

СЦЕНІЧНЕ МИСТЕЦТВО

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CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCIENCE OF “CIRCOLOGY” IN CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN ART CRITICISM: A STUDY OF THE SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL AND ARTISTIC EXAMPLES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CIRCUS GENRES AT THE KYIV MUNICIPAL ACADEMY OF CIRCUS AND PERFORMING ARTS

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The topic of the research is devoted to the creation and development of the science of “Circology” in contemporary Ukrainian art criticism. Its phenomenon, definition, goals, objectives, and place in the scientific space are specified in the context of performative art and its stage samples. It is important to note that this topic and the process of studying its problem are practically unexplored, with very few fragments and references available regarding its generalization in modern art criticism, particularly concerning circus art. Given the importance of building a professional scientific school to engage in detailed studies, there is a need for research into the historical, educational, and artistic processes within the circus space. The concept of “Circology” in a cultural and art-critical format indicates that this science is a systemic professional component of the theory, history, and artistic practice of circus art and its genres. The purpose of the study is to clarify, define, and generalize the most important principles of today’s scientific research on circus art within the context of contemporary art criticism. As an example, scientific and methodological research is provided, focusing on the artistic samples of circus art and the educational processes surrounding circus genres today, based on the scientific work of the pedagogical staff of the Department of Circus Genres at the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts. The concept of genre in circus art has a dual definition, unlike other types of art and artistic culture. For example, in the circus genre of acrobatics, a mixed couple (a guy and a girl) demonstrates their professionalism through stunts in the neoclassical style and lyrical genre. Features of circus theory include terms, ontological considerations, and the definition of concepts related to circus equipment, props, types of genres, and safety rules. Circus art, much like sports, is an area of increased risk of injury for performers. Additionally, circus traditions and narrow-profile professional concepts and terms are vital within contemporary

circus genres – such as acrobatics, aerial gymnastics, equilibristic, juggling, illusion, clown shows, and training.

The conclusions show that the development of circusology in contemporary Ukrainian art criticism is important today due to its poorly studied phenomenon. A clear definition of circusology, its system, and research methods as a professional component of the theory, history, and artistic practice of circus art and its genres is necessary. This is evidenced by specific factors of scientific research (articles, textbooks, presentations at scientific conferences) conducted by the scientific and pedagogical staff of the Department of Circus Genres at the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts.

Keywords: acrobatics, aerial gymnastics, equilibristics, juggling, illusion, clowning, performative art, stage art, theatricalization, circus directing, circusology, circus art, circus genres, circus pantomime, artistic culture.

Formulation of the problem. The peculiarity of this problem is that detailed scientific research in the field of circus arts and the development of a scientific school require a systematic approach and maximum interaction between scientific research and artistic practical methods to identify the most important phenomena, components, and concepts. ***Research Analysis.* Not many representatives have been involved in research in this area. Most often, studies have concerned individual fragments of circus art without disclosing the details of understanding the circus process and its object. Additionally, there has been a superficial consideration of the factors and objects in the circus space, as well as a lack of a systematic approach to studying the specifics of circusology as a science in contemporary art criticism. However, it is important to mention the key representatives in the study of circus art within the context of circusology.

Among them, it is possible to distinguish between theorists and practitioners: Lvova Inessa, 2020 [4]; Malykhyna Maryna, 2012–2016 [5; 6]; Orel Dmytro, 2018–2020 [7; 8]; Olena Pazharska, 2021 [9]; Romanenkova Yulia, 2020–2021 [10; 11]; Zeigmund Daniel 2014 [13]; Steinberg Kristian, 2017 [14]; Sharikov Denys, 2023 [15; 16]; Shevchenko Lyudmyla, 2024 [17].

Purpose of the Article. This article studies the key phenomena and unique aspects of circus art within the context of contemporary art criticism.

Main Content Overview. A significant factor in the development of the Kyiv Scientific School of Circusology is the initiation of research activities at the Department of Circus Genres within the Faculty of Stage Arts at the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts, which began on January 1, 2017 (the department was established on January 1, 2016). The history of professional circus art at the Academy traces back to the Kiev Republican Studio of Circus and Variety Arts, which was established in 1961. Subsequently, practical and applied aspects of circus art were developed within the secondary specialized educational institution, the Kiev State School and College of Circus and Variety Arts, beginning in 1975. This development focused on genres such as acrobatics, aerial gymnastics, equilibristics, juggling, illusion, and clowning. In 2008, this educational institution evolved into the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts. Since 2016, the Academy's circus arts program has been structured around practical training, featuring a dedicated college for circus genres, as well as bachelor's and

master's degree programs. It is noteworthy that the training process for students, the staging of circus acts, and program development occurred at the Kyiv National Circus from 1961 to 2020. The Department of Circus Genres functions as an educational, scientific research, methodological, and artistic structure within a higher educational institution. Its primary goal is to professionally train circus artists and teachers for circus art schools, making it the only institution at the master's level in Europe and the world dedicated to this purpose. The program offers systematic competencies in scientific research activities alongside artistic and creative components. Scientific research within the Department of Circus Genres is conducted in the domain of circusology by a faculty comprising both senior lecturers – who are professional circus artists focused on the specifics and theory of practical material – and professors, who systematically study artistic processes, history, genre, stylistic components, and influential personalities. Photos 3–4.

Between 2017 and 2024, the staff of the Department of Circus Genres has actively engaged in both educational and creative endeavors while also contributing to the academic field through the publication of scientific articles and methodological literature. This body of work includes teaching aids that explore and systematize the theoretical and methodological aspects of various circus disciplines, such as acrobatics, aerial gymnastics, equilibristics, juggling, illusion and manipulation, circus directing, and the history of circus art. A distinctive feature of the Department's research in circus studies is its close integration of practical experience with theoretical investigation. From 2018 to 2024, faculty members will provide robust scientific guidance to both bachelor's and master's students, promoting active participation in scientific conferences and the publication of abstracts based on students' research. Prominent members of the Department of Circus Genres and their notable scientific contributions to circus studies include: Lyudmila Shevchenko, a professor and People's Artist of Ukraine, has significantly impacted the circus scene as the General Director and Art Manager of the National Circus of Ukraine from 2012 to 2019, following her role as Chief Director from 2007 to 2012. With a rich lineage stemming from the Shevchenko world circus dynasty, she is not only a circus trainer specializing in predatory animals but also an accomplished aerial gymnast and equilibrist. Lyudmila has authored over 20 scholarly publications on circus-related topics, including textbooks such as "Circus Directing" and "Equilibristic." Additionally, she serves as the head of the jury at numerous prestigious International Circus Festivals and Competitions across various countries, including Monaco, Hungary, France, Italy, Spain, and Ukraine. Denys Sharikov, an associate professor and Ph.D. in Art Criticism, is a multifaceted talent as a director, choreographer, circus expert, and lecturer. He has held the position of Dean of the Performing Arts Department at the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts from 2016 to 2023. Denys has authored more than 15 specialized publications on circus literature and has co-authored essential textbooks, including "Circus Complex-Technical Training: Equipment, Safety Precautions, and Props," "Aerial Gymnastics", and "Vultige Acrobatics." He is also the designer of the educational programs for Circus Genres covering the years 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024. Dmytro Orel, a senior lecturer with a master's degree in sports from artistic gymnastics, is a professional circus artist specializing in acrobatics and aerial

acts with the duo Cord de Parel. He leads the group Air Duo Love and has earned accolades at multiple international circus festivals as a circus director. Dmytro has published over 10 scientific articles pertaining to circus, including his textbook “Acrobatics” and contributions to “Circus Complex-Technical Training” and “Aerial Gymnastics”. He is also the creator of a unique artistic and health training method titled “Circotherapy” and has served as a jury member for both Ukrainian and international circus events. Photos 7-8.

It is essential to analyze the term “Circology”. In the article “On Questions of Circology and Stuntography in the Contemporary Circus Space: Scientific Analysis and Applied Component”, the author highlights various aspects of this scientific discipline. Circology is regarded as a scientific field within contemporary art criticism in Ukraine. Importantly, the term “circus studies” is no longer relevant according to international standards in the scientific art criticism community. Circology, however, systematically and qualitatively articulates the definition of this concept while addressing the issues related to its research and study. To define the systemic provisions of this term, we describe circology as the science of art criticism that examines the theory, history, and artistic practices surrounding circus art. The theory of circology involves exploring and analyzing several key components, including:

1. The clarification and formation of the conceptual and categorical framework in circus art.
2. The definition and generalization of circus art as a phenomenon within contemporary art culture.
3. The semiotics of circus art, which includes the sign system for tricks and the construction of trickography.
4. The examination of circus genres in relation to time and space during the presentation of a circus composition, which highlights the significant differences between various types such as acrobatics, aerial performances, and juggling.

The history of circology focuses on researching the origins of circus art by genre, including acrobatics, aerial gymnastics, equilibrism, juggling, illusion, clowning, and pantomime. It looks into the processes that shaped circus art throughout history, from its origins to modern and contemporary iterations. Furthermore, it addresses the genre and stylistic aspects of artistic expression by performers, based on genre and style principles.

There are two main principles regarding circus genres: one sees genre as a stage and theatrical component, while the other defines genre by the specifics of props and performance. For instance, acrobatics can be seen as a circus genre, with a performance classified as a lyrical duet. The artistic practice within circology focuses on identifying and developing applied aspects of circus art today. This includes improving contemporary technologies for circus props and stunts, applying new teaching methods in the education of professional circus performers, teachers, and directors, while preserving the essential classical technical aspects of various circus genres. It also encompasses the restoration of lost circus genres and the revival of significant circus mass acts and groups, as well as the creation of highly professional solo and group circus acts for shows and attractions. Photo 5.

“Clarification of Technologies in Contemporary Circus Directing”. This text

provides a detailed look into the technologies involved in contemporary circus directing, focusing on the architectonics of a circus performance, show programs, and individual acts. It discusses the technical equipment used in various circus genres, including work with devices, safety engineering principles, sound and lighting engineering, and the contemporary innovations in computer-based pyrotechnics.

In addition, the development and study of artistic practices in circus art encompass various aspects such as circus production, art management, and collaborations with representatives from circus companies, directors, and impresarios. A crucial part of the scientific research in circus studies is the examination of trickography – the art of constructing tricks to showcase an artistic image. These tricks are constructed differently depending on the circus genre. For example, the approach to crafting tricks, musical accompaniment, and the artistic design of a circus composition varies significantly. The architectonics of a group vaulting acrobatic act differs from an aerial flight performance. Key principles and rules regarding safety, the distribution of space and time during trick performances, technical preparation, the rehearsal process, arena lighting, and the costumes of circus performers are all vital components of presenting a circus act.

The study of circus semiotics, which includes the system of symbolic images in circus tricks, is also essential. The signs used in different circus genres vary greatly. For instance, the semiotics of illusion in trick performances differs fundamentally from the techniques employed in clowning. Contemporary stand-up methods are utilized in both genres, yet they showcase significant differences. While circus clowning can take place in both the arena and on the theater stage, illusion acts typically require a broader array of equipment and props specifically designed for illusions, including configurations on the walls, floors, and ceilings. Circus clowning relies heavily on live audience interaction and does not necessitate the extensive setups found in illusion performances.

An important factor in exploring the genre-stylistic components of circus studies is understanding its history and artistic practices. This involves clarifying, describing, defining, comparing, and classifying various trends, styles, and genres in circus art. Currently, several styles and genres are prominent in contemporary circus art:

1. “Folk Modern”: Contemporary interpretations of folklore from various countries.
2. “Jazz Modern”: Styles inspired by jazz music, including jazz, blues, burlesque, and swing.
3. “Neoclassique”: Aesthetic techniques rooted in neoclassicism.
4. “Postmodern”: Contemporary performances incorporating elements of popular youth culture.
5. “Remix Style”: A blend of diverse stylistic features presented in specific circus acts or show programs. The nature of a circus performance, influenced by modern trends and theatrical elements (as exemplified by Cirque du Soleil), adopts a distinctive style based on its plot and thematic focus. The genres of thematic circus acts include intimate lyricism, often found in neoclassicism, folk modern, and remix styles, as well as expressive psychological impacts associated with jazz modern,

remix style, and postmodern elements.

Conclusions. In conclusion, the advancement of circus studies as a scientific discipline within art criticism is crucial. It systematically investigates the theoretical, historical, and artistic dimensions of circus art, including its types, styles, genres, origins, performances, semiotics, and the characteristics of circus acts in relation to time and space. Furthermore, it involves the classification and definition of terms and specific nomenclature, making it highly relevant in contemporary scholarship. The methods and research approaches conducted by the Department of Circus Genres at the Faculty of Performing Arts of the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts are vital. While these methods may require significant refinement, they nonetheless play a key role in advancing contemporary thought in circus art today.

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**СТВОРЕННЯ І РОЗВИТОК НАУКИ “ЦИРКОЛОГІЇ”
У СУЧАСНІЙ УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ АРТ-КРИТИЦІ:
НА ПРИКЛАДІ НАУКОВОЇ ШКОЛИ ТА ХУДОЖНІХ ЗРАЗКІВ
КАФЕДРИ ЦИРКОВИХ ЖАНРІВ КИЇВСЬКОЇ МУНІЦИПАЛЬНОЇ
АКАДЕМІЇ ЦИРКОВОГО І ПЕРФОРМАТИВНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА**

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Тема дослідження присвячена розгляду створення та розвитку науки “Циркологія” у сучасній українській арт-критиці. Феномен, дефініція, цілі, завдання, наукове місце цього явища уточнюються в контексті перформативного мистецтва та його сценічних зразків.

Важливо відзначити, що ця тематика та процес дослідження пов’язаних з нею проблем практично не вивчені або представлені лише фрагментарно, а в сучасній арт-критиці в контексті циркового мистецтва згадуються побіжно. Це особливо актуалізує

необхідність створення професійної наукової школи, яка б системно вивчала історичні, освітні та художні процеси у цирковому мистецтві.

Поняття “Циркологія” у культурологічному та арт-критичному форматі вказує на те, що ця наука є системним професійним компонентом в теорії, історії та художній практиці циркового мистецтва та його жанрів.

Мета статті – уточнити, визначити та узагальнити найважливіші принципи проведення наукових досліджень циркового мистецтва в контексті сучасної арт-критики. Наводяться наукові та методичні дослідження художніх зразків аренного мистецтва та освітніх процесів у його різновидах на основі наукової роботи співробітників-педагогів кафедри циркових жанрів Київської муніципальної академії циркового та перформативного мистецтва.

Поняття жанр у цирковому мистецтві має подвійну дефініцію на відміну від інших видів мистецтва та художньої культури. Наприклад, – у цирковому жанрі акробатики циркова змішана пара (хлопець та дівчина) демонструє свій професіоналізм і трюкографію у неокласичному стилі, в межах ліричного жанрового забарвлення. Циркова теорія має низку особливостей, зокрема специфічну термінологію, онтологію і дефініцію понять, що стосуються циркових апаратів, реквізиту, різновидів жанрів, правил техніки безпеки, (оскільки аренне дійство, як і спорт, є сферою підвищеного травматизму виконавців), а також циркових традицій та вузькопрофільних фахових термінів. Це стосується таких жанрів, як акробатика, повітряна гімнастика, еквілібристика, жонглювання, ілюзії, клоунада, дресура.

У висновках ідеться про розвиток циркології в сучасній українській арт-критиці, яка сьогодні є важливою, бо – маловивчена як феномен. Автор пропонує чітке визначення циркології, її системи та методів дослідження як професійного компоненту в теорії, історії та художній практиці циркового мистецтва та його жанрів. Про це свідчать конкретні чинники наукових досліджень – статті, навчальні посібники, виступи під час наукових конференцій, а також науково-педагогічна праця співробітників кафедри циркових жанрів Київської муніципальної академії циркового та перформативного мистецтва.

Ключові слова: акробатика, повітряна гімнастика, еквілібристика, жонглювання, ілюзія, клоунада, перформативне мистецтво, сценічне мистецтво, театралізація, циркова режисура, циркологія, циркове мистецтво, циркові жанри, циркова пантоміма.

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Додатки



Photo 1–2. National Circus of Ukraine, Kyiv, where a professional structure for the development of circus arts and the educational process of teaching students was created, which later became the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts..



Photo 3. National Circus of Ukraine, Kyiv, arena and circus apartments, where in 1961–2020 students of the circus direction, the republican studio, the school-college, and the academy rehearsed circus acts and programs.



Photo 4. The main building of the Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts.



Photo 5. Circus performance. Group under the direction of Viktor Yarov, circus genre of equilibristics “Flying Perches”.



Photo 6. Lyudmyla and Volodymyr Shevchenko (photo from the personal archive of Lyudmyla Shevchenko).



Photo 7. Dmitry Orel, author of the first professional teaching aids on circus specializations. “Acrobatics”, “Circus complex-technical training”, 2018, 2024.



Photo 8. Dmitry Orel and Svetlana Kashevarova (photo from Dmitry Orel’s archive).