

Analysis of Anna Pavlova: Your Autograph Please

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Age: 14

Date of Birth: February 13, 1996

Anna Pavlova was formally trained in Russia at St. Petersburg's Imperial Ballet School with mentors such as Enrico Cecchetti, Christian Johanssen, Pavel Gerd, and Marius Petipa. She performed in many of Petipa's timeless classics we still know today such as *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Pavlova traveled for years with her company making several tours through Europe and the Americas. Her works were revered as poetic and beautiful by many even with the set back of her size and frail appearance. When her company first debuted in America the beauty of the dance had awed the audience to the point that they could no longer put words to it. Anna Pavlova's dream was not to be forever remembered by all classical ballerinas as the greatest classical dancer, her dream was to dance to share her gift with the world. By sharing this gift with the world Pavlova inspired many girls of her time and many girls even now, in our time. She had dreamed of being a dancer since she had seen her first ballet at the age of eight. It was Petipa's classic *The Sleeping Beauty* that caught her attention and inspired her to achieve greatness on the dance floor.

Pavlova not only became a great dancer but she did it while overcoming the stereotype for ballet dancers of that time. She was originally believed to be too small and frail to deal with the intense schedule it took to become a great dancer. Anna Pavlova pushed through this hardship and set a new standard for dancers to follow. She never seemed to be as muscular as the other dancers of time because she was not bulky, though she was strong. Very serious dancers now tend to have similar builds to Pavlova, small and delicate but strong. Her struggle with her size changed the world's view of dance. It showed everyone from that age that with dedication anyone can dance, and dance well. Pavlova was dedicated enough to spend her entire life past the age of eight dance classical ballet as well as travel the world exposing people to new

dance moves techniques and styles. By doing this she became the most famous dancer to be known in the European world.

Anna Pavlova was the star of many great ballets that are still recognized today. She and her company almost always featured Pavlova's two favorite ballets, *The Swan Lake* and *the Sleeping Beauty*, gaining them much popularity. Other dances the company performed were *Giselle*, *The Bacchanale*, and *The Swan*. *Giselle* was another featured classic from Petipa that Pavlova's company performed on a regular basis. *The Bacchanale* was an original duet from Pavlova and was dedicated to one of her former students who she had cared for very much. Finally the world-wide known ballet *The Swan* was Pavlova's twist of *Swan Lake* that focused more on the exact happenings and feelings of the swan. Pavlova continuously starred in all of these productions still earning them all further fame and appreciation. *The Swan* is the most well-known for its eerily beautiful music and dance moves. Anna Pavlova adapted classical dance moves to portray the motions and emotions of a swan.

On Pavlova's first tour through the Americas it was one of the first ballets many in the audience had ever seen. Because of this they were reduced to calling many extravagant, beautiful steps simple names such as twirls, jumps, and spins, but the beauty was not lost on these people. Over all Pavlova had five tours through America. She also had several tours in locations across the world such as Japan, China, India, Burma, Egypt, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, England, Germany, and Russia. At each of these places Pavlova absorbed the different cultures and interpreted them into her new dance techniques. What was produced was considered, at the time, shocking, innovative, and very different from the typical idea of Russian Ballet. Anna Pavlova helped create many of common dance moves that we use today that were thought of as strange back then. She helped pave the roadway for the modern ballet dancer.

All of the above are great accomplishments, but none of Anna Pavlova's accomplishments are greater than the inspirations she has given to so many girls, including me. Everything she has done she's done she did for not only herself but also for her audiences. The beauty and grace she portrayed in her ballets despite her slight, frail figure can teach us that no matter what the circumstances we can power through the hardships. We can make our dreams reality but only if we truly want it and have the determination to stick to it through the end. The message in her original work *The Swan* really emphasizes this theme as we watch a beautiful girl turn into a swan and have to face dangers and many hardships to try to become human again. Pavlova defeated the smalls odd of size that was against her and created many stunning and inspirational pieces that teach us lessons of love, death, and persistence.

Anna Pavlova has taught me to be strong and ready to face any challenges that face me as I reach for my goal. She pushed ballet to a new level of depth and beauty as she developed new ways to portray different scenes in life. Pavlova is my inspiration to keep working to be better in dance despite setbacks. She also inspires me to apply this idea to every portion of my life. Pavlova held her head high when she was a young student, in the height of her dancing career, and when her career was coming to an end. If I could go back in time and get Anna Pavlova's autograph I would look at it every time that I felt that I could not go on and remember how well she held her head high and worked through every setback she faced. Pavlova inspires me a great deal and I plan on using her concepts throughout my life so I can be strong and proud of what I have done in the world as I move through to the end of life.