’s employee life is reduced to two minutes of dancing, without music, with the dancer accompanied only by the noise of a typewriter. [...] It is more of a life that is dry on the outside and felt inside. Like Belmiro, after all. The main aspect in the story, for the ballet, is the search for the women and the confusion with the Myth<sup>49</sup>.

“A courageous spectacle, with the clear purpose of freeing Brazilian ballet from stagnation, Klauss Vianna puts in it, among various noises, a piano and a drum set serving as the background”<sup>50</sup> (Jornal da Cidade, 1960);

[...] at Carmela’s wedding [...] the sound background consists of unintelligible noises that suggest the rustling of cloth, the voice of a priest in a sermon, pieces of prayers and litanies [...] the street scene is all built with car engine noises, starts, brakes, horns (Noticiário Artístico, n/d).

Without a doubt, the highlight of the choreography was the sound design created by Vianna, which surprised everyone with its originality and boldness. It was the capital of Minas Gerais integrating itself, through ballet, into a larger movement of research into international contemporary music, which at the time sought new expressive possibilities for sounds. It was Concretist Music.

As for the other elements of the choreography, sets, costumes and performers, of the work that was presented at Teatro da Cultura Artística, in São Paulo, a critic of O Estado de São Paulo newspaper writes that:

“Arabela, a Donzela e o Mito” [...] came once again to raise the level of the playbill. Décimo de Castro’s vigorous dance contributed to the success of this performance, in addition to the felicitous choreography by Klauss Vianna, the sets by Augusto Degois and the tasteful costumes by Wilma Martins<sup>51</sup>.

Following a growth in quality, there is the revival, as in *Caso do Vestido*, of successes that underline Vianna’s investment in the enhancement of scenic



language resources initiated in his previous works. The sound research with the *orchestral choir of Caso do Vestido* is now repeated through the unusual presence of sounds that, like the idea-movement, expand to something – if I may say so, paraphrasing the notion – like an idea-sound. It is worth noting that the sound underlies the context of the scene presented and emphasizes the content of the intended choreographic message. Wife and performer of his ballets, Angel<sup>52</sup> reports the process of sound research on *O Amanuense Belmiro*:

[...] to him, what did the civil servant represent as to sound? A thing of... rhythm, like... that pulsated the same. All binary pulsation. So, what did he suggest? As he knew I played the piano, he said: 'let's experiment with the typewriter.' And he would say to me: 'hit... this many times on the typewriter and giving tempos, breaks [...]. I was playing on the typewriter, and he was recording. [...] Then, others, like... the car engine. When you start the car, it makes that 'tvrummm' noise, and it diminishes when the engine gradually stops [...] that eternal little sound... Far, far... ! [...] That was the great experiment of *Amanuense Belmiro*."

Similarly to the sound research, the choreographic movements, based on the search for the idea-movement, also sought to emphasize the rigidity of the employee's life with its monotony, translated into the intense rhythmicity of continuous repetition, as Angel says:

[...] the straight and broken movement (Fig. 8). Every movement broken, shortened. And, also, with thrusts. Typewriter repetition, car engine repetition and... movement repetition. [...] It was not in the mechanical sense, but in the way of repetition [...] Exactly Klaus's employee, whom he saw at the time; he was, poor man, an employee who was there to survive. Surviving and repeating, daily, the same thing [...] as all of Klaus's choreographies, they pretty much sought the essence of feeling.

[...] in addition to the straight, broken, cut movements, there was a thing of... containing the movement. Like... the individual! And the dancers repeating the movements. [...] The dancers doing everything the same [...] it was me, Nena, Pompéia, Dione, in a line, repeating the same gestures [...] The same in modern or contemporary dance<sup>53</sup>.



Figure 8 – Choreography for *Arabela, A Donzela e o Mito* (1960).

Photo: Iannini. Author's collection.

In observing, in Figure 8, the postures and body outline of the performers with their broken and straight movements, I address again, therefore, the concretist image proposed by Degois for the cover of the playbill, which, following the same outlines of the movements proposed by Vianna, combines geometric blocks that mold a rigid structure, just as the choreography structures human blocks within an everyday rigidity. This comparison is added with all the other elements highlighted in the criticism and descriptions recorded by Angel (ballet performer), in the typewriter's music, in the abstraction and layout of the scenography, and in the rectilinear design proposed for the female costumes that, tight in the body, represent, in the lightness of the falling sleeves, the softness of the mythical maiden *Arabela* in a harmonious conjunction. Thus, I think I can say that, with *Arabela, A Donzela e o Mito*, BKV's work reaches a point of development that, despite the group's still short existence, already shows Vianna approaching – with his curiosity, sensitivity and investigative strength – his last work for BKV, as we will see below.

***Marília de Dirceu: end point and new starting point***

The year 1962 represents the last act of existence of BKV, due to Vianna and his family moving to the city of Salvador, where he would live and work at UFBA – Federal University of Bahia – and, later, to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo<sup>54</sup>. For the playbill<sup>55</sup> of this last presentation, Degois uses the maximum degree of abstraction (Figure 9), which leads him to alienate himself from sensitive objects, disregarding them, as he surrenders to the consideration of what is in the imagination. Through abstraction, the understanding forms concepts, which are mental realities – abstract realities – in the sense that they are the result of our understanding. Accordingly, on a white background, there is a bundle of strong, scratched lines in black, which have, as their nucleus, a red spot, a single point of color. Even without the definition of shapes, the lines seem to suggest bodies in extension of legs and arms that rise upwards, having the intense vibration of the internal desire – the red spot –, the motivating vehicle of an action that asks for a greater expansion, greater expression and expansion in the world. The group's name occupies, in a delicate and discreet way, the right foot of the cover, in a balanced contrast between full abstraction and graphic formalism, not without instigating possible interpretations, in a style in which the observer's fantasy is a primordial factor in the enjoyment of the observed image, opening the thought to free imagination. The image seems to mean, representing the future, that only being modern was no longer enough; one had to be avant-garde, considering and already perceiving winds of different intensities and directions, accessing the desire for a gestating contemporaneity.

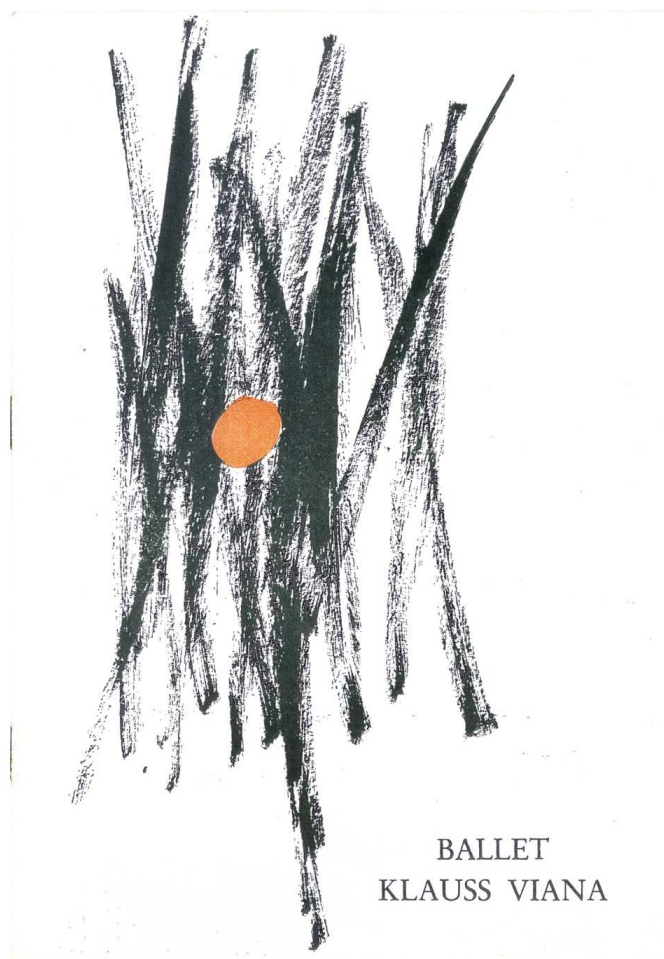


Figure 9 – Ballet Klaus Vianna playbill (1962)

Source – Author's collection.

Vianna's choreographic research in 1961 and 1962 produces a work of great relevance, *Marília de Dirceu*, the last choreography for the group – before its dissolution – and a solid point of support for the artist's proposal for the creation of a modern and Brazilian ballet. Danced by Angel Vianna, Ceme Jambay and Pompéia Pires (as protagonists), the staging represented an initiative against the traditional style of the *pas de deux*. The choreographer sought to show how modern dance can present different solutions for the “[...] boring acrobatic pas de deux of classical ballet, for the pure play of virtuosity, to technicality. I tried to show, in *Marília de Dirceu*, a sense of purity and purification”<sup>56</sup>, in relation to previous research. According to

Vianna, this choreography “[...] is my most serious and most significant work”<sup>57</sup>. Inspired by a suggestion by Sansão Castelo Branco, it has the city of Ouro Preto as a backdrop and imperial *modinhas* collected by Mário Andrade, played on the piano, with sets and costumes by Degois. The premiere occurred at the 1st National Assembly of Dance Schools in Brazil, held in Curitiba in the same year. At this assembly, Vianna also presents his didactic work, renovating as to classical ballet, leaving a great impression on the ballet masters present there, becoming the great revelation of the event as a proposer of his own methodology for something established worldwide<sup>58</sup>.

According to Alvarenga (2009), at the premiere of the *Marília de Dirceu* ballet, in Curitiba, the audience was perplexed by the simplicity of the movement, basically a diagonal crossing the entire stage, in which a baroque saintess paraded by as in a procession in the rural area of Minas Gerais and the lovers, Marília and Dirceu, danced around her in a *pas de deux*. Recalling that day, Ricardo Teixeira de Salles, who played the male role in this debut, comments:

The set was designed by Augusto Degois... it was an oratory. The door was opened and the ballerina came out, similar to Our Lady, like... wanting to evoke the spirit of Minas Gerais, baroque, from the rural areas of Minas Gerais [...] The ballet avoided that thing of *tuttu*, ponte shoes, *pas de bourré*. It was a conception of movement outside of these classical standards; “white ballet,” there was nothing “white ballet” about it. It was indeed very personal, of him, Klaus! There was a saintess who appeared in front of a man, and that man got involved with her; wanting to create... thus... a vision of the Minas Gerais baroque<sup>59</sup>.

Dancer and choreographer Lia Robatto<sup>60</sup>, also attending the event, representing the UFBA Dance School, commented on the mix of novelty and amazement caused by Vianna’s creation, coming from a city with no tradition of modern dance, and whose performers worked with the classical ballet technique. She recalls that:

[...] Klaus was a big surprise because there was no easy communication, nothing was known about Minas and, suddenly, there was a classical ballet teacher, with the classical ballerina wife, at the ends and such, doing a very modern choreography. [...] that impacted me so much that [...] a few years



later I made a choreography and quoted his work [...] I was shocked and surprised to see how a man, committed to classical ballet, could make something so creative, so new, because he had the freshness of a novelty, of his originality. It was very beautiful, without influences, there it was, Minas, isolated from everything. So, he was not copying the New York model, because, at the time, New York and Argentina were the parameters for modern dance. Europe was not yet into it. [...] But Minas was isolated. [...] And that was his benefit, the fact that he was not contaminated by influences, that it was a creation! [...] But Klauss had this freshness of his originality, and being part of the contemporaneity of his time. It was beautiful, in 1962.

The general reception, however, included boos and applause, conferring singular prominence to the person and work of Vianna and to the dance then produced in Minas Gerais. See the critique of the *Diário do Paraná* newspaper:

*Marília* caught us off guard and only after its conclusion the spectator can understand that the synthesis of the procession, in a single figure, would correspond to another synthesis of the idyll. Nevertheless, recapitulating mentally the spectacle, there is still something unrealized in this synthesis of the two figures to which the procession is related as creation of atmosphere. This atmosphere, however, did not suit the temperature of the audience, which at first was the worst possible, in the expectation of the trapeze artist and the lion tamer<sup>61</sup>.

According to Vianna,

Between what I presented there and what I will present today, there is a great distance. I found a much better solution for the ending, and introduced some changes to the choreography that made it more defined and clearer. And the dancer I invited to play Dirceu did it wonderfully<sup>62</sup>.

Criticizing one of his most praised works, *Caso do Vestido*, not seeing in it everything he idealized for a genuinely Brazilian ballet, and as if finding, at last, a clear meaning in the direction he was taking, he says:

In the case of *Caso do Vestido* [...] there was a whole set of accessory, useless lines, which prevented the full manifestation of the purity that I see in modern ballet. With *Marília de Dirceu* I think I have freed myself from certain obstacles and reached, through the simplicity of the steps, a certain purity, I would even say, the fundamental basic structure, the purest academic form.

And it is based on this structure that I intend to work from now on, towards the creation of a Brazilian ballet<sup>63</sup>.

Writing for *Jornal de Minas* newspaper, Lúcia Machado de Almeida<sup>64</sup> summarizes:

Harmony, intelligence, sensitivity, creation, good taste, up-to-dateness, all of this was in every detail: choreographies, costumes, sets [...], music [...] Klauss didn't just take a step forward, but rather a major and authentic leap. It was condensed, purified and, although based on from a totally classical base, it imprinted on its choreographies something modern, pure and extremely personal. [...] We believe that *Marília de Dirceu* was to date the most important choreography of this idealist, extremely sensitive and great artist that is Klauss Vianna. Everything in *Marília de Dirceu* is suggestion, symbol (the procession in Ouro Preto is represented by the passage of a saintess).

I find simplification, condensation, and brevity difficult tasks for those looking for a clear form of expression, which, in my view, is Degois' pursuit for the cover I describe now. I observe the image he created in Vianna's last production for BKV: a bundle of crossed lines containing in its middle area, in the longitudinal direction, as a nucleus, a red spot, a single point of color, makes me think that among the white of the page – presence of all colors –, the bundles of lines are arranged in black – the absence of all colors –, where the red dot holds the vital impulse in this mid-position between two extremes, decisions need to be taken. And Vianna points out, in her discourse, the possible paths to follow in his search, so subtly represented by an attentive Degois. Similarly, extending his apprehension to the scenography – with what the images used allow us –, in which Degois seeks to synthesize the Ouro Preto and baroque environment of the lovers, a mixture of oratory (Figure 10) suggested by the two monstrosities (which also resemble floral elements), as a backdrop for the performer, Angel Vianna, inside a superimposed cluster of real *shanties on the hillside* (Figure 11), typical of the local topography where the lovers live their unfinished love. The comments from the interviews gather, which, as documents of the experience, solidify what Vianna's theoretical discourse seeks to announce.

Here, in *Marília de Dirceu*, all the learning from BKV's early days is organized in this purification, filtered and translated into a creative language,

which starts to express a style that is more and more specific to his subjectivity. Thus, I think that Vianna's Minas Gerais modernism, with its proposal for a modern Brazilian ballet, finally shows that it is not a radical modernism that destroys the past, since, despite breaking with the norms of classical ballet, in which the artist was trained, he continues to rely on it for his highest pursuits. According to him, he sought more simplified bases, but he imprints, in each work, his transforming and insightful thought of a scholar, without the radicalism commonly assumed by names linked to movements of a modernist character. Vianna seeks technical improvement as a basic support for the full expression of the dancing body; trained by ballet, but inspired by modern dance trends.



Figure 10 – Choreography for *Marília de Dirceu* (1962), performer Angel Vianna.  
Photo: Iannini. Source – Author's collection.



Figure 11 – Choreography for *Marília de Dirceu* (1962), performers Ceme Jambay and Angel Vianna. Photo: Iannini. Source – Author’s collection.

## Expanding Horizons

The visual examples used throughout this text, taken from the covers of playbills of 4 BKV shows, and the photographs, substantiated by interviews, newspaper articles and critics, are intended to contribute to a possible historiography of a certain period and place in our country – Belo Horizonte from 1958 to 1962 –, focused on understanding the researches of Klaus Ribeiro Vianna, in the construction of a personal aesthetic for a modern Brazilian ballet. Trained under the influence of European culture, then preponderant in ballet, Vianna would later follow a path that would gradually bring him closer to concerns with the national past through the rich sources of regional culture, based on facts collected from a generation of artists that was established through mutual influences from different fields, but which were consistent in the ideal of a creation fraught with local elements, favoring individual expressiveness. It is the entire *Complemento Generation*, as mentioned above, a renovating movement of intellectuals, painters, sculptors, architects, tapestry makers, filmmakers, singers, musicians and writers that boosted Minas Gerais arts in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In this involvement,

the productions of dance performances by Ballet Klauss Vianna (BKV) led to important forms of creation, emphasizing a modernity that, at that time, saw greater adoption in dance performances in Belo Horizonte and pointed to new paths for this form of artistic expression, but with eyes set on the larger field of Brazilian dance.

In the set of images used, I think it is possible to trace a path of conceptual transformation revealed by the contribution of Visual Arts represented by Augusto Degois. Vianna certainly saw himself represented in these images, even because he approved them, expanding spaces already contained in his creative sensibility that, now, we update through a possible historiography, reconstruction of a past that, written in images, it keeps alive. The interviews, newspaper articles and critiques strengthen what the images propose to us, even because I am not exempt from speculative possibilities in the proposed interpretations, just as the text of the interviews may contain biases. We will never have the history that took place back; this whole article will always be a construction, like the whole past relived. Without neglecting the considerations above, I think that the text provides relevant information on a topic that is still little explored and full of possibilities for many researchers, both due to the content addressed and to the methodological improvement, proposed here by a descriptive-interpretive process and textual support, given the peculiarities of this art of movement, the dance.

Klauss Vianna's Minas Gerais modernism, with his proposal for a Brazilian ballet, finally shows, as Semeghini (2021, p. 22) points out, that

It is possible to provide with the means [...] with the artist being the one who weaves this network of resonances and recognitions. The artist who, before being a creator, exists as a connector, or being of proximity. [...] Walking, stopping, encountering the other to whom one wants to direct new insights.

In seeking new ways of comprehending, practicing, transmitting and creating based on classical ballet, his training, which he describes in the book *A Dança* (1990), he imprints, in each work studied here, his transformative and insightful thought of a scholar in dialogue with the images of his time.

## Notes



- <sup>1</sup> New History – Centered on the French academic publication *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, later known as the Annales school, was a movement located among historians who sought new objects and research methods, approaching the procedures and ideas of Social Sciences, differing from the traditional paradigms that dictated the paths of historical research until then. There are several important names linked to different moments of transformation underwent by the movement, such as: Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand Braudel, Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Nora, among others.
- <sup>2</sup> See Homans, Jennifer (2012).
- <sup>3</sup> See Homans, Jennifer (2012, p. 167 and p. 281).
- <sup>4</sup> See Homans, Jennifer (2012, p. 329).
- <sup>5</sup> See: Cavrel (2015, p. 85-1700).
- <sup>6</sup> See: Silva, (2005, p. 105-143).
- <sup>7</sup> See Mendes, Ana Carolina (2010, p. 55-80).
- <sup>8</sup> See: Vianna, 1990.
- <sup>9</sup> See: Denis, 1956.
- <sup>10</sup> See: Vieira, 1997, p. 134.
- <sup>11</sup> Guignard School - [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escola\\_Guignard](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escola_Guignard) Accessed on Apr 27, 2021.
- <sup>12</sup> Edith Behring (1916-1996) [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Behring](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Behring) Accessed on Apr 26, 2021.
- <sup>13</sup> Alberto da Veiga Guignard (1896-1962) [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto\\_da\\_Veiga\\_Guignard](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_da_Veiga_Guignard) Accessed on Apr 26, 2021.
- <sup>14</sup> João Ceschiatti (1916-1987) <http://fcs.mg.gov.br/espacos-culturais/palacio-das-artes/teatro-joao-ceschiatti/> Accessed on Apr 26, 2021.
- <sup>15</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna on May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>16</sup> Modern Art Week in 1922 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern\\_Art\\_Week](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Art_Week) Accessed on Apr 29, 2021.

- <sup>17</sup> Golden Ratio - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Golden+Ratio&oq=Golden+Ratio&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i512l6j69i60.712j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>. Accessed on Apr 26, 2021.
- <sup>18</sup> The premiere program contained the following choreographies: *Parque de Diversões*; *Desfile de Modas*, *Egmont*; and *Cobra Grande*.
- <sup>19</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna on May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>20</sup> Interview with Klauss Vianna by journalist Amélia Carmem Machado on Jan 16, 1955. See: Vianna, 1955.
- <sup>21</sup> Interview by Antônio César, Última Hora newspaper, Belo Horizonte, 1960. See: Vianna, 1960c.
- <sup>22</sup> See: Vianna, 1952.
- <sup>23</sup> The notion of *idea-movement* was mentioned for the first time in his 1952 essay *Pela criação de um Ballet Brasileiro* [For the Creation of a Brazilian Ballet], establishing the basis for the intended renewal: “What I want to achieve is what I call an idea-movement, that is, a ballet whose construction and performance is based on a fundamental and creative conception. Technique or virtuosity is not enough as a solution. It is necessary to fill this movement with a creative idea.”
- <sup>24</sup> Interview with Klauss Vianna by journalist Frederico de Moraes. See: Vianna, 1958.
- <sup>25</sup> Amélia Carmem Machado, Diário de Minas newspaper: Belo Horizonte, Jan 16, 1955. See: Vianna, 1955.
- <sup>26</sup> See: Vianna, 1952.
- <sup>27</sup> Jornal da Cidade newspaper, Aug 29, 1960, 1st Supplement. See: Crítica, 1960a.
- <sup>28</sup> Jornal da Cidade newspaper, Aug 29, 1960, 1st Supplement. See: Crítica, 1960a.
- <sup>29</sup> Interview with Klauss Vianna by Jornal da Cidade newspaper, Belo Horizonte: Aug 29, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960a.

- <sup>30</sup> Interview with Klaus Vianna by Jornal da Cidade newspaper, Belo Horizonte: Aug 29, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960a
- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Klaus Vianna by Jornal Diário de Minas newspaper. See: Vianna, 1960a.
- <sup>32</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>33</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>34</sup> The 1959 playbill contained the following choreographies: *Suíte Clássica; Estudo; o pas des deux de Dom Quixote; Neblina de Ouro; and Caso do Vestido.*
- <sup>35</sup> The 1959 playbill contained the following choreographies: *Classical suite; Estudo; Grand Pas de Deux from Don Quixote; Neblina de Ouro; and Caso do Vestido.*
- <sup>36</sup> Article from Jornal da Cidade newspaper – Belo Horizonte, Aug 29, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960a.
- <sup>37</sup> Article from unidentified periodical, September 1960.
- <sup>38</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>39</sup> Machado, Lúcia Helena. *A Filha da Paciência*, p. 26. See: Machado, 2000.
- <sup>40</sup> Critique by O Estado de São Paulo newspaper, Nov 9, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960b.
- <sup>41</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>42</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>43</sup> Interview given to journalist Haydée, from Diário de Minas newspaper, on Sep 11, 1960. See: Vieira, 1960.
- <sup>44</sup> Jornal Estado de Minas newspaper, September 1960. See: Marschner, 1960.
- <sup>45</sup> The playbill contained the following choreographies: *Concerto Barroco; Delírio* (choreography by Denis Grey); *Dança da Fita; Jazz; Caso do vestido; Solidão* (revival of the choreography *Neblina de Ouro*) and *Arabela, a donzela e o mito.*

- <sup>46</sup> The Concretist Movement in poetry emerged after World War II, comprising a series of innovations and experiences, eliminating verse as a formal-rhythmic unit, in an attempt to broaden the poem's possibilities of expression and communication. Those considered founders of concrete poetry are Swiss-Bolivian Eugen Gomringer (1955) and, almost simultaneously, in Brazil, the group of the magazine *Noígrandes* – Décio Pignatari and the brothers Augusto and Haroldo de Campos. The concretist experience in Brazil profoundly altered the context of national poetry, making it the first Brazilian literary movement to appear at the forefront of the world movement. See: Enciclopédia, 1980.
- <sup>47</sup> Geometric Abstractionism was one of the two great currents of abstract art, that is, Cezanne's abstraction and lyrical abstraction, being linked to the first. Painter Mondrian was its major representative, seeking to build, with geometric bases, artistic objects whose validity stems from their own structure. Through vertical and horizontal lines, Mondrian sought the right angle – and by extension the square – through its intersection, to which the three primary colors (red, blue and yellow) were added, in addition to the non-colors (white, black) and gray. The painter's activity was conceived as an ordering of these elements, excluding all resemblance to nature, but also all feeling, passion and individuality. In Brazil, the Constructivist movement was called Concretism, Neoconcretism and even Geometric Abstractionism, being one of the most fertile and regular in national art. Its representatives were Franz Weissmann, Amílcar de Castro, Antônio Lizárraga, Sérgio de Carvalho, Mira Schendel and the great Lygia Clark; its golden age was the 1950s and 1960s. See: História, 1995.
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with Klauss Vianna by *Jornal da Cidade* newspaper, Belo Horizonte, Aug 29, 1960. See: Vianna, 1960b.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview by unidentified periodical, September 1960.
- <sup>50</sup> *Jornal da Cidade* newspaper – Belo Horizonte, Aug 29, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960a.
- <sup>51</sup> *O Estado de São Paulo* newspaper – São Paulo, Nov 9, 1960. See: Crítica, 1960b.
- <sup>52</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.

- <sup>53</sup> Interview with Angel Vianna – Rio de Janeiro, May 5, 2001. See: Vianna, 2001.
- <sup>54</sup> See Alvarenga, Arnaldo Leite de (2002) Master's Dissertation.
- <sup>55</sup> The playbill contained the following choreographies: *Classical suite*; *O Circo* (first choreography by Angel); *Suíte de Danças Antigas*, and *Marília de Dirceu*.
- <sup>56</sup> Interview given to journalist Frederico de Moraes, Nov 24, 1962. See: Vianna, 1958.
- <sup>57</sup> Interview given to journalist Frederico de Moraes, Nov 24, 1962. See: Vianna, 1958.
- <sup>58</sup> See: Alvarenga, Arnaldo Leite de (2009). Doctoral thesis.
- <sup>59</sup> Ricardo Teixeira de Sales – Interview. See: Sales, 2007.
- <sup>60</sup> Lia Robatto - interview by Ricardo Baretto. See: Robatto, 2007.
- <sup>61</sup> Eduardo Virlmont - Diário do Paraná newspaper. Curitiba, September 14, 1962. See: Virlmont, 1962.
- <sup>62</sup> Eduardo Virlmont - Diário do Paraná newspaper. Curitiba, September 14, 1962. See: Virlmont, 1962
- <sup>63</sup> Lúcia Machado de Almeida – Jornal de Minas newspaper. Belo Horizonte, Nov 1962.
- <sup>64</sup> Lúcia Machado de Almeida - Jornal de Minas newspaper. Belo Horizonte, Nov 1962.

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