

Music, Literature, Dance and Fashion | Dance and entertainment | Modern dance and entertainment

"I wanted to create a new form of art, an art completely irrelevant to the usual theories, an art giving to the soul and the senses at the same time complete delight, where reality and dream, light and sound, movement and rhythm form an exciting unity." (Loie Fuller)

Among the cultural innovations of the Arab and Ottoman world in the 19th century were the European-style vaudeville theatres that staged a variety of performances including dance and operetta. Local cultural life was able to absorb some European genres according to the specific style and theatrical traditions of the region, such as ortaoyunu (Turkish folk theatre) and tuluat (improvisational theatre). European-style musical instruments and singing, in addition to French and Italian operetta, became part of the Arab and Ottoman cultural landscape. As well as the new theatre venues, the ballroom became fashionable among the elite as a place to practise dancing the waltz, quadrille, polka and foxtrot. In late 19th- and early 20th-century Europe, as a result of the meeting between the "Eastern" and "Western" cultural traditions, the Orientalist art scene provided modern dance performances and entertainments that gave symbolic expression to an era; eccentric and mystic shows that made extensive use of the bare feet and bent knees seen extensively in dances of the "East". New entertainment venues that appeared in the Near and Middle East during this century include music and cabaret halls, opera and theatre houses, and bars.



Working Number: FR 180

Name: Loie Fuller: the serpentine dance

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 19th century

Materials: -

Curator Justification: The work of Loie Fuller (1862#1928) provided a bridge between Romanticism and Modernism, between ballet and multiple forms of "new dance".



Working Number: FR 164

Name: Les Folies Turques: quadrille

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1875

Materials: -

Curator Justification: The quadrille, a fashionable dance for couples, was first experienced in the elite ballrooms of Europe and Istanbul in the 19th century.



Working Number: FR 049

Name: Folies Rambuteau. New quartet from the Auvergne.

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1885

Materials: -

Curator Justification: The Folies Bergère that opened in Paris in 1869 became world famous for light entertainment, which included operettas, comic opera, popular song and gymnastics.



Working Number: FR 181

Name: Bob Walter [veiled dancer]

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1898

Materials: -

Curator Justification: The "Serpentine dance" was choreographed specifically to be performed in theatrical lighting, its plays of light paying homage to the recent invention of electricity, and presented a blend of "Oriental" fantasy and classical dance.



Working Number: FR 182

Name: Shéhérazade, a ballet by Michel Fokine. Stage sketch.

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1913

Materials: -

Curator Justification: Scheherazade is a ballet based on the central character of the Arabian Nights, which combines dazzling, colourful orchestration with the European fascination for the "East".



Working Number: FR 163

Name: La Sahrienne: Arab dance for piano

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1911

Materials: -

Curator Justification: At the beginning of the 20th century, Orientalist-inspired European composers used harmonic motifs from Arab and Ottoman musical compositions.



Working Number: TR2 159

Name: Pera Palace Hotel

Holding Museum: Istanbul University, Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi (Rare Books Library)

Date: 1892

Materials: Photograph

Curator Justification: The Pera Palas Hotel, built at the end of the 19th century in the highly fashionable Western-style cultural district of Beyoğlu (Pera) Istanbul, was specifically designed to accommodate affluent tourists travelling on the Orient Express.



Working Number: TR2 062

Name: Beethoven at the Palace

Holding Museum: Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Painting and Sculpture Museum

Date: 1915

Materials: Oil on canvas

Curator The Westernisation period of the Ottoman Empire gave way to an

Justification: increasing interest in Western polyphony and primarily at the Ottoman court Western-style instruments became very popular.
