



“When in Music We Have Spent an Hour”: Choreographer John Cranko’s Recontextualization of *The Taming of the Shrew* as a Ballet

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ABSTRACT

William Shakespeare’s works have always been the centre of attention in adaptation and translation studies, not only because the subject matter of his works is universal but also because there is still too much to comment upon what the three-dimensional characters go through in his oeuvre. This study primarily aims at displaying how dancing is used as a communication tool in John Cranko’s ballet adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew*, with music by Domenico Scarlatti and Kurt-Heinz Stolze. While discussing the unique norms and conventions of ballet, this study intends to investigate the standing point of the adaptors during the process of translating Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* into music and bodily movement. Starting with an emphasis on the musical nature of the source play, this paper traces the role of music in the “taming” scheme. In that respect, one of the primary concerns of this study is analysing Katherina’s “taming” process in John Cranko’s choreography, which is the central theme of the source play. With a close analysis of the choreography employed in the ballet adaptation, this paper aims at comparing and contrasting the gender relations that are portrayed in the source text and its ballet adaptation.

Keywords: *The Taming of the Shrew*, John Cranko, Shakespeare, ballet, adaptation

Introduction

The temporal, transcultural, and intermedial journey Shakespearean plays go through is, undoubtedly, a consequence of the universality of the Bard’s subject matters and his three-dimensional approach towards those subjects. The everlasting desire to adapt Shakespearean oeuvre into ballet and opera is stimulating by its very nature since the incontrovertible power of the Bard, his language, is challenged by the dominance of music in opera, and the lack of verbal language in ballet. Furthermore, Shakespeare’s



language, which has a distinct rhythm and musicality of its own, is replaced with the music created by the composer or the choreographer of the adaptation. While this replacement provides the composer, the choreographer, and/or the librettist with a certain sense of freedom, the audience's prior knowledge of the source text, or hypotext in Gérard Genette's terminology, is determinant in the audience's expectations: "For the reader, spectator, or listener, adaptation as adaptation is unavoidably a kind of intertextuality if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text" (Hutcheon, 2013, p. 21).

When a play such as *The Taming of Shrew*, in which language is one of the most substantial tools, is adapted into a ballet or an opera, the prior knowledge of the audience has the potential to be vital. Yet, one has to remind oneself Hutcheon's argument that "an adaptation is a derivation that is not derivative - a work that is second without being secondary. It is its own palimpsestic thing" (Hutcheon, 2013, p. 9). Hence, throughout this paper, the concept of fidelity, which is often emphasised in adaptation studies, is not going to be a concern in analysing the relationship between the adapted work and the adaptation. Rather, this study intends to discuss how opera and ballet adaptations – and most significantly John Cranko's ballet choreography (1969) – recontextualize Shakespeare's storyline. More importantly, the main focus of this study is displaying how Cranko's choreography challenges the depiction of Katherina as the "shrew".

The Taming of the Shrew is one of the most musical Shakespearean plays since it "contains one hundred musical references. Eighty-four are 'allusive' and sixteen 'denotative'" (Waldo & Herbert, 1959, p. 187). Although the majority of the musical references are spread over the scenes in which Bianca's suitor Hortensio¹ is disguised as a lute instructor, the general theme of the play, "being in tune or harmony with others," is often presented with musical references and allusions. The witty remarks addressed by and to Katherina as well as the association between "taming the shrew" and tuning a musical instrument are reminiscent of Hamlet's furious words to Guildenstern, in which he likens himself to an instrument they intend to play upon: "Call me what instrument you will, though you fret me, you cannot play upon me" (III. ii.361-363). A similar allusion is displayed in Act II Scene I, when Hortensio recalls his personal experience with Katherina:

1 It is significant that in the opening scene of Cranko's adaptation, musical instruments, such as the lute, are used as props by Bianca's suitors. Hence, the significance of music and harmony is visually emphasized in the ballet from the beginning.

[...] she hath broke the lute to me.
 I did but tell her she mistook her frets,
 And bow'd her hand to teach her fingering,
 When, with a most impatient devilish spirit,
 'Frets, call you these?' quoth she, 'I'll fume with them.'
 And with that word she struck me on the head. (II.ii.lines 149-153)

While in these lines, which are spoken by Hortensio, the ostensible theme is playing a musical instrument, the audience, as well as Hortensio's fictional addressee, recognize the fact that it is, in fact, Katherina, who is tried to be played upon. Ironically, the musical instrument, the lute, becomes a weapon in Katherina's hands suggesting that Katherina's control over the musical instrument – and, hence, music and harmony – is stronger than Hortensio.

An overview of the opera and ballet adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew*

It is no coincidence that the first opera adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* is an *opera buffa* (Italian comic opera) *Il duca di Atene* composed by Ferdinando Bertoni in 1780. Most of the opera adaptations choose to focus on one storyline of the multi-layered source play. The structure of the hypotext, which includes an induction, main plot, and subplots, presents a complex storyline that requires to be shortened and simplified in accordance with the norms and conventions of the opera. Since it takes longer to sing a word than to speak it, Shakespeare's play (like most of the source texts) needs to be shortened by omitting certain scenes, incidents, characters, and even plots. The most common practice in adapting *The Taming of the Shrew* into other genres such as cinema, opera, and ballet is excluding the whole Induction, which focuses on a drunken tinker, Christopher Sly, and turns the story of Katherina, Petruchio, and Bianca into a play within a play, which is performed to divert Sly for he is tricked by a nobleman to believe that he himself is a nobleman too. Amongst the opera adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's *verismo* opera *Sly, ovvero la leggenda del dormiente risvegliato* (1927) [Sly, or the legend of the awakened sleeper] is one of the very few opera adaptations that totally focus on the Induction of the source play. Moreover, this *verismo* – in other words, realistic – opera is constructed as a real tragedy that ends with the suicide of Sly. Another opera adaptation depicting the story of Sly, while disregarding the whole Katherina, Petruchio, and Bianca plot, is Dominick Argento's

one-act comic opera *Christopher Sly*, which premiered in 1962. Amongst the numerous opera adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Vittorio Giannini’s adaptation with the same title is one of the most well-known and acclaimed versions. Premiered in 1953, Giannini’s adaptation is an *opera buffa* that he started composing before World War II; yet, the opera was first staged in its entirety in 1958 by the New York City Opera. Due to the composition history of the work, it is possible to find traces of the changes in musical forms and techniques that took place during and after World War II. The latest opera adaptation of the play that is still being performed is composed by Vissarion Shebalin to a Russian libretto written by Abram Akimovich Gozenpud. The libretto contains only a few lines from Shakespeare’s source text and most of the subplots as well as secondary characters are omitted. The opera, which premiered in 1955, follows the *opera buffa* tradition in accordance with the traditional reading of the source play.

One of the common characteristics of the opera and/or ballet adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew* is the lack of the multi-layered structure of the source play – i.e., the play within the play presenting Katherina and Petruchio’s story as a fiction that is staged before Christopher Sly. Hence, what Phyllis Rackin argues in *Shakespeare and Women* cannot be applied to the adaptations that are mentioned in this study: “Framed by the Induction, the taming plot comes to the audience as a farcical theatrical performance rather than a representation of actual life” (Rackin, 2005, p. 55). The taming process for Shakespeare’s contemporaries is challenging since that period was marked by various powerful women, including Queen Elizabeth I: “Given what we know about the widespread economic activity of women in sixteenth-century England, the roles of the women in the taming plot look much more like a wistful fantasy than a recognizable representation of the kind of women that Shakespeare and his first audiences would have been likely to encounter in their daily lives” (Rackin, 2005, p. 56). From this point of view, the depiction of the taming process as well as the portrayal of Katherina as the shrew transform substantially over time. Moreover, the opera and ballet adaptations of verbally powerful works – such as Shakespeare’s plays – employ distinctive languages and sign systems in commenting on the previously mentioned changes. Current adaptation studies concentrate on the relationship between the source text and the adaptation under headlines regarding performative perspective, plot adjustments, choreographic annotations, dance traditions, multiculturalism, and gender studies.²

2 Alan Brissenden (1981, 2001), Vera Krasovskaya (1991), Jane C. Desmond (1997), Sally Banes (1998), Jim Hoskins (2005), Julie Sanders (2007), Nancy Isenberg (2008, 2009, 2019), Iris Julia Brühle (2019), and Elizabeth Klett (2019) are strongly recommended regarding these studies.

Although it shares certain characteristics with opera with respect to their use of music as a medium for communication, ballet and dance provide the adaptor with a challenge (or an opportunity) to free themselves from verbal language. As defined in the Cambridge Dictionary, the French-originated term choreography means, “the art of arranging the steps and movements of dancers during a performance, such as for a ballet or stage show”.³ In other words, choreography is the language one creates to tell a story – or an abstract visual performance – using human body movements. Although the art of classical ballet, which evolved from the sixteenth-century French court dances, has its own traditional vocabulary, today, the alphabet and terms of choreographic language may vary according to its creator. Just like a fingerprint, the movement language of a choreographer is unique, carrying traces from their background, emotions, and choices in life. Stories have started to be told using choreographic languages since the creation of the genre called *ballet d’action* in the eighteenth century. Still, classical ballet terms are indispensably used in contemporary dance education or during the creation process of today’s choreographies. Moreover, historical texts, legends, folktales and literary masterpieces also inspire choreographic creations.

Another connection established between ballet and literature is the text used during rehearsals. *Libretto* (It.) refers to the words or text of an opera, oratorio, musical, or ballet. Since the beginning, ballet creators, like the ones in the art of opera, have written and used librettos. These texts were written by different actors in the creation process, sometimes by a playwright or a dramaturg, and sometimes by the choreographer himself/herself.⁴ Although the nineteenth-century ballet scene witnessed such collaborations, the twentieth century presented the most striking ones in dance history. Unlike opera librettos, ballet librettos are not given with the programme notes during the performances or archived with the music score. They can mostly be found in the personal archive of the choreographer, within the choreography notes, if preserved.

John Cranko’s *The Taming of the Shrew*

Shakespearean plays such as *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Macbeth*, *A Winter’s Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Othello* have inspired choreographers since the *ballet d’action* era. Another fruitful piece for adapting

3 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-french/choreography>

4 The analysis of the collaborations during the writing process of a libretto is the subject of another research.

the dance scene from the playwright’s heritage is *The Taming of the Shrew*.⁵ This paper mainly focuses on this masterpiece’s 1969 staging, choreographed for the Stuttgart Ballet, by John Cranko (1927-1973).

Cranko is one of the most prominent choreographers of twentieth-century dance art – as mentioned in his official biography given by the The Stuttgart Ballet which he founded, and where he directed, and created his most prominent pieces: “Cranko had a gift for nuanced story-telling and clear dramatic structure”.⁶ He created more than a hundred pieces during his lifetime, and a considerable number of them were literary adaptations. His breakthrough came with a Shakespeare masterpiece adaptation: *Romeo and Juliet* (1958); and after that, his adaptation of Pushkin’s *Onegin* was staged (1965). While directing a company and choreographing in the blooming age of twentieth-century dance, Cranko thought of another masterpiece to complete his trilogy of full-evening narrative works, and that was *The Taming of the Shrew*. He never knew that one day, among his several long or short creations, *The Taming of the Shrew* would become the most popular one: “John picked on this subject, he said, because “I was reading *The Taming of the Shrew* one day, and I suddenly asked myself, why has no one made a ballet of this? It’s so visual” (Percival, 1983, p. 196).

Similar to several twentieth-century dance pieces, *The Taming of the Shrew* is an end-product of a collaboration. Karl Heinz-Stolze and Walter Erich Schäfer⁷ were the thinkers and deciders; dancers Marcia Haydée (b. 1937) as Katherina and Richard Cragun (1944-2012) as Petruchio, who were also Cranko’s life-long friends, contributed to the creation process. Haydée is considered to be Cranko’s prime muse and inspiration throughout his life, while Cragun as a highly talented ballet dancer and Haydée’s partner both on and off stage, was a natural-born Petruchio with his humorous, self-determined character, strong body control and technique.

5 Some of the ballet adaptations of *The Taming of the Shrew* in which the sets and costumes are not related to the Renaissance can be listed as follows: Choreographer Stephen Mills’s version of *The Taming of the Shrew* with music by Antonio Vivaldi, Alessandro Scarlatti, Domenico Scarlatti, and Vincenzo Tomassini in 2004 for Ballet Austin in the United States. 10 years later, in 2014, the acclaimed contemporary choreographer and director of Les Ballets de Montecarlo, Jean-Christophe Maillot created his own version of the piece, with the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, premiered by the Bolshoi Ballet. The latest choreography of *The Taming of the Shrew* is the only production with an original score composed by Jan Kučerain 2018, was choreographed by Alena Pešková for the JK Tyl Theatre in the Czech Republic.

6 <https://www.stuttgart-ballet.de/company/john-cranko/>

7 Prof. Walter Erich Schäfer (1901-1981) was a German dramaturg and playwright who collaborated with John Cranko in the Stuttgart Ballet. The two also authored a book called *Über den Tanz. Gespräche mit Walter Erich Schäfer*, published by S. Fischer Verlag in 1974.

Given the fact that the choice of music is one of the determinant factors for an adaptation to have a long-lasting popularity, the music used in *The Taming of the Shrew* is significant in various aspects. It is observed that Cranko's work is a multi-layered adaptation: Not only the story but also the music is an adaptation: Domenico Scarlatti's (1685-1757) pieces were arranged by Cranko's lifelong friend Karl-Heinz Stolze (1926-1970). As an eighteenth-century composer, Scarlatti is mostly known for his compositions for the keyboard, which cover a significant part of music history structurally and technically. For Cranko's *The Taming of the Shrew*, Karl-Heinz Stolze adapted some pieces from Scarlatti, presenting full-length ballet music with about two hours of duration.⁸ Despite the overall success of the ballet, some dance critics, such as John Percival, discuss this particular choice of music with respect to its negative aspects as well:

With all its virtues, *The Taming of the Shrew* had one serious limitation. Scarlatti had long been one of John's favorite composers, but it was actually Schäfer who suggested using his music for this ballet. As for *Onegin*, Kurt-Heinz Stolze made a score based on a selection of short pieces by the old composer, in this instance from among his 550 keyboard sonatas, freely adapting the music when necessary, as well as arranging it for the orchestra. Although skilfully done, it disturbed some music lovers simply by being done at all, and even for those happy to accept it without complaints of sacrilege, there was a sameness to the score that prevented it from enjoying a full success. (Percival, 1983, p. 197)

Needless to say, that Stolze's attitude towards Scarlatti's music is similar to Cranko's attitude towards Shakespeare's play. In this context, one should keep in mind that the adaptation is a new creation, with intertextual and intermedial connections to previously created works. Hence, the combination of Stolze's composition based on Scarlatti's music and Cranko's choreography based on Shakespeare's play is a unique entity of its own. Furthermore, another aspect of Cranko's multi-layered adaptation is his choreography since it contains various sources, such as some prominent movement motifs of *commedia dell'arte* and dance traditions of the Renaissance. Although Domenico Scarlatti is not a Renaissance composer, his music provides a perfect foundation for

8 The nineteenth century is known to be the golden age of classical ballet, in which most of the masterpieces of this art form are created. *Giselle* (1841), *Le Corsaire* (1856), *Coppelia* (1870), *La Bayadère* (1877) *Swan Lake* (1877), *The Sleeping Beauty* (1889) are brilliant examples of these masterpieces and all are durated almost two hours. This tradition will not continue in the next century but Cranko must have felt this Shakespeare adaptation should be among the classics.

capturing scenes of the era. The relationship between music and dance of that period can be defined as smooth and imitative. Musical ideas match the dances, and motifs performed by the instruments can also be observed in the footworks of the dancer. Using an eighteenth-century music arrangement, Cranko created extremely subtle movement patterns. Nevertheless, one can clearly see that he could not allow himself to add his signature twentieth-century nuances to the piece. For instance, powerful lifts during the first *pas-de-deux*⁹, turn-ins¹⁰, and flexed feet performed by the dancers perfectly reflect their quarrel. The music was planned precisely to accompany the libretto, in which two main things in the original text do not take place; "the plot around Sly" and "the arrival of Vincentio, Lucentio's father." In Percival's words, "as usual, John adapted his source considerably when turning it into dance. Many irrelevances were stripped away, including the prologue of the tinker, Timothy Sly, which John admitted "I could never understand" - in common with most readers and most producers of the play" (Percival, 1983, p. 197).

In accordance with the predominant theme of the source play, the most intriguing moments of the ballet adaptation focus on the taming process, which takes place in three utterly artistic, dynamic, and theatrically strong scenes. These are the two scenes of *pas-de-deux* – danced by the leading couple – and a short scene titled "the horseback journey," which takes place twice. Kate is uncontrollable/"untamed" in the first one, but things change, and she becomes happy, peaceful and "tamed"¹¹ in the second.

John claimed that the essential plot of the ballet was conveyed in their three big duets. In the first, Kate is stronger; by the second Petruchio has the upper hand; and in the third, they find a balance. By this development, and by his sympathetic treatment of Kate, John disarmed at least some of those who find Shakespeare's play unforgivably anti-feminist. John's Kate was a more modern character: a free woman who chooses her own terms for life. (Percival, 1983, p. 196)

9 *Pas-de-deux* (Fr.): Dance for two. This French term of classical ballet is also used for dances for three, four... etc. performers' dances. E.g.: *pas-de-trois*, *pas-de-quatre*.

10 "Turn-in/out" refers to the position of the feet in ballet. While "turn-out" is the base of the six principal positions of the art of ballet, from the beginning of the twentieth century, "turn-in" positions are used by choreographers as a symbol of protesting these hard-to-perform, unnatural positions forced by the tradition.

11 One should note that throughout this paper the word "tamed" is used in quotation marks in order to emphasise the patriarchal view that is alluded in the title of the source play as well as the ballet adaptation.

All three scenes emphasize what Shakespeare underlines about the leading roles. Although some ballet and dance critics of the 1970s, especially from the United States, argued that the physical actions of Kate – such as punching and kicking – are far away from Shakespeare’s description of the character, one should not forget that creating movement from a text may give rise to such actions in order for the feeling to be reflected plainly. In order to allow the most vocal character of the source play to “speak” her mind without words, Cranko’s choreography provides her with a physical platform and liberty. Hence, the tension between the two leading characters is presented through sharp and strong body movements. Furthermore, in terms of gender relations, which is the predominant theme of the storyline, the 1960s and 1970s were challenging times. As Isenberg mentions,

only months before John Cranko’s 1969 ballet of *Taming of the Shrew* opened in Stuttgart, German feminists had begun their separatist movement by marching angrily out of leftist political rallies and throwing tomatoes at the men they had once considered their comrades. A whip-cracking Petruchio, and in the final scene a submissive Kate – as the earlier twentieth century had been portraying them – conflicted harshly with the feminist call for a new sexual politics. Cranko took up the challenge and in his choreography articulated a progressively more balanced relationship between Kate and Petruchio. He did this through a series of three pas de deux that provide the structural foundations of his work. (Isenberg, 2016, p. 1824)

The particular interest in Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew* in 1960s can be linked to the heated discussions concerning gender equality and women’s rights of the era in light of the second wave feminist movement in Europe and the United States. While Betty Friedan, the author of *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), founded National Organization for Woman (NOW) in 1966, Action Council for Women’s Liberation (*Aktionsrat für die Befreiung der Frauen*) was initiated in West Berlin in 1968. The questions and criticism raised by such organizations around the globe were inevitably reflected in the artistic works of the period as well. Only two years before Cranko’s ballet adaptation, Franco Zeffirelli’s film adaptation with the same title, featuring Elizabeth Taylor as Kate and Richard Burton as Petruchio, becomes a huge success, associating the fictional couple with the then-married leading actors. The debates concerning Katherina’s final speech presenting her – on the surface – as a submissive wife acknowledging her husband’s absolute power as the patriarch is challenged and left open to discussion through

Elizabeth Taylor's acting and Franco Zeffirelli's direction. In this respect, Cranko's choreography, which displays the changes in the dynamics of the couple's relationship too, is a visual sign of his perception of (and commentary on) the source text.

As far as Kerby-Fulton is concerned, "Cranko's Kate is an intelligent nonconformist who disdains the pallid (and ultimately superficial) sweetness of her sister's winning ways as much as she disdains the suitors stupid enough to fall for them" (Kerby-Fulton, 1993, p. 1386). As a consequence of what Shakespearean scholarship presented for centuries, modern and contemporary adaptors are able to reflect the previous arguments in their adaptations in accordance with their own points of view. Hence, Katherina's reasons for being the "shrew" are reflected in Cranko's choreography more evidently, although she only uses her body as a tool for communication. In Kerby-Fulton's words, Katherina's "shrewishness, in its comic moments, is clearly promoted by sibling rivalry, but in its more serious moments, it reflects the dilemma of the woman unwilling to play the conventional courtship game, for whom antisocial behaviour is the only line of defense" (Kerby-Fulton, 1993, p. 1386). On the other hand, Cranko's depiction of Petruchio is utterly energetic and fun loving.

The first *pas-de-deux* of Kate and Petruchio, in other words, their first real dialogue, is the most popular scene of Cranko's adaptation. The battle between the two main characters is highly physical and utterly speedy. While Petruchio intends to turn Kate into a puppet-like creature whose body and, hence, mind he can control, Kate fights back and proves her strength against the patriarchal limitations imposed upon her.

John Cranko's Kate in his *Taming of the Shrew*, however, is as far a cry from ballet's virginal Giselles, seductive sylphs, and fairy-tale Cinderellas as she is from its Juliets, Desdemonas, and Ophelias. She shows no signs of the ballerina's grace and delicacy of line or movement when she stomps across the stage hard on her heels, chin out, arms pumping aggressively, when she lifts her leg with bent knee and flexed foot, and extends her arm with a thrust and a punch. But if we stop for a moment to reflect on the ballerina as a real woman who to achieve her art and a place of prominence in a world of fierce competition must show great strength, resolution, and self-assertiveness, we can see Cranko's Kate bringing this real woman into the limelight – the dancing woman who knows her own mind and is determined to get what she wants. (Isenberg, 2016, p. 1824)

As the couple moves away from their social environment and thus gets closer to one another, their communication, as well as their dance, starts to change as well. It can be suggested that the mutual understanding between the two characters starts to form and is made visible to the audience before the finale. Kerby-Fulton comments on one of the most significant scenes, focusing on the gradual understanding and communication growing between Katherina and Petruchio:

By the fourth scene of Act II, all sense of the imperious tamer has disappeared and there is an almost quixotic element in his insistence, for example, that Kate dutifully agree that a bystander is a water pump because he says so. Kate catches the spirit and Cranko transforms what seemed an absurd and whimsical test of her submissiveness in Shakespeare into a moment of fun as she enters into his imaginative world by gamely trying to extract water from the peasant's arm. (Kerby-Fulton, 1993, p. 1386)

In the source play, Katherina's final speech (V.ii.lines 137-180), where she underlines the need for female subservience in the relationship between man and woman, is still open to debate: On the one hand, Shakespeare is sternly criticized for presenting her as a champion of male supremacy, against which she seems to be fighting in the beginning of the play. On the other hand, the opposing view suggests that her final speech is ironic, and it is basically designed as Katherina's strategy to survive in that misogynistic society. Given the fact that the referred monologue is the longest speech in the source play, it would be problematic to agree with the argument that the final speech is a testimony that Katherina is tamed. Besides, it is apparent that Cranko's choreography is in accordance with the second view as well. Both the music and the body movements in the final scene suggest that Katherina and Petruchio come to terms with their differences, and there is finally genuine harmony between the couple. The aggressive movements in the first *pas-de-deux* are replaced by unified and softer dance figures, which are accompanied by a serene melody.

Conclusion

As Julie Sanders states, "dance is undoubtedly a highly kinetic discourse" (Sanders, 2007, p. 65). Hence, it is possible to read and discuss a ballet choreography like a narrative written in verbal language. In that respect, the narrative techniques and/or theatre conventions are reflected with slight differences in the ballet form as well. The

wedding scene in the final act can be described as a *tour de force*, a well-known tradition of classical ballet companies on such productions, which present a crowded cast. Colourful costumes and plain scenery match the times of the source text. Cranko deliberately chooses not to adapt his choreography to twentieth century by keeping the mood and atmosphere of the Shakespearean Renaissance comedy taking place in Padua, Italy.

One should keep in mind that this choreography was created specifically for a famous and talented couple, Marcia Haydée and her partner Richard Cragun. Hence, it is possible to suggest that Shakespeare and a real-life ballet couple are the muses of this adaptation. Both soloists were ready to devote themselves to the piece. On the home video recording of the ballet, an interview with the prima ballerina Marcia Haydée gives information about the creation process and her motivation during the performance. She states that she had quite a hard time because she had never danced in a comedy role before, and she thanks Cranko and her partner Cragun for their support. The dancers in the supporting roles in the original cast were; Susanne Hanke as Bianca, Heinz Claus as Lucentio, Egon Madsen as Gremio and John Neumeier¹² as Hortensio.¹³

Although the music of the ballet is an adaptation of various works composed by Scarlatti, it can be suggested that it communicates to the story and characters written and adapted by Shakespeare. This multi-layered adaptation presents the audience how the body can communicate without words and how Scarlatti’s music reenacts the Shakespearean atmosphere with techniques that are unique to ballet and dance.

The dialogues or group speeches were adapted to the ballet by Cranko, using the same structure as the source text. In other words, the dialogues were choreographed

12 John Neumeier (b. 1939): Beside dancing in the original cast of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Neumeier is another important figure in twentieth century dance. The American dancer and choreographer became the director of the Hamburg Ballet in 1973 and since then, he has choreographed several pieces, including literary adaptations for ballet from the works of Shakespeare such as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1977), *As You Like It* (1985), *Othello* (opera, 1977), *Hamlet* (1997). Apart from these, *Shakespeare’s Lovers* (1985) is a special project in which Neumeier combined the *pas-de-deux* from his Shakespeare’s adaptations. The only guest choreographer of this project was John Cranko with his famous *pas-de-deux* choreography from *The Taming of the Shrew*.

13 Unfortunately, there is no open-access visual recording of Cranko’s ballet with the original cast and leading roles performed by the legendary couple Marcia Haydée and Richard Cragun. The Stuttgart Ballet’s official DVD recording of John Cranko’s *The Taming of the Shrew* is a production of UNITEL in co-production with NHK, SWR, ARTE and Stuttgart Ballet. The DVD is recorded live at the opera house of the State Theatre Stuttgart in 2022.

as *pas-de-deux*, the three, four, or more peoples' speeches as *pas-de-trois*, *pas-de-quatres*, and so on. In Cranko's choreography, Bianca and her suitors are the supporting roles. Nevertheless, the choreographer assigns high-level technical tasks to these characters as well. They are expected to be physically well-conditioned dancers and refined comedians simultaneously. In addition, Bianca and Lucentio are almost the second stars of the ballet, showing their technical talents in the two *pas-de-deux* created for themselves in the piece.

Given the fact that the duration of a ballet in accordance with the norms and conventions of the particular art requires a significant number of omissions during the adaptation process, it is striking to see that Cranko introduces new characters and sup-plots to the source text, such as "a sub-plot about Lucentio's tricking his two rivals for the hand of Kate's sister, Bianca, into marrying a couple of whores in the belief that it is Bianca herself they are wedding" (Percival, 1983, p. 197). This can obviously be read as a direct consequence of the fact that this particular ballet adaptation is created by John Cranko, basing his story on Shakespeare's almost four hundred years old play. Hence, the additions as well as the omissions are reflective of Cranko's liberty as a creator.

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