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Front of the cover: Róża Puzynowska – II act. "The Chosen One" with Magdalena Ciechowicz – the First Soloist of The Polish National Ballet Company. 22 carat gold flakes, silver leaves and powdered gold with oil on canvas. Size 210 x 120 cm.

Back of the cover: Róża Puzynowska – II act. "7 Ancestors, 3 Bear Skins and ROZA's selfportrait" with Polish National Ballet Dancers – Adam Kozal and Zbyszek Czapski-Kloda. Oil, 22 carat gold flakes and powdered gold on canvas. Size: 210 x 187 cm.

TRENDS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES



**AVANT 3/2013**



**A Laboratory of Spring**  
Special Issue

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Witold Wachowski (managing editor),  
Przemysław Nowakowski, Monika Włodzik

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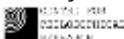
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## Preface

Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present a special issue of Avant, an online version of anthology "A Laboratory of Spring" that will be published in print in English as well as in Polish. It is a remarkable and multidimensional collection published on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the premiere of "The Rite of Spring" by Igor Stravinsky. The articles cover the field of musicology as well as history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethnography and cognitive science of music.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our special gratitude to the Peer-Reviewers – outstanding specialists in the aforementioned fields – as well as to some Authors who are absent here, but who supported us during the preparation of this issue.

Editorial Board  
*Torun–Warsaw*  
*Winter 2013*





**LABORATORY**





## A Laboratory of Spring. Introduction

It sometimes happens that when we go to a concert and the first sounds of music fill the air we are forced to discreetly silence our light-heartedly chattering companions.

But at times, we also have to put the music on hold and give the words their due. An occasion such as the 100th anniversary of the premiere of "The Rite of Spring" by Igor Stravinsky – celebrated in 2013 – is one of those moments when somebody ought to speak up out of necessity, with authority, and the usual pomp and circumstance. Stravinsky's work certainly deserves the highest accolades, and has received plenty. But not all commentators have been equally kind. Each Stravinsky has his own Adorno.

This volume is not quite an instance of the latter. It is not so much a tribute to the work or to the composer but to a certain epoch. "The Rite of Spring" – brought into existence by the creative strokes of Stravinsky, Vaslav Nijinsky as well as Sergei Diaghilev, painted against the social and cultural backdrop of their era – shines brightly in its own right but has also led the path for many others. It is not an isolated, unchanging creation which passes through many decades and generations without being transformed itself. Of course, source analyses, attempts at reconstruction or elimination of later influences are incredibly tempting and enrich our musical culture. However, there is also another temptation: Is it possible to reconstruct the sensitivity of the original spectators? This is why asking what really happened on May 29, 1913 at the Paris Théâtre des Champs Élysées is a bit like asking what happened on February 14, 1900 at the Hanging Rock. It is hard to say if what we have in mind are either the historical events that took place on that day, or how they were experienced by the people who took part in this performance. Will any laboratories of the future be able to "recreate" their sensibility – whatever that means – and who should we expect to work there? Musicologists? Neuroscientists? Psychologists of music? And perhaps also poets?

Therefore, the heroes of "A Laboratory of Spring" are first and foremost our authors, some already famous and accomplished, others no less worthy of our attention for their wits and talents. Surely they do not speak with one voice and not about the same issues. But they comprise the age after "The Rite".

We start our issue with a kind of diary that was kept by Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer (*Ballets Old & New*, London) during their staging of "The Rite of Spring". It is followed by a series of papers in which Stravinsky's work is analyzed from multiple perspectives, and examining a great variety of questions. Featured in our special issue are contributions by Pieter van den Toorn (University of California, Santa Barbara), Hanna Järvinen (The University of the Arts, Helsinki), Lucy Weir (University of Glasgow), Helen Sills (International Society for the Study of Time), Piotr Przybysz (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan), Howard Gardner (Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge), Timothy D. Taylor (University of California, Los Angeles), and Richard Taruskin (University of California, Berkeley). The issue concludes with an interview that we conducted with painter Róża Puzynowska (who graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, and created the paintings displayed on our cover page).

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December 2013

d i a r y





**HODSON & ARCHER**





## Landmarks in the Life of the Reconstructed *Sacre*

Millicent Hodson & Kenneth Archer

In the midst of the centenary year of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, when *Avant* asked us to contribute something about our reconstruction of this legendary ballet, we knew the pace of our peripatetic lives would not allow us to write a new text. Much of the year we are away from our London base to stage the works that we have reconstructed or created through Ballets Old & New, our dance and design partnership.

But we travelled even more during the *Sacre* centenary, participating in conferences, festivals, exhibitions and lecture series as well as staging our productions. So we suggested that *Avant* publish in Polish the diary we wrote while first producing *Sacre* in St. Petersburg at the Mariinsky, the theatre which gave the world this ballet's original creators: the composer, Igor Stravinsky; scenarist and designer, Nicholas Roerich and choreographer, Vaslav Nijinsky.

The Mariinsky production and diary marked a turning point in our work. That was 2003, about halfway through the twenty-five years between our 1987 world premiere of the reconstruction with the Joffrey Ballet in the United States and the far flung celebrations of the *Sacre* centenary.

Now 2013 has come and gone. Perhaps the ghosts from the riotous Parisian *Sacre* of 1913 are glad for some peace and quiet. For our part, the two of us appreciate the chance for Polish readers to share our 2003 diary, entitled "Seven Days from Several Months at the Mariinsky."

Yet another landmark in the history of our project came in 2011, when Krzysztof Pastor and the Polish National Ballet invited us to stage *Sacre* at the Teatr Wielki, where Nijinsky's parents had danced. That was reason enough to cherish the opportunity to do *Sacre* in Warsaw. But also, the dancer Marie Rambert, who had served as Nijinsky's assistant for rehearsals in 1913, was Polish, and a special bond had existed between them. Rambert's notes on a Stravinsky piano score were crucial to our reconstruction and Millicent published them in facsimile in her book *Nijinsky's Crime Against Grace* (Pendragon, New York, 1996). Furthermore, many of Sergei Diaghilev's dancers in the so-called Ballets Russes were actually Polish, as documented by the Wielki's archivist, Pavel Chynowski, in the souvenir programme for *Sacre* performances there.

All of these facts added to our excitement about the Warsaw production. We were not disappointed. The dancers and design staff gave themselves passionately to the process and have kept the work in repertoire since its 2011 premiere. In our new book, *The Lost Rite* (London, 2014) we feature the Wielki dancers in Shira Klasmer's 400 stop-frame photographs of the choreography, each one linked to a quote from critics or participants in the original *Sacre*. So the reader can follow the ballet visually while “hearing the voices” of 1913. We like to think that the book is part of Nijinsky’s repatriation as a Polish artist, although it covers, of course, the full quarter century of our work on *Sacre*.

As an introduction to the 2003 Mariinsky diary which follows, we have prepared an album of photographs from our work with the Polish National Ballet. The reconstructed *Sacre* is featured in a number of films and can be seen periodically in the dozen or so countries around the world where we have set the ballet. We hope Polish readers of *Avant* will have the chance to see the the ballet live onstage at the Teatr Wielki and by mid 2014 they can “read” *Sacre* in *The Lost Rite*.

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All pictures in the Diary are published with kind permission  
of Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer.

Persons:

Slava: Vyacheslav Khomyakov  
Lyudmila Sveshnikova  
Alexei Mironov  
Kristina Ivanenko  
Tatiana Bessarabova  
Sonya: Sofia Yadchenko  
Pavel Gershenson  
Tanya: Tatiana Noginova  
Irina Sitnikova  
Andrei Garbuz



## Seven Days from Several Months at the Mariinsky<sup>1</sup>

**Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer**

Ballets Old & New, London

<http://www.hodsonarcher.com>

Received 04 April 2013; accepted 20 November 2013; published Winter 2013/2014.

### Saturday, 15 February—Chosen Ones

So this is it, the great Mariinsky Theatre, where Nijinsky began his meteoric career as a dancer, and where Diaghilev poached him for the Ballets Russes. By the age of 23 Nijinsky had become the most celebrated dancer in the world, caused a riot in Paris with his choreography for *The Rite of Spring*, eloped with a Hungarian socialite on tour in South America and then been banished from the Ballets Russes by the jealous and lovelorn Diaghilev.

Because of Nijinsky and his *Rite* we are standing in Teatralnaya Square looking up at the Mariinsky. It is 20° below zero. Our job is to stage the 1913 version of the *Rite* with its multitude of handpainted costumes by Roerich. Nijinsky was the first of some one hundred choreographers to tackle Stravinsky's tumultuous score. We spent almost a decade reconstructing this first version and another decade setting it on companies in Europe and the Americas. Yet bringing it to Russia, to St Petersburg, to this theatre, is a dream come true. In the months to come we may call it a nightmare. Colleagues have catalogued the problems of working here. "Nonetheless, you will love the Russians," a friend at the Royal Ballet reassured us. "It will be difficult, but it will be all right on the night," said Balanchine contacts, recalling their heroic struggle to stage the triple bill of *Jewels*.

A 19th century architectural wonder, the Mariinsky is now wrapped in plastic and ice-clad scaffolding. The city is racing to finish its many renovations before the 300th anniversary celebrations in June. High on the front of the theatre a vast poster depicts the Mariinsky's legendary director Valery Gergiev, mastermind of the festival, which will feature the *Rite*, and beside the maestro in silhouette is the Bronze Horseman, symbol of the city and its founder Peter

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<sup>1</sup> The first version of this diary was published in online magazine *ballet.co.uk*

the Great. Freezing winds buffet the poster so that it buckles and shrieks like the sail of a ship in a storm. We shiver in deep snow, hoping this operatic welcome by the elements is not an ill omen.

Inside the theatre we are greeted warmly—once we get past the bureaucratic barrier of doormen who shoulder their duties with Cold War severity. We watch the Kirov in class, welcomed as *gosti* from abroad, and luxuriate in the forest of classically curved limbs and perfectly turned out feet. The original *Rite of Spring* requires the dancers to invert their technique, with toes turned in and elbows glued to the ribs. Stravinsky called Nijinsky's Maidens "knock-kneed Lolitas." In 1913 the Mariinsky dancers mutinied during the *Rite* rehearsals. Ninety years on, we wonder how they will cope.



Millicent Hodson in rehearsal for *Rite of Spring* with dancers from The Kirov Ballet  
Photograph © Valentin Baranovsky

The ballet director, Makhar Vasiev, ushers us into his office. A former principal dancer of the Kirov and a princely man by nature, he is an amiable host with English so good he can entertain us with his wit. But he is pressed and so are we. There is a lot to do. "You haven't even started your ballet with us and I am already booking it on tour. Today, I agreed London, Covent Garden. It's crazy, but nice, don't you think?" We talk about casting, especially for the Chosen One who dances the violent five-minute solo at the end of the *Rite*. One ballerina who interests us is guesting with a New York company but may return. Another has an injury. We mention yet another, listing her special quali-

ties for the role, which Vasiev confirms, but informs us she is pregnant. Nijinsky had the same problem with his sister, Bronislava, but worse. He had created the solo on her, sculpting each movement. Then she became pregnant in the run-up to the premiere, and he had to start all over again on Maria Piltz. In the end with Vasiev we name three Chosen Ones: the renowned ballerina Iulia Makhalina, the new star Daria Pavlenko and the rising young soloist Alexandra Iosifidi. Already we speculate about how they will individually approach the role.

But now we must embark on a journey to the upper realms of the theatre, where we meet with technical staff about costumes and decors. We take them through the two acts of the ballet, group by group, scene by scene. Act I takes place in the daytime. Archaic Slavic tribes anticipate the spring with games and ceremonies. We explain that Nijinsky treats this primitive scenario as a modern canvas, deploying blocks of colour and bolts of energy. But all the while he builds the ritual, using motifs on the Roerich costumes as ground patterns for the dancers. The staff become intrigued and pour over our dossiers. Act II, at night, begins with Maidens in a moonlit labyrinth. One is chosen by fate to dance herself to death to ensure the return of spring. Ancestors in bearskins lift her as an offering to the sun god Yarilo. At *Sleeping Beauty*, one of many ballets we will enjoy, we see Pierre Lacotte, here to reconstruct *Ondine*. He saw us do the *Rite* at the Paris Opera and urges us to teach the Kirov in the same way. Soon, during Petersburg's dark wintry days, we will start the sunlit scenes of Act I. How could we know now our premiere will be postponed and that we will set the nocturnal dances of Act II in the season of the midnight sun.

## II. Thursday, 6 March—Divinations

We are back from London to start rehearsals. Snow swirls around us. English wool is no match for this kind of cold. We buy serious hats at Gostiny Dvor, a sort of imperial Selfridges on Nevsky Prospect. The hats are bordered with fur, like the ones Roerich designed for *The Rite of Spring*. It makes us wonder how long the freeze lasts. We hurry back to the theatre to rehearse the men in the first scene of Act I, with its shifting rhythms and insistent jumps. In the ritual they pound the earth with their feet, warming it, making it ready for the rays of the sun. The scene is called *Augurs of Spring* and the men divine the future by leaping over twigs. We ask them, "Who is the best jumper?" A chorus replies, "Grisha." The young Popov, fresh from the Vaganova School, looks like an elongated Baryshnikov. His partners raise the twig mischievously high, but he clears it with the ease of a mountain goat. This form of fortune telling the men learn from a character dancer, who scurries among them, hunched double. She is listed in the ballet as the Old Woman of 300 Years. The men joke that she is the same age as St Petersburg.



Two of Seven Maidens & Elder, Act 1/7 - Circling the Sage. Sketch by Millicent Hodson ©. Source 'Nijinsky's Crime Against Grace', by Millicent Hodson, Pendragon Press 1996. An exhibition of Millicent Hodson drawings of 'Rite of Spring' is being held at Gallery K, London, from the 27 July - 20 August 2003.

At the door of the studio faces appear, looking in on the commotion. The men take to this ballet immediately, punching the air with pent up power. They must dance one rhythm with their arms and another with their feet. Expletives of frustration. Millicent shouts the counts. Slava, the ballet master, joins in, helping fix her Russian. Kenneth shows Lyudmila and Alexei, the pianist and stage manager, our documents for the next scene. Our translator Kristina

gets all of us out of linguistic snares. At first some women seem bewildered in the rehearsals, but a few, like Ti Yon Riu, push to the extremes the *Rite* requires. Gradually, others follow suit, and before long the studio is filled with Maidens who look beautiful gripping the ground with flat feet and clapping with spatula hands. "There is a grace here," said Jacques Riviere, defending Nijinsky's ballet in 1913, "one more profound than in *Spectre de la Rose*."

We need to establish a long-term rehearsal schedule. So we speak with Tatiana, one of Vasiev's assistant directors, showing her the timetable agreed in our contracts. We are guaranteed thirty days with a minimum of three hours per day for the full cast plus extra time for small groups and soloists. "*Nevozmozhna!*" (Impossible), she responds. "The company performs different ballets every night and must rehearse them. And we must prepare the tours." Thus we encounter for the first time what we call the "Kirov enigma." We discover it has daunted an honour roll of guest choreographers and répétiteurs. Some, it is said, are driven to rage, others to tears. Some pack their bags and leave. The enigma is—how to stage a work new to the company when all the time is booked for its normal routine. No time for novelties.

We take our scheduling problem to Vasiev, who convenes his three assistant directors: Sonya (she speaks English) is administrator and trouble-shooter; Pavel (he speaks French) focuses on repertoire and stagecraft; and Tatiana, who supervises schedules and casting. With his team Vasiev reviews the Kirov's forthcoming commitments and calculates days when the women are more in demand for ballets like *Swan Lake* and *Giselle*. He arranges for the men to have extra *Rite* rehearsals in that period. And he reminds his assistant directors of the special stylistic demands of Nijinsky's ballet.

After the meeting we return to our lodgings at the Lokosphinx, an impressive colonnaded building on Griboedova Canal opposite the famous Lion Bridge - familiar from Dostoevsky. Petersburg is like Venice with ice. Yet our rooms are too hot. No way to turn down the heat—a vestige of Soviet ways, we are told, when everyone got the same, want it or not. So windows are flung open to subzero gales. No wonder we are all fighting the flu. But what matters is that we feel at home here.

The Lokosphinx is more a residence than a hotel. No sign on the door reveals its identity as a haven for hard working Mariinsky guests. We meet the French architect Xavier Fabre and his team who are planning massive renovation of the theatre. The opera director Julia Pevzner arrives from Tel Aviv to do *Rheingold* and *Valkyrie*. Before long we are joined by our American colleague Howard Sayette, who is staging *Les Noces*, on the same programme as the *Rite*. Giovanna Avanzi, a costumier from Italy, has brought her husband and baby while she works on Puccini's *Il trittico*. We pass each other in the Mariinsky corridors, but breakfast is the only time our schedules mesh. We share news of the war in Iraq, complain about the weather and de-stress in

four languages about our projects. Whatever the state of current affairs, the daily temperature or our various productions, the breakfast club at the Lokosphinx is a happy occasion. The lady chefs invent for us an "omlet vesni" (spring omelette), with lots of parsley and dill, to fortify our work on Nijinsky's ballet.

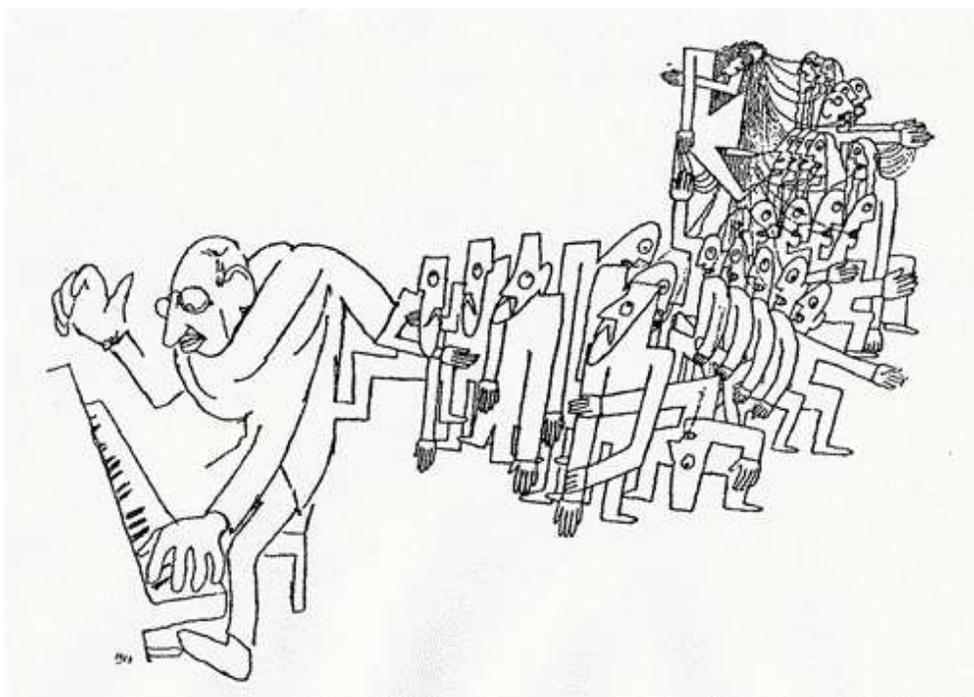
### III. Wednesday 19 March—Meltdown

Slush on the pavements, as Pavel walks us to the decor workshop, inspires hope that winter will come to an end eventually. We had proposed going with the painters to see Roerich works at the State Russian Museum, where as graduate students we did research two decades ago. But at the meeting we found Roerich monographs and catalogues piled on the workshop table. The painters knew and valued Roerich's art. Now we are back to see progress on the backdrops. The workshop is vast, old-fashioned and congenial. Russian pop music, complete with static, plays in the background. Canvases for the *Rite* are spread on the floor, surrounded by buckets of paint, brushes and broomsticks with sponges. We scale the steps of the long catwalk to study the huge canvases from above. The painters engage us in debate on various points, translated by Vasiev's aide Ugana. We arrange to have the backdrops hung in the theatre soon to check sightlines and wing positions—that is to be our first step on the hallowed stage of the Mariinsky.

The dancers have survived the second scene, *Ritual of Abduction*, with its primitive version of a silent movie chase and brute duets where the men bounce the women with abstract emotion. We move into scene 3, *Spring Rounds*, and the five-part counterpoint. The men, who have had more time than the women, have advanced further, but they struggle with the syncopations and fragmented structure. We make a big chart on the back of an old Kirov poster as a cue sheet for the five groups.

Musicologists know that Stravinsky mined collections of Russian folk music for motifs. But these are scholarly matters. We do not expect them to surface during the pressures of rehearsal in St Petersburg. The women are scheduled from 8.50 to 10.00 pm. Some are still jetlagged from a recent tour. All are wide-eyed with fatigue. They throw their arms and stamp their feet in a section Nijinsky called "oy dee la do," according to notes on the piano score, made by his assistant Marie Rambert. She added his stage direction, "as though they were singing an old folk song." The women lock wrists with each other in *kumlenie* (ritual pacts). Lyudmila at the piano starts to chant over the Stravinsky score: "gori gori," exclaiming, "They are calling in the spring, evoking it by magic." She recognizes the composer's source, remembering it from her youth. The women come alive, astonished but delighted. Like the crowd in *Petrushka* entranced by the Magician's flute, we cluster around the piano. Lyudmila chants again. The dancers mark the movement. Nijinsky's next in-

struction is "*maslo*" (butter). They must melt, like butter or ice, from the *staccato* wrist locks into the *tranquillo* coda. The women dance this section with particular zeal. They understand that their energy, like the sun, will bring the spring, and its *Rite*, into being.



Jean Cocteau's 1913 cartoon of Stravinsky playing *The Rite* with Nijinsky's dancers multiplying movement in geometrical progression.

Since *Sleeping Beauty* in February we have seen *Chopiniana*, *Carmen*, *Le Jeune Homme et La Mort*, *Swan Lake* and two versions of *Nutcracker*, some but not all of what the dancers have performed. The standard is predictably high; comparable to the many Kirov performances we have seen on tours in Europe and the Americas. Now, as we watch them at home, somewhat familiar with the life behind Golovine's gorgeous front curtain, we are confronted with the cost of our pleasure. It is no secret that Kirov dancers feel overworked and underpaid. That fact ceases to be a statistic when you face them in the studio at all hours of the day and night. During rehearsal we tell the Chosen Ones their dance is Nijinsky's biography of a soloist—how it feels to be the one in the centre—the effort, responsibility, isolation and glory. But he made his *Rite* an ordeal for each member of the large corps, all of whom have solo parts. The Chosen One dances herself to death, but they all exhaust themselves. So perhaps Nijinsky was telling it like it always was at the Mariinsky.

Walking back to the Lokosphinx, we watch Army conscripts in greatcoats and fur-flapped caps breaking the ice with bludgeons and pouring hot water on the snow. We talk about the "Kirov enigma" and how to crack it. The Mariinsky dancers are arguably the best in the world, but the system causes meltdown on many levels. The Kirov Ballet is doing the work of an imperial-cum-state theatre at home and Diaghilev's Ballets Russes abroad. Can they maintain their traditional repertoire, at the standard they have set, and introduce a whole new world of choreography?

#### IV Sunday 23 March—Name Day

Rumour has it that the costume and decor workshops just got a *diktat*: "Be ready by 1 April for stage rehearsal." Because of the Kirov's double (sometimes triple) casting, more than a hundred handpainted costumes and nearly a thousand accessories are to be finished. We regularly visit the costume shops and know that much remains to be done. How could they do it in a week? More importantly, why? We have struggled for time to finish the first act choreography, let alone start the second. We go to Vasiev and show him our record of rehearsal time requested and granted. The difference is tallied in red ink. "We are artists not accountants but you need to see the figures." Before looking at our tally he says, "Probably we are in debt, but," he pauses, "the Maestro wants the *Rite*, *Noces* and *Oedipus Rex* for the Stravinsky gala on 10 April." President Putin is bringing Schroeder and Chirac with the president of Siemens, who is the sponsor.

"That would be possible," we parry, "either the gala on the 10th or the premiere, as planned, on the 13th, if we can rehearse the *Rite* all day, every day, until then." Vasiev stops and thinks, knowing only too well that life at the Kirov does not work that way "The *Rite* is important and must be done properly," he affirms. "And there is also *Noces*," we add. "And *Etudes* to finish," he sighs—"we have to postpone the Stravinsky ballets." Pavel is summoned. "The second Stravinsky is set for 9 June, he reports, "it will be hard to get technical time at that point in the festival. Vasiev interrupts "But the Maestro just might agree." Gergiev is conducting at the Met in New York. Vasiev, after a full day at the Mariinsky, spends half the night trying to reach him on the phone. In the end the Maestro decides to postpone. For the April gala he puts *Petrushka* and *Firebird* with *Oedipus Rex*. Our premiere is now 9 June.



Ancestor in bearskin, Act II/4 - Pawing the ground. Sketch by Millicent Hodson ©. Source 'Nijinsky's Crime Against Grace', by Millicent Hodson, Pendragon Press 1996. An exhibition of Millicent Hodson drawings of 'Rite of Spring' is being held at Gallery K, London, from the 27 July - 20 August 2003.

We have to stay longer. The postponement plays Russian roulette with our schedule. How can we finish the *Rite* in St Petersburg and keep commitments in Rome, Helsinki, London, and Moscow. Phone calls and faxes to explore our options. Then we discover the company is to leave on tour for Cagliari in Sardinia. Vasiev invites us to his office and tells us, smiling, he is having "crazy ideas." We are instantly curious. "Why don't you come on tour and rehearse the dancers in Italy? You could have more time there." For a few moments we imagine the Mediterranean heat. An ingenious solution if enough of our cast are on the tour. "Is there a list for Cagliari?" we ask. Vasiev calls his assistant

directors Sonya and Tatiana who show us the roster of visas. Half our cast is to go, half is to stay in St Petersburg, but more men than women will remain. We are about to start Act I, scene 4, *Games of the Rival Tribes*, with its fighting duets for the men, which require individual teaching. We tell Vasiev that we had better “stay and fight.” Despite our disappointment, we are cheered by his “crazy ideas,” which somehow break the spell of winter, like the crashing of Kostchei’s egg in *Firebird*. The sun is shining somewhere. We will see it some-time.

We try to keep track of the ever-changing population in our rehearsals, the cast, the covers, and what Slava calls the “undercovers.” The company’s collective body memory is both a great and a terrible thing. We are determined to know our dancers by name. In Russian tradition, name days—feasts of major saints—are more important than birthdays. The Kirov’s 260 some dancers seem to share a total of ten names. So the dancers propose that we add the first initial of their surnames. There is almost a whole alphabet of Alexanders and Alexeis—Alex M, Alex N, etc. The same is true of Marias and Natalias, who become Masha K, Natasha S. Patronymics in postmodern Petersburg seem to be out of fashion. But nicknames are a source of never-ending invention. Our Chosen Ones become Iulitsa, Dasha and Sashlinka.

We need to relax. Howard has returned from the US and we spend several evenings with him. One night Slava walked us along Griboedova to his apartment for supper. On the way he pointed out the original dormitory for imperial ballet students, where Pushkin stood at the entrance passing love letters to the girls. At the corner of *Sredaya Podyacheskaya Ulitza* (Middle Bureaucrat Street), he showed us the building where Fokine created *The Dying Swan* on Pavlova. During supper Slava’s wife Irina—both are former Kirov dancers—invited us to watch her class at the Vaganova School. During our visit Irina introduced us to Mariinsky star Altynai Asylmuratova, who now directs the school, and Slava showed us drawings by Nijinsky in the archive.

Other evenings Howard joined us for performances. *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was a first for us, as was Lavrovsky’s version of *Romeo and Juliet*, which we saw with Julie Kent from American Ballet Theatre. Tonight she is guesting in *Giselle*. In the interval we meet with Vasiev in his box by the stage. He talks about the budget for London this summer and says he can only take dancers for the *Rite* if they are in other ballets on the tour. We agree to draw our second act dancers from the London group. That means three quarters of our present cast cannot dance Act II, and more than 30 new dancers will have to be trained for Act I in London. Our workload grows by orders of magnitude. Long into the night we revise cast lists in Cyrillic.

We make time to visit the State Russian Museum to see if things have changed since *perestroika*. Many works by Roerich and his contemporaries, which had been secreted in curatorial offices, are now displayed. *Kapuchinni* have be-

come popular, and we stop at a cafe before heading home. The rivers and canals are still frozen but Petersburg drips with melting snow. We turn along Bolshaya Morskaya, parallel with the Moika, and notice a handsome building. On the facade is a gilt title in Russian art nouveau letters, which we translate as "Imperial Society for Encouragement of the Arts." Then we notice a plaque with the name Roerich, which tells us that he and his family lived there when he was director of its school in the last days of the Romanovs.

### V. Sunday, 13 April—Battle Plan

When the tour group came back, we had a few days with the first cast, trying to catch them up with the covers. Josette Amiel, whom we know from the Paris Opera, is also back to complete *Etudes* against the clock. With a 17 April premiere that cannot be postponed, she has to have total priority. Many of our dancers are in *Etudes* and, just as difficult, our pianist and stage manager must be in those rehearsals instead of ours. Vasiev has given us the option to leave earlier and return sooner than planned for our final period of work. As director he is besieged by the conflicting demands of his tours, his home repertoire and his guests. Once again we asked to see him.

"So that's the battle plan," Sonya said, peering at our large chart with coloured arrows. In fact, the chart shows the tribal square and lines of movement for the 44 simultaneous solos toward the end of Act I. "It's not Borodino," Kenneth quipped. "But it could prevent battles over rehearsal time," Millicent added. We show Vasiev how we can teach the solos in shifts to any dancers not needed for *Etudes*. Experience at the Mariinsky has taught us to hoard time like gold. Though visions of London in the spring tempted us to pack and go, we decided to stay put and teach the solos. Most companies learn them in groups over a day or two. At the Mariinsky groups were not available. So it was one-on-one for more than a week as we slowly worked our way through several casts. To do the solos we had to skip forward to Act I, scene 7, *Dance of the Earth*, after the Sage has kissed the ground, releasing the forces of spring which hurl the dancers into the air and throw them down. This chaos is organized in canons of classical movement gone berserk—*entr'chats*, *tours en l'air* and *grands jetés*—with torso spasms and sickled feet. Rambert wrote that Nijinsky interrupted these bursts of individuality with braces of rhythmic unison. "Accents with frenzy," she called them, when the dancers beat on the ground, their chests or their heads, then fling themselves toward the Sage, focusing their volatile energy toward him as their centre.

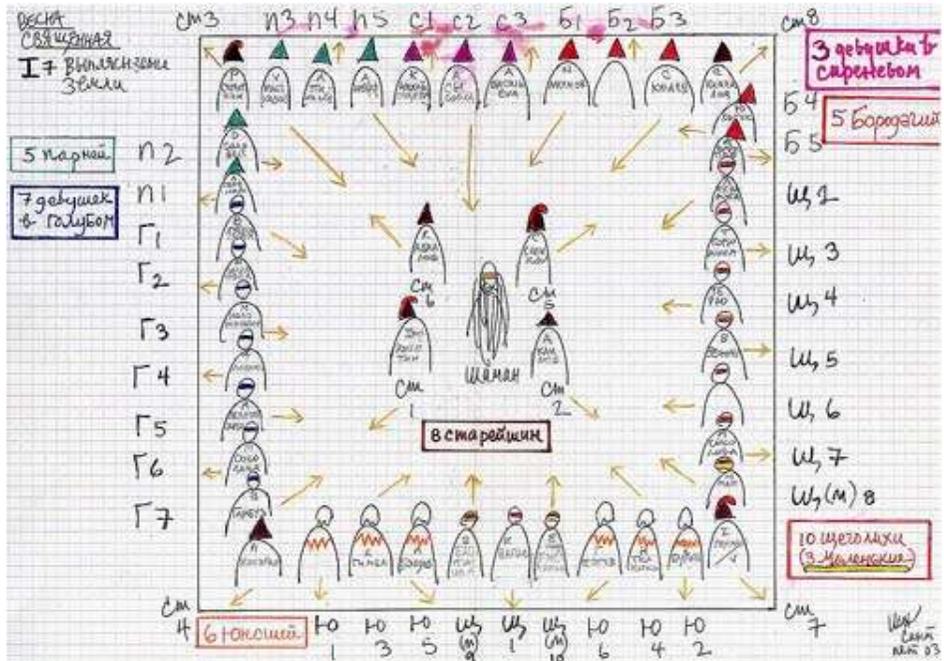


Chart by Millicent Hodson showing the tribal square and starting places for the 44 simultaneous solos in Act 1, scene 7, Dance of the Earth

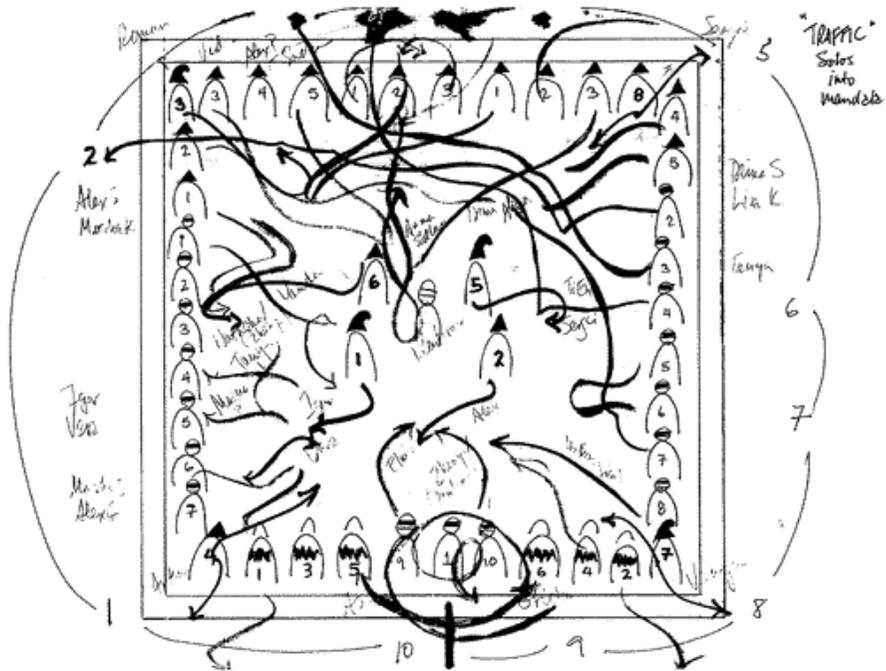


Chart by Millicent Hodson showing the lines of movement for the 44 simultaneous solos in Act 1, scene 7, Dance of the Earth

Natasha, Lyudmila's reserve, plays the same 24 measures more than a hundred times. Soon her fingers are wrapped in tape—"arpeggio stress syndrome," we jest. Perhaps it was this section Cocteau caricatured when he showed Nijinsky's dancers multiplying themselves in geometrical progression. Dancers from *Etudes* leave but hurry back. We notice the margins of the studio get more crowded by the day. The dancers stretch out and watch each other learn or leaf through Millicent's notebooks. Some are not accustomed to being personally choreographed. Others, more experienced, marvel at the quantity of material amassed in 44 solos. Somehow we have crossed a threshold. Before, the dancers worked hard. That is their job. Now they are working together. Ironically, the singularity of the solos has made them into an ensemble. Slava records every move with his fountain pen and meticulously collects copies of Millicent's teaching notes. The Kirov is making the *Rite* its own.

The costumier Tanya took us again to check the costume painting. In adjoining rooms artisans were busy applying colours, some with stencils, some free-hand. A variety of smocks with vivid Roerich borders were hung from overhead racks. After shoes, hats and headbands, we checked the tights. The Russians do not buy them for their dancers. Every pair is made to measure on two ancient knitting machines. A ledger contains details for thousands of Kirov legs, past and present. For several decades the same women have run these machines. Above them a portrait of Lenin still presides. Since Howard could not get a full cast for his rehearsals of *Noces*, he decided to leave early and finish in the weeks prior to the premiere. Just before he flies to California, we see together a triple bill of *Apollo*, *Prodigal Son* and *Le Jeune Homme et La Mort*. We also watch performances with Josette, meeting after her marathon days on *Etudes*. In this period we see *La Sylphide*, *Don Quixote*, the operas *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and *Prince Igor*, plus the Siemen's gala.

The days fly by. We wake up early on Sunday morning amazed that this is the last working day of our second visit. Kenneth is determined to take his Roerich walk, so often contemplated but always cancelled in the interests of the *Rite*. He strides out towards Vasilievsky Island, past St Isaacs and across the Neva, to the embankment where Roerich grew up. There is a plaque on the house where the artist was born. Further along the river is the Academy of Art and university he attended. En route Kenneth meets Andrei, once a dancer and now a teacher at the Mariinsky, who is walking his dog in the park. His daughter Vera is in our first cast. Many dancers live on this island and often rush from performances to reach its bridges before they are raised for the nightly passage of the ships. Millicent never gets to Nijinsky's house.



"Dance of the Earth" from the Kirov's *Rite of Spring*. Photograph © Valentin Baranovsky

Today the conductor Mikhail Agrest watches rehearsal, following the score as we integrate scenes 5 and 6 of Act I—*The Procession of the Sage*, with the Elders' dance of the four directions, and *The Adoration of the Earth*, when the Sage kisses the ground. These scenes lead directly into the ecstatic release of the solos, which seem to liberate the dancers from fatigue, physical and spiritual. The mandala and spiral formations after the solos are a headache to perfect, but everyone persists, looking forward to the final stamping sequence, when they close in around the Sage and end the act. They just miss the count with its tricky syncopation, but that strengthens their resolve to do it right that night when Vasiev comes to see their last run through of Act I. We fret over imperfections but the Kirov director turns to us and smiles. Sensing the anguish of incompleteness we feel, he starts slowly—"You know, I think really it's not bad at all." We relax slightly. "In fact, it's already quite good," he carries on. We would contradict him, but he takes us each by an arm and says, "I know these dancers, and I can see they want to do it." Slava thanks the cast and reminds them that we leave for London tomorrow. They give us a good send off, some punching the air and others clapping with spatula hands in true Nijinsky style.

## VI. Friday, 23 May—Labyrinths

Petersburg is green and leafy. We are back on Griboedova but not at the Lokosphinx. Its prices have increased two-and-a-half times for the city's anniversary celebrations—too much for the Mariinsky to pay. Members of the breakfast club are relocated to separate apartments in the vicinity. Ours overlooks *Nikolsky Sabor* (St Nicholas Cathedral) with its golden domes and Orthodox crosses like the ones so many dancers wear. Christianity has returned full force. "This return to religion is an urban thing, for the intellectuals," we are told by a young waitress, who has a doctorate in Soviet history. We had noticed that many people observed Lent. At the Lokosphinx, as elsewhere, no one served *blinis* from - the end of *Maslyenitza* (Butter Week, like Mardi Gras or Pancake Day) until Easter.

We are back at the theatre but now in the big downstairs studio. Kenneth simulates the Act II chalk circles with tape on the floor. In scene 1, *Mystic Circles of the Maidens*, thirteen women tread in a tight ring at the centre. The setting is a stone labyrinth in ancient Rus. "Like Stonehenge," Slava says. Act II challenges the women, as Act I did the men, and we keep reminding them that Nijinsky made this ballet on Mariinsky dancers. "Turn your technique inside out—reverse your alignment," Millicent coaches, "dance from a lower centre of gravity and deeper point of concentration." When they sweep one foot in a *rond de jambe*, it has to be done with the entire sole and not the tip of the toe. And they must land from *jeté* turned-in—everything they learned not to do at school. These contortions amuse them when they try to coordinate their feet with Nijinsky's innovative *port-de-bras* — a primitive crossing of the chest and ritualistic reach to the stars. As they thus walk the labyrinth, according to Roerich's scenario, the Maidens seek to learn their future. Fate chooses one as the sacrifice. The deadline of the premiere makes us work mercilessly fast. They learn thirteen hours of material in less than two. Vasiev comes into the rehearsal and watches the women spar with each other in scene 2, *Glorification of the Chosen One*, when they honour and frighten the victim, preparing her for the ordeal. "Both the music and the movement are difficult," remarks Vasiev, as his dancers become "*Amazonki*," to use Stravinsky's term.

The men are pacing the *ostinato*, which they perform around the Chosen One in scene 5, *The Sacrificial Dance*. It is both a brain and body teaser with its irregular rhythms: 1-2, 1, 1-2-3, 1, 1, 1-2, 1-2-3, and so forth, as they step, close, dip and bow. They do it as a daily drill, reading from charts at the outset until they memorize this sequence, which musicians can only follow from a score. Gergiev hovers at the door as our Ancestors struggle to master the circular procession, learning it in half the standard time. "Aren't they meant to do it together?" he queries. Meanwhile, we start scene 4, *Ritual Action of the Ancestors*, in which they isolate the Chosen One through laughter, a strange but timeless practice, laughing at her with their hands but dragging their feet in a

pagan prayer for her protection. The six tallest men, as we know from Rambert's notes, must be the Ancestors in Bearskins. Pressed together, they lumber toward the Chosen One as a primordial mass of black fur. The dirge thunders from the piano, and Lyudmila calls out to us all, "*The Mass of the Dead—do you hear Stravinsky's quote?*". The men nod, striving to stay in step.



The Chosen One - Shaking with fear and embracing her fate. Sketch by Millicent Hodson ©.  
Source 'Nijinsky's Crime Against Grace', by Millicent Hodson, Pendragon Press 1996  
An exhibition of Millicent Hodson drawings of 'Rite of Spring'  
is being held at Gallery K, London, from the 27 July - 20 August 2003.

The week that follows is engulfed by anniversary events, climaxing in the Mariinsky gala attended by President Putin and 45 heads of state, Tony Blair among them. BBC vans surround the theatre. Outside the scaffolding is off, but security inside is ironclad. Getting past the stage door is like going through a labyrinth. During the gala period, we lose two days of rehearsal, not good for pre-premiere nerves. We repair to the Cafe Idiot and catch up our diary, sinking into worn leather chairs and taking inspiration from defunct Cyrillic typewriters, part of the eccentric decor. The Idiot (homage to Dostoevsky's hero)—a cafe bar on the Moika—is a magnet for expatriates and literary tourists. The BBC turn up in force: 40 of them are at the Lokosphinx, including Ross MacGibbon, whom we know from a Balanchine project. On Russia we see their broadcast of the gala, which includes our *Shaman*(Sage) Vladimir Ponomarev as Peter the Great. No sooner are we back in rehearsal than the studio is evacuated. America's first lady Mrs Bush is arriving at the Mariinsky shop to buy souvenirs. The dancers rush to stop police from towing away their cars.

Bundled in jumpers to prevent bruises, the second act women do the falls in scene 3, *Evocation of the Ancestors*. Five times they fall, flat on their faces. It takes courage. The men, in awe, applaud them. What they are doing, Rambert wrote, is "designating the spot" for the sacrifice, "not consecrating or cursing but making it, in a way, magic." They impress us with their *esprit de corps*, falling in unison (almost) around the Chosen One. By the time of this achievement—four days before the premiere—we are suddenly told that one of them cannot dance because her debut in *Le Corsaire* is the day after the *Rite*. Return in extremis of the "Kirov enigma"—how can the system keep such a secret? A *Corsaire* premiere is no last minute affair. The Act II Maidens are totally destabilized. We resist despair. The countdown has begun.

### VII. Monday, 9 June—High Noon

Yet we awaken on the morning of the premiere with a sense of euphoria. The onion domes of St Nicholas Cathedral gleam in the sunlight. We speak with Slava on the phone and he is cheerful, too. Last night at the final studio rehearsal the dancers were relaxed and confident. We set the bows, calling each one by name to take their place in the full cast formation. It felt like a graduation ceremony, and in a sense it was. They knew we were pleased with their work and that we trusted them to do their best. We all applauded each other.

Today will not be easy. For us it is very rare to have the general rehearsal—the dancers in costume and make up with orchestra—on the afternoon of the premiere. It is even more rare to begin the lighting at this eleventh hour. But we have done everything we can to be ready. Costumes and accessories are still being finished. We have yet to see the bearskins, which Act II men must try with the movement. All the same we are pleased with what we have seen.

For several days we have had to report difficulties to our valued costumier via her mobile. It surprises us that she has not been about. Later she tells us she had to be in Siberia finishing another production.

The stage call for lighting the *Rite* and *Noces* is 10 o'clock. "Our technicians are not ready—why not go and have a coffee," advises Sergei Lukin, the lighting director. Together with Howard we leave the dark theatre and go out into the sun to a café nearby. With so much left undone, it seems unnatural to feel this relaxed. It is noon before we can start drafting cues for Act I in order to see lights on the decor and dancers during the general. At 12.30 the singers come for *Noces*. We have to abandon the lighting. We take care of costume details while *Noces* is on stage. After it has had two run-throughs, we meet Slava in the wings, ready to call our dancers. The look on his face forecasts bad news: "They are going to do a third run of *Noces*." We look at him in disbelief. "But that means we can't start the *Rite* until 4.30 at best and *Oedipus* sets up at 6.00. When will we finish our lights?" He sighs philosophically: "*Obuichna*" (It's normal). "Not for us," we protest to him and Pavel, who raises his hands in existential despair. Clouds begin to gather outside the theatre.

Our spirits lift a little when we see Maestro Gergiev mount the rostrum for the *Rite*. Since February everyone has confided that he will not have time to conduct the general rehearsal. Lyudmila, a longtime friend of his, has offered to convey our urgent needs. He is noted for his brisk pace. We request a slower tempo for the breakneck partnering of the *Abduction* in Act I. He agrees to try and the general begins. The dancers hold their own. Sergei runs the rough cues and commands his crew by intercom, improvising on the lights we have discussed. But for Act II he has to experiment—one eye on our notes. Halfway through this act lights start flashing on and off. The Maestro calls in amazement over his shoulder, "Is this the lighting?" Suddenly the stage is plunged into darkness. The Chosen One is spinning wildly. Millicent jumps up, calling out, "It's too dangerous!" Like Maria Piltz during the 1913 riot, Lulia keeps her head in the crisis. She is still on the music when light returns.

It is 5.45 pm. The *Oedipus* stage manager paces anxiously by the footlights. We persevere desperately with Sergei and his crew, who communicate from catwalks over the stage. At 6.00 the situation explodes: angry shouting, feedback from microphones, scores slamming shut. Our time is up, and the *Rite*, after months of careful work, is not ready for its premiere. We go into shock. So high at noon: so low at six o'clock.

Back at the apartment we change for the evening. For the first time in fifteen years of opening nights together, we do not speak a word to each other. As we walk back to the theatre it begins to rain. Blossoms are blown from the trees, and we remember the ominous wind on our first day at the Mariinsky. Backstage after *Oedipus*, we cannot distinguish the applause from the rain beating on the ground outside. We watch *Noces* with Howard in the Tsar's box and are

relieved for him that it goes so well. When the *Rite* is called, we check everything onstage and try to convey our support to the dancers. But both of us feel empty and numb.



The Kirov's *Rite of Spring*. Photograph © Shira Klasmer / from the Authors' archive

Miracles can and do happen, especially at the Mariinsky. The dancers, despite their exhaustion, surge through the music, pulling themselves into perfect lines and circles throughout the kaleidoscope of Act I. The 44 simultaneous solos are a wonder to behold. During the Entr'acte the women manage the fast change-the Maestro helps by easing the tempo. Act II, which the dancers had to learn so quickly is delivered by collective will. The *Amazonki* jump and fall in precise unison. The *Ancestors* master the procession. Iulia carries the company and audience with her until the last breath of her ordeal. Nijinsky's *Rite* reveals the architecture of human passion - elemental forces, sexual drives, tribal tensions, religious ecstasy. The Kirov tapped those powers in themselves and the public. Twenty minutes applause. They deserve it. Afterwards, jubilant, the dancers embrace us. We treasure our bond with them.

Vasiev comes onstage to thank the dancers for their hard work on the Stravinsky programme. He announces a four-day holiday, plus a bonus, which caps their joy with relief and renewed energy. Then he invites us, with Howard and Pavel to supper at the nearby Backstage Restaurant, where he entertains us all with Kirov anecdotes making us forget the traumas of the day. The conversation turns to his dreams for the future, and we understand how keenly he feels his responsibility to lead the Kirov Ballet into Russia's dynamic new era.

At 3 30 in the morning he walks us home. It is still light. Pointing across the Krukov Canal Vasiev indicates the site of the new theatre. As we stroll past the Mariinsky he explains the renovations that the French are planning: "It will cost millions and all this touring will help pay for it. In a hundred years the two theatres will still be here for St Petersburg." He says good night to Howard and to us in traditional Russian style, three kisses each and a bear hug for the *Rite*. Then he turns and walks back along Griboedova, a tall solitary figure, facing yet another enigmatic day at the Kirov.

o r i g i n a l   p a p e r s





**VAN DEN TOORN**





## From The Firebird to The Rite of Spring: Meter and Alignment in Stravinsky's Russian-Period Works

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### Abstract

Addressed here is the psychological complexity of meter, notated and heard, in *The Firebird* and Part II of *The Rite of Spring*. Of concern from the standpoint of the listener are the competing forces of meter, displacement, and parallelism; how these forces take precedence, with melody and harmony falling into place accordingly. Duly supplanted is the motivicism of the Classical style (developing variation), as Theodor Adorno observed some time ago. Also of consequence here are octatonic harmony and the strict performance style favored by the composer on a life-time basis.

**Keywords:** metrical displacement; parallelism; Adorno; octatonic harmony; strict performance style.

When *The Rite of Spring* was first conceived in the spring and summer of 1910<sup>2</sup>, Stravinsky's success as a composer had already been established with passages such as the ones quoted in Examples 1b-d. The cited excerpts, familiar no doubt to most readers of this volume, are from the Finale of *The Firebird*, which was first performed in Paris, June 25, 1910, to overwhelming popular and critical acclaim. The composer would later attribute the immediate success of *The Firebird* to the currency of its materials, to the fact of their be-

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<sup>2</sup> "I have started work on the Great Sacrifice", Stravinsky wrote to his collaborator, Nicholas Roerich, in a letter dated August 9, 1910; "Have you done anything for it yet?" See Letters to Nicholas Roerich and N.F. Findeizen. Appendix II in the accompanying booklet to Igor Stravinsky. 1969. *The Rite of Spring: Sketches 1911-1913*. London: Boosey and Hawkes: 27. These early sketches were interrupted by "a sort of *Konzertstück*", as Stravinsky recalled much later, which would eventually lead to *Petrushka* (1911). The "Great Sacrifice" was not resumed until summer, 1911. See Igor Stravinsky. 1962. *An Autobiography*. New York: W. W. Norton: 31; and Pieter C. van den Toorn. 1987. *Stravinsky and "The Rite of Spring"*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 23.

ing “of the styles of the day”.<sup>3</sup> Later, in 1919 and again in 1945, when orchestral suites were fashioned from the original ballet score, *The Firebird*, duly abridged in this manner, became for a long while one of the most performed works of the twentieth century. It was a success of which the composer grew resentful, however, unmatched as it would be by works of his neo-classical and serial eras. In “conversation” with Robert Craft in 1962, the composer dismissed the 1919 Suite in particular as an “audience lollipop”.<sup>4</sup>

Nonetheless, Stravinsky would also admit that the score of *The Firebird* was a “fecund” one, and especially where *The Rite of Spring* was concerned.<sup>5</sup> The connection between these works is worth pursuing from a number of angles, but perhaps above all from those of meter and rhythm. Processes having to do with the metrical displacement of repeated themes, fragments, and chords are the defining ones in much of Stravinsky’s music, and especially in the works of the composer’s Russian period, stretching from *The Firebird*, *The Rite of Spring*, and *Les Noces* (1917-23) to *The Soldier’s Tale* (1918).<sup>6</sup> Metrical displacement prevails as a kind of stylistic common denominator in these works, accommodating and even ushering in many of the phenomena we readily tend to identify with them: 1) ostinatos, along with short, open-ended melodic fragments (often folk-like in character) that are repeated at length and often quite literally; 2) superimpositions (or *stratifications*, as these have become known)<sup>7</sup> of fragments and chords that repeat according to cycles or spans that vary independently of each other; 3) juxtapositions of relatively heterogeneous and self-enclosed blocks of material<sup>8</sup>; 4) a diatonic, modal foundation that is subject to specific forms of octatonic intervention; 5) and the need, as expressed by the first three of the above-noted processes, for a strict application of the beat in the performance of Stravinsky’s music, precision coming at the expense of many of the traditional techniques of expressive timing (*rubato*) and nuance.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1962. *Expositions and Developments*. New York: Doubleday: 145.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 49.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 151.

<sup>6</sup> For a broad discussion of the role of metrical displacement in Stravinsky’s music, see Pieter C. van den Toorn and John McGinness. 2012. *Stravinsky and The Russian Period: Sound and Legacy of a Musical Idiom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 13-41.

<sup>7</sup> See the account of stratification in van den Toorn and McGinness 2012: 2, 10, 17, and 114.

<sup>8</sup> For further comment on Stravinsky’s block structures in *The Rite*, see Gretchen Horlacher. 2011. *Building Blocks: Repetition and Continuity in the Music of Stravinsky*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; and van den Toorn 1987: 97-114.

<sup>9</sup> The musical rationale behind Stravinsky’s lifelong insistence on a strict application of the beat in performances of his music is discussed in van den Toorn and McGinness 2012: 5-6, 252-65. See also Malia Roberson. 2012. Stravinsky’s Concerto for Piano and Winds: Metrical Displacement,

Of concern to this inquiry is not just the construction of *The Firebird* and *The Rite*, or even the manner in which this construction distinguishes itself as Stravinskian in character. Of primary concern is the listener's apprehension of the construction. To repeat a theme, motive or fragment in Stravinsky's music is often to displace it metrically. And to displace it metrically is to upset the listener's expectations of metrical parallelism, expectations that a motive or fragment will be repeated at a metrically parallel location.<sup>10</sup> Put another way, the normal expectation is that a theme entering on the fourth beat of a 4/4 meter will be repeated on the same beat of the metrical cycle.

Crucial in this regard is the role metrical parallelism can play in the actual establishment and confirmation of a meter in the mind of the listener. The dynamics work both ways, in other words, reciprocally. Upsetting the listener's expectations of parallelism can have the additional effect of upsetting or at least challenging his/her metrical bearings. Whether those bearings are disrupted altogether or merely threatened hinges on a great many factors, perhaps above all tempo and metrical location. It is the middle range of the metrical hierarchy that is most salient to the listener, that is, levels of pulsation at about 80-100 beats per minute.<sup>11</sup> And it follows therefore that the displacement of a fragment or chord on and off either the tactus or possibly the level of pulsation just above is potentially the most disruptive in its effect.<sup>12</sup>

It should be stressed that meter is *entrained* by the listener, inferred reflexively and synchronized with various of his/her "internal clock mechanisms."<sup>13</sup> Like walking or running, meter is a kind of "motor behavior", as Justin London has described it.<sup>14</sup> Once internalized, meter engenders deeply embedded expectations of its own continuation, an ongoing form of anticipation of which the listener may become conscious only in the event of a disruption. An entrained meter is "renounced" only in the face of "strong contradictory evi-

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Tonal Distortion, and the Composer as Performer. Ph. D. dissertation. University of California at Santa Barbara.

<sup>10</sup> For an account of metrical parallelism, see Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff. 1983. *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*. Cambridge: MIT Press: 75. See also David Temperley and Christopher Bartlette. 2002. Parallelism as a Factor in Metrical Analysis. *Music Perception*, 20, no. 2(2002): 117-49. A more detailed account of these phenomena as they inflect our perception of various Stravinsky works may be found in van den Toorn and McGinness 2012: 18-41.

<sup>11</sup> See Justin London. 2004. *Hearing in Time: Psychological Aspects of Musical Meter*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 4-5.

<sup>12</sup> See Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983: 17: The regularities of metrical structure are most stringent at the level of the tactus.

<sup>13</sup> David Epstein. 1995. *Shaping Time: Music, the Brain, and Performance*. New York: Schirmer Books: 138.

<sup>14</sup> London 2004: 7.

dence”, as Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff advised some time ago.<sup>15</sup> Here, the evidence that contradicts arises from the non-parallelism of displacement, the fact that alignment and the meter are at odds.

No less likely to affect the disruptive potential of a given displacement is the literal nature of the repetition; as a general rule, the more literal the repetition of a given theme or fragment undergoing displacement, the greater the potential for disruption. In *The Rite of Spring*, much of the repetition lacks the melodic and harmonic elaboration closely identified with the Classical style. In Stravinsky’s stratifications, in particular, pitch, instrumentation, dynamics and articulation are often held constant. And they are held constant, it would seem, in order that they might serve as a foil for what *does* change, namely, the vertical alignment of the reiterated entities as they relate to each other and the meter. In effect, traditional processes of motivic development are often sacrificed in order that vertical placement and displacement might be set in relief. The result is an altered relationship between the key dimensions of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form, one in which the forces of rhythm and meter can seem to take precedence, and according to which melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, and articulation fall into place.

These large-scale adjustments in the balance between parameters can now seem as radical from the standpoint of rhythm and meter as the atonal and serial discoveries of the Second Viennese School were from that of pitch. They had a startling effect early in the past century on that most notorious of Stravinsky’s critics, Theodor Adorno. Nearly all of Adorno’s highly charged, negative assessment of *The Rite of Spring* and other Stravinsky works may be traced to the absence (or near absence) in this music of what Arnold Schoenberg called “developing variation”.<sup>16</sup> To Schoenberg and his adherents, the

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<sup>15</sup> Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1983: 27.

<sup>16</sup> See Arnold Schoenberg. 1967. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Ed. Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein. London: Faber and Faber: 8. In spelling out the implications of the concept of “developing variation,” Schoenberg divided the “features of the motive” into four large categories, namely, *rhythm*, *intervals*, *harmony*, and *melody*. The means by which these features were varied were spelled out in considerable detail; a melody could be altered “by transposition,” “by semi-contrapuntal treatment of the accompaniment,” and so forth (10). “Homophonic music can be called the style of developing variation. This means that in the succession of motive-forms produced through variation of the basic motive, there is something that can be compared to development, growth” (8). Or see the description of “developing variation” in Arnold Schoenberg. 1985. *Style and idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*. Ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black. Berkeley: University of California Press: Criteria for the Evaluation of Music: 129-31. Ideas encompassed by Schoenberg’s use of the term “developing variation” underlie much current understanding not only of Schoenberg’s music but also of the Classical or “homophonic” style generally: see, for example, Carl Dahlhaus. What is ‘developing variation’? In Carl Dahlhaus. 1987. *Schoenberg and the New Music*. Trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton. Cambridge University Press: 128-34; and Carl Dahlhaus. 1980. *Between Romanticism and Modernism*. Trans. Mary Whittall. Berkeley: University of California Press: 40-52. The concept is further explored in Walter Frisch. 1983. *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*. Berkeley: University of California

Classical style—“homophonic” music, as Schoenberg sometimes called it—was defined accordingly. Apart from the role of tonality, it was the theme and its detached motives or “motive forms” that defined the Classical style, the elaboration and insinuation of these “forms” into all crevices of the Classical fabric, including the accompanying parts. From the time of Haydn’s “Farewell” Symphony<sup>17</sup> to that of Beethoven, Brahms (the pinnacle), and into the twentieth century with the Second Viennese School of Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, such were the means by which individual works or movements of works were made whole. (Commonly implied by developing variation is not variation alone, but variation at the service of an overreaching train of thought, a process of development and growth.) Schoenberg would later describe his late atonal works as having been composed “with the tones of the motive”,<sup>18</sup> while Adorno would describe twelve-tone methods, defined at their core by operations of transposition, transformation, and segmentation, as an apotheosis-like intensification of the developmental style, a transfer of what earlier had been surface-articulative and even stylistic to the foundation of a new system of composing.<sup>19</sup>

Schoenbergian very nearly in their entirety, Theodor Adorno’s perspectives on analysis and twentieth-century music may well have come by way of Berg, Schoenberg’s pupil and Adorno’s composition teacher for several years during the 1920s. In the same way that the individual human subject could be depicted as undergoing a self-reflecting quest for fulfillment in a world conditioned necessarily by forms of alienation, the musical subject (or theme) and its “motive-forms” underwent a process of development in pursuit of an eventual fulfillment. And if the individual subject, transformed by development, remained in some sense the same individual, then these dialectics of nonidentity and identity could be applied to the transformation of the musical subject as well. Such were the conditions of vital art, Adorno reasoned, one that mir-

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Press. The continuing role of “developing variation” in Schoenberg’s atonal and twelve-tone repertoires is examined in Jack Boss. 1992. Schoenberg’s Op. 22 Radio Talk, and Developing Variation in Atonal Music. *Music Theory Spectrum* 14, no. 2 (1992): 125-49; and Ethan Haimo. 1997. Developing Variation and Schoenberg’s Twelve-Tone Music. *Music Analysis* 16, no. 3 (1997): 349-65.

<sup>17</sup> See James Webster. 1991. *Haydn’s “Farewell” Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>18</sup> Schoenberg 1985: 89.

<sup>19</sup> Theodor W. Adorno. 1973. *Philosophy of Modern Music*. Trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Bloomster. New York: Seabury Press: 102: “Twelve-tone technique elevated the principle of variation to the level of a totality, of an absolute; in so doing it eliminated the principle in one final transformation of the concept.” In other words, variation became a part of the operations of the system itself, eliminating the distinction of the theme as a (unvaried) point of departure. “As soon as everything is absorbed to the same degree into variation, not one theme remains behind, and all musical phenomena define themselves without distinction as permutations of the row.”

rored the reality of the human predicament in modern times. Summaries of Adorno's aesthetic argument have been composed by numerous scholars, including, perhaps most memorably, the American musicologist Rose Subotnik:

*By [developing variation] is meant a process whereby a musical element subjects itself to logical dynamic change while simultaneously retaining its identity, thus overcoming the contradiction between identity and non-identity. The most obvious embodiment of this principle occurs in the development and recapitulation of the sonata allegro, the structure essentially synonymous with [Beethoven's] second-period style. Development is the process through which the musical subject demonstrates its self-generated powers as it "goes out", in dialectical terms, from itself into the generalizing world of Other or object—through which it demonstrates, in other words, its freedom in objective reality... The emphatic reassertion of self in Beethoven's recapitulation is equally important in developing variation theory, for it is through the recapitulation that the subject demonstrates its power to return to itself, no matter how vigorously and far it has traveled into the world of object.<sup>20</sup>*

But for Adorno, nothing even remotely resembling such a scenario could be heard or sensed in *The Rite of Spring* and other works of Stravinsky's Russian period. Instead of a thorough-going development of themes and their motives, such development coming by way of changes in key, mode, interval, harmony, and/or instrumentation, there were "primitivistic patterns" that repeated relentlessly and often quite literally as well.<sup>21</sup> These "patterns" were not transposed, elaborated or even tossed about from one instrument to the next in a sympathetic (or "humanistic") dialogue (as they are, typically, in a string-quartet movement of Haydn's, for example). Especially in Stravinsky's layered or stratified textures, where the superimposed fragments and chords repeat according to varying spans or cycles, pitch, instrumentation, dynamics, and articulation are fixed from start to finish. A case in point is the stratified texture stretching from Rehearsal no. 64 in the "Ritual of the Rival Tribes" to the end of "The Procession of the Sage" at Rehearsal no.71. Missing altogether here is a sense of forward motion from one bar or even section to the next; the entire stretch is virtually immobile from a harmonic standpoint. A sense of climax is achieved by the composer not by harmonic change but by piling on more layers of reiterating fragments as the "Procession of the Sage" draws to a close. (At Rehearsal no.71, about fifteen such layers are superimposed. In *The Rite of Spring*, the block and layered or stratified textures typical of Stravinsky's music are *maximized*, to use a term introduced by Richard Taruskin

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<sup>20</sup> Rose Rosengard Subotnik. 1991. *Developing Variations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 20-21.

<sup>21</sup> Adorno 1973: 150.

some time ago.<sup>22</sup> These structures recur again and again in subsequent Stravinsky works, but never to the extent of their length or complexity in *The Rite*.)

Stravinsky writes “music against music” in the sense that his music denies what is musically inherent, namely, succession;<sup>23</sup> to quote again from Adorno, Stravinsky’s music is bereft of the idea of an “afterwards, now, and a before”:

*As a temporal art, music is bound to the fact of succession and is hence as irreversible as time itself. By starting it commits itself to carrying on, to becoming something new, to developing. What we may conceive of as a musical transcendence, namely the fact that at any given moment it has become something and something other than what it was, that it points beyond itself—all that is no mere metaphysical imperative dictated by some external authority. It lies in the nature of music and will not be denied<sup>24</sup> ...*

The force of Adorno’s critical and aesthetic argument about *The Rite of Spring* and Stravinsky’s music more generally is undeniable. Whatever the response to his ideas, positive, negative, or possibly mixed, there is no denying the weight or explanatory yield of his account, the grand design that can accommodate a vast assortment of musical features, qualities, styles, and chronologies. Enthusiasts of Stravinsky’s music, even while rejecting Adorno’s critical verdict, can gain much by pulling the argument through the Classical style and into the twentieth century. The musical characterizations and large-scale stylistic distinctions drawn in one way or another can be appreciated on their own, quite apart from the negative light in which they are couched.

However, much of the point of Stravinsky’s music can still seem to have been missed by the critic-philosopher. Adorno’s insistence on the validity of a single musical style and tradition can still seem to have blinded him to the pluralism at the outset of the past century. In many of the dance movements in *The Rite of Spring*, the ostinatos and ostinato-like repetition can make for a hyper-static landscape, to be sure. Yet, in accord with an internal logic no less robust than the one imagined by Adorno, that landscape serves a purpose. The immobility of pitch, harmony, instrumentation, and articulation highlights the shifts that occur in the vertical alignment of the superimposed, reiterating fragments and chords. The irregular spans and accents brought about by displacement (by the shifting of alignment) set off a chain reaction in the mind of the listen-

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<sup>22</sup> See Richard Taruskin. 2005. *Oxford History of Western Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Vol. IV, Chapter 47.

<sup>23</sup> Theodor W. Adorno. 1998. Stravinsky: A Dialectical Portrait. In Theodor W. Adorno. *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. London: Verso: 151-52.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* 151.

er, one in which displacement, hinging for its apprehension on meter, is pitted against the forces of metrical parallelism. These two forces of displacement and parallelism are irreconcilable; listeners can be aware of one while attending to the other, but they cannot attend to both simultaneously. Hence the metrical disturbance to which they are apt to lead.

Thus, too, contrary to another of Adorno's complaints, many of the irregular accents in *The Rite* are likely to be felt as such by the listener. Even where the notation features rapidly changing bar lines, the suggestion of a meter can be powerful enough to allow for a sense of syncopation, and for the conflicting forces of displacement and parallelism to make themselves felt. Listeners may become actively engaged participants in the play of these countering forces, something other than the hapless "victims" imagined by Adorno.<sup>25</sup>

But what larger meaning or significance attaches itself to Stravinsky's invention? Why should listeners of his music turn excitedly to passages that disrupt their metrical bearings? Why should the disruption prove aesthetically appealing? And what point can there be in immobilizing features of harmony and instrumentation only to expose a displacement in the repetition of various fragments and chords? In Stravinsky's music, what is the aesthetic attraction of metrically displacing a repeated theme or chord?

Answers to these questions may well have to await future study in the fields of music perception, cognitive psychology, and/or neuroscience. It would be helpful to learn more about the *entrainment* of meter, for example, how, spontaneously, a metrical grid is made physically a part of the listener. The implication here is not that aesthetic experience can be reduced to electro-chemical activity, or that, in effect, the mind can be reduced to the brain and its functions. Only a future study in the above-noted fields is likely to shape future questions about aesthetic experience, belief, and immediacy.

## I.

The various features and qualities identified above with Stravinsky's musical style are integrally a part of the Allegro section of the Finale of *The Firebird*. Shown in Example 1a is the Russian folk song on which the Finale is based, as transcribed in Rimsky-Korsakov's 100 Russian National Songs. Directly below in Examples 1b-d are Stravinsky's three arrangements of this song in the Lento, Allegro, and Maestoso sections of the Finale. Apart from the song's division

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<sup>25</sup> See Adorno 1973: 156-57. Stravinsky's irregular accents are viewed as "arbitrary" by Adorno. Pursued as ends in themselves, these accents are incapable of being anticipated and hence assimilated by the listener; they are apt to be experienced as "convulsive blows and shocks". "The musical subject makes no attempt to assert itself and contents itself with the reflexive absorption of the blows. The subject behaves literally like a critically injured victim of an accident which he cannot absorb and which, therefore, he repeats in the hopeless tension of dreams".

into two phrases (labeled A and B in Examples 1a-d), none of these settings bears much of a resemblance to Rimsky-Korsakov's harmonization. Yet there are several outside contexts with a specific bearing on the configuration of the Allegro section. These are shown in Examples 2a-d, starting with a passage from Mussorgsky's song cycle *Without Sun* (Example 2a), which is known to have served as the source of the opening of Debussy's *Nuages* (Example 2b), and from which the opening of Stravinsky's opera *The Nightingale* is likely to have been derived (Example 2c). In turn, the Introduction to *The Nightingale* may also have had an effect on the configuration of the Allegro section in the finale.<sup>26</sup> Noteworthy in Examples 1a-d and 2a-d is the two-phrase division, and in Examples 1c-d and 2b-d, the octave doublings, open fifths, and back-and-forth motions. The intersection of these four contexts carries historical as well as analytical implications; the comparison allows for a close reading of Stravinsky's Allegro arrangement, one with a sharpened sense of the particular of the composer's idiom.

Example 1: *The Firebird*, Finale: Russian folksong; Stravinsky's arrangements

a) 100 *Russian National Songs*, op. 24, no. 21, ed. Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov

The image displays four musical examples (a, b, c, d) of a Russian folksong, each with two phrases labeled A and B. Example a) is a simple melody in 3/4 time. Example b) features a more complex melody with glissandi. Example c) is a piano accompaniment with a bass line featuring octaves and a treble line with chords. Example d) is a piano accompaniment with a bass line featuring octaves and a treble line with chords. A vertical dashed line separates the two phrases in all examples.

<sup>26</sup> Act I of *The Nightingale* was completed by the end of summer, 1909, and hence before Stravinsky commenced work on *The Firebird*.

Example 2: Possible sources of *The Firebird*, Finale, Allegro section

a) Mussorgsky, *Without Sun*, III, mm. 16-18



b) Debussy, *Nocturnes (Nages)*, mm. 1-3

Modéré

*pp*



c) Stravinsky, *The Nightingale*, Introduction

Larghetto

*pp*



d) *The Firebird*, Finale: opening bars of Allegro section



The entirety of the Allegro section of the Finale is reproduced in Example 3. Eventful here is the *block* structure of this section, as vivid an illustration of such a structure as any in the two ballets that were to follow, *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*. At Rehearsal No.18, the A+B formation that serves as a point of departure is split into two with the two phrases (or *blocks*) A and B repeated out of order, independently of one another. (See Example 3; the number directly above each bracket represents the total number of half-note beats encompassed by each block restatement; in parentheses, half-note beats are converted into quarter-note beats.)

The reader will note, however, that, as outlined by the brackets in Example 3, block A of Stravinsky's arrangement is made to begin on the *second* rather than on the first quarter-note beat of Stravinsky's 7/4 bar. The downbeat is shifted forward by a quarter-note beat. This analytical rebarring of the Allegro allows the listener to continue with the alignments introduced in the previous Lento section, that is, with the glissando and timpani punctuation heard as syncopated upbeats to phrase A. The rebarring also relieves the listener of the necessity of switching to the difficult quarter-note beat at Rehearsal No.17 (with Stravinsky's metronome count of 208 beats per minute), allowing him/her to continue instead with the half-note beat as the tactus; the notated sevens may be avoided altogether.

Example 3: Allegro section, block restatements; alternate barring

The image displays a musical score for an Allegro section, consisting of four systems of piano music. Each system shows two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and rhythmic markings. The score is divided into measures, with brackets and vertical lines indicating different barring options (A and B) for groups of measures. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 208$ . The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The systems are numbered 17, 18, and 19. System 19 includes the instruction "Doppio valore".

System 17: Measures 17-20. Options: 3 (6) A, 4 (8) B, 3 (6) A, 4 (8) B.

System 18: Measures 21-24. Options: 3½ (7) A, 3½ (7) A, 3 (6) A, 3½ (7) B, 4 (8) B, 3½ (7) A.

System 19: Measures 25-28. Options: 3 (6) A, 4 (8) B, A, etc.

Marked off by brackets and vertical lines in Example 3, the revised barring is the *preferred* reading of the Allegro, it being the one listeners are most likely to adopt, and for the reasons cited above. This is not to suggest that Stravinsky's notated barring is "wrong", but only that other and possibly more compelling options are likely to suggest themselves to the listener. From the standpoint of meter and rhythm, the music at Rehearsal nos. 17 and 18 is likely to strike the listener as a good deal more lively (and conflicted) than Stravinsky's 7/4 measures with irregular subdivisions imply.

More specifically, the notated 7/4 bars conflict with the listener's natural inclination (or instinct) to infer and impose a steady metrical framework from and on the successive series of seven, largely undifferentiated quarter-note beats. Stravinsky's notation is a form of *anti-meter* in this regard. Above all, it is the *conflict* between these different interpretations of the bar line that distinguishes the rhythmic-metric invention in the Allegro, not one interpretation taken singly and in isolation from the other(s).

At Rehearsal No.18, block A is followed by another block A rather than by block B, the effect of which is to lengthen block A to 3 ½ half-note beats, and to force the listener (finally!) to accept the sevens of Stravinsky's notation. (The listener may continue with the half-note beat at this point, adding an "extra" quarter-note beat at the end of each repeat of the A segment.) The changes in length and ultimately in alignment are highlighted by what does *not* change throughout these sections of music, namely, *everything else*.

In other words, the Allegro consists of ten repetitions of blocks A and B, six of block A and four of block B. In pitch, instrumentation, and articulation, these repetitions, first at Rehearsal No. 17 and then, following a semitonal transposition, at Rehearsal No. 18, are *exact*. And they are so in order that the length, order, and alignment of the two phrases might be highlighted.

And the development that may be inferred by way of this interaction between fixed and non-fixed elements is largely metrical. As rebarred in Example 3, the (A+B) + (A+B) formation at Rehearsal No.17 may be read with the half-note beat as the tactus. At the level of the bar line, this formation spells (3+4) + (3+4) half-note beats, with the second block B the recipient of an extra beat. At Rehearsal no.18, the extra half-note beat becomes an extra quarter-note beat; although the listener is likely to read through the repetitions of phrase A in a parallel fashion, a threat is posed all the same. The drama of this invention, in which, however briefly, a tactus or meter is implied and then threatened or disrupted altogether, would be enacted again and again in Stravinsky's music over the next fifty or so years.

## II.

Identifying *The Firebird* as a "fecund" score, Stravinsky cited the 7/4 measures and their irregular subdivisions in the Finale as "the first appearance in my music of metrical irregularity".<sup>27</sup> And so they are, even if, as we have noted just above, the notated irregularity may represent only part of the story as far as the listener's metrical involvement with this music is concerned. Notation is by definition partial, of course, typically an approximation of what the composer may envision in listening and in performance. Often in Stravinsky's scores, the notated bar lines conceal as much as they reveal.

In the revised barring in Example 3, the vertical bars coincide with restatements of blocks A and B. Parallelism rules, as bar lines and block repeats are synchronized. And the expectation is that the listener will respond accordingly. In the revised barring at Rehearsal no.18, the extra quarter-note beat in the first of the successive block A repeats will mean that the half-note beat will be interrupted at some point; on the other side of the bar line, listeners must

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<sup>27</sup> Stravinsky and Craft 1962: 151.

scramble to reestablish the half-note beat as the tactus. This is the sort of experience that both implies and is implied by the analytical rebarring bracketed in Example 3.

Elsewhere in recent years I have labelled barrings such as the notated and revised ones traced in Example 3 as *radical*;<sup>28</sup> in parallel fashion, measure-lengths coincide with the lengths of motives or blocks and their subsequent repeats. When repeats are spaced irregularly, measure-lengths will reflect that irregularity.

In the Introduction to Part II of *The Rite*, the repetition of the configuration shown in Example 4a is again radical. Closely resembling the treatment of blocks A and B in *The Firebird* Finale, the configuration bracketed as block A5 is immediately followed by a repeat. The repeat stretches the configuration by a quarter-note beat, which is acknowledged by the 6/4 signature. In parallel fashion again, blocks and their repeats, whether literal or modified in some fashion, correspond to the bar lines.

At Rehearsal nos. 87-89, block A becomes a separate layer in a large-scale stratification (see Example 4b). The harmony is octatonic, as is often the case with the dance movements of *The Rite*. Typical of the dissonance in *The Rite* is the 0-5, 11 interval span, reading down;<sup>29</sup> the chord Db-Ab, D in the strings unites with (Bb-F) in the first part of block A to implicate Collection I, one of the three transpositions of the octatonic set (see the left-hand side of the vertical dotted line in Example 4b). The latter alternates with Eb-Bb, E in the strings and (C E G) in the second violins, implicating Collection III. Although the separation between these two alternating octatonic transpositions is blurred in time by the sustained chords in the flutes and lower strings, alternations of this kind between octatonic transpositions are rare in Stravinsky's music. Indeed, they are present on a consistent basis only in the fourth tableau in *Les Noces*.

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<sup>28</sup> For further discussion of Stravinsky's *radical* notations, see van den Toorn and McGinness 2012, especially 18-28. The distinction between *radical* and *conservative* responses, between allowing the meter to be interrupted and allowing it to be sustained, respectively, was first made in Andrew Imbrie. 1973. Extra Measures and Metrical Ambiguity in Beethoven. In *Beethoven Studies*. Ed. Alan Tyson. New York: W. W. Norton: 45-66. The distinction was then introduced in Lerdahl and Jackendoff. 1983: 23-25, as a means of classifying alternative readings of hypermeter at the opening of Mozart's G minor symphony, K.550. It has since been applied to various types of reactions to metrical displacement in *The Rite of Spring*; see van den Toorn 1987: 67. See also Gretchen Horlacher. 1995. Metric Irregularity in *Les Noces*: The Problem of Periodicity. *Journal of Music Theory* 39, no.2(1995): 285-310.

<sup>29</sup> See van den Toorn 1987: 131-52, for an account of the octatonically conceived 0-5, 11 interval span as it manifests itself throughout *The Rite*.

Example 4: *The Rite of Spring*; Part II, Introduction

a)

Musical score for Example 4a, measures 86-87. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 48$ . The score is for a trumpet (tps.) in 5/4 time. Measure 86 is marked *p* and contains a melodic line with a slur over measures 86-87, labeled  $A_5$ . Measure 87 is also marked *p* and contains a similar melodic line, labeled  $A_6$ . Both measures end with a half note marked  $(\flat)$ .

b)

Musical score for Example 4b, measures 87-88. The score is for strings and clarinet (cls.) in 5/4 time. Measure 87 is marked *mp* and contains a melodic line for the clarinet and a rhythmic pattern for the strings. Measure 88 is marked *mp* and contains a melodic line for the clarinet and a rhythmic pattern for the strings. The strings part features triplets in measures 87 and 88. A vertical dashed line separates measure 87 from measure 88. The labels "octatonic collection I" and "collection III" are placed below the string parts for measures 87 and 88, respectively. The clarinet part is marked "cls." and the string part is marked "strings". A "Flag." marking is present above the string part in measure 88.

Harmony and melody (pitch relations, more generally) have been slighted in this inquiry, in large part because of the considerable attention they have received elsewhere in the past half century.<sup>30</sup> Relevant here, however, is the static, deadlocked quality of the octatonic configurations shown in Example 4b, a quality traceable ultimately to the symmetries of the octatonic set itself, and one very much in keeping with the immobility sensed earlier on the part of the repetition, stratification, and block textures in *The Rite* and in Stravinsky's music more generally.

Thus, too, the fixed, immobile features of the instrumentation, registration, articulation and now octatonic harmony serve to highlight the shifts that occur in the alignment of the reiterating fragments and chords. The internal logic of *The Rite* and other Stravinsky works is again brought to the fore, as rhythm and meter take on a dynamic character, in relation to which the domains of melody, harmony, and form tend to fall into place.

### III.

No less radical than the barrings cited in Examples 3 and 4a and b are the bar lines accompanying the melodic repeat structure that opens the "Glorification of the Chosen one" at Rehearsal no. 104 in Part II of *The Rite of Spring*. Parallelism rules here as well, with the successive 5/8 measures at the start of this movement a reflection of block A5 and its immediate (near) repeat (see the brackets above the staves in Example 5a; the numbers indicate the number of eighth-note beats encompassed by each block and its subsequent repeat). The contrasting block B9 that follows consists entirely of repetitions of the tiny motive a2, derived in turn from block A5 (see the brackets below the staff in Example 5a). Much of the rhythmic play of this movement may be traced to changes that occur in the number of successive repetitions of motive a2. Left uncertain of that number, listeners are left guessing, as it were, with their anticipation of a return to the more reliable block A5 and its a2+b3 motivic succession heightened as a result.

Clearly at work in our apprehension of this music, however, are forces other than those of parallelism. The repetitions of motive a2 in block B9 are likely to instill in the listener a sense of the quarter-note beat and possibly even of the half-note beat as well- the quarter-note beat as the tactus at 104 beats per minute, the half-note beat as a possible bar line. In Example 5b, the opening of the "Glorification" is rebarred accordingly. (Although at a somewhat slower

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<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Arthur Berger. 1972. Problems of Pitch Organization in Stravinsky. In *Perspectives on Schoenberg and Stravinsky*. Ed. Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone. New York: Norton: 123-154; Pieter C. van den Toorn. 1983. *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*. New Haven: Yale; and Richard Taruskin. 1996. *Stravinsky and The Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works Through "Mavra"*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Two vols.

pace, the hammer-like action of the quarter-note beat in the notorious 11/4 bar that directly precedes the “Glorification” could also act as a form of support for the quarter-note beat.)

Example 5: *The Rite of Spring*; “Glorification,” opening bars

a)

104 ♩ = 144

A<sub>5</sub> A<sub>5</sub> B<sub>9</sub> A<sub>5</sub> A<sub>7</sub>

a<sub>2</sub> b<sub>3</sub> a<sub>2</sub> b<sub>3</sub> a<sub>2</sub> etc.

b)

104 ♩ = 144

In this *metrical* interpretation of the opening of the “Glorification” (Example 5b), the character of block A5 and its immediate repeat changes dramatically. Quite simply, the repeat is heard as a displacement of the original. Block A5 falls first on and then off quarter-note beat, with the (near) repeat assuming a *syncopated* character. A bit more complex is the return of block A5 followed by A7 at mm. 4-5. By way of the extra eighth-note beat of block B9, block A will enter first off and then on the quarter-note beat, a reversal of the initial sequence; the syncopated version comes first, with the original sequence displaced.

Of course, listeners sensitive to the metrical implications of the opening bars of the “Glorification” could well experience a disruption of the meter at the return of block A5 at m. 4. The forces of parallelism could well overwhelm those of the meter at this point, with the listener switching in midstream from one mode of interpretation to another.

Yet the larger point at this juncture concerns (once again) the multiple forces that are apt to engage the listener in his/her hearing and understanding of this music, along with the fact that not all of these forces may be represented by the notation. And there are different kinds of listeners as well, listeners who might respond differently to a given stimulus. Above all, however, it is often the *conflict* between the various forces examined above that characterizes Stravinsky's music from a rhythmic-metric standpoint, the fact that there is often insufficient evidence for an easy, automatic determination by the listener in favor of one force over another.

The metrical rebarring traced in Example 5b could be described as *conservative*,<sup>31</sup> given that the listener is imagined as *conserving* the meter (or at least the quarter-note beat) through the irregularly spaced repeats of blocks A5 and B9 and their embedded motivic successions. In turn, Stravinsky's radical barring in Example 5a could be judged *anti-metrical*, in that the parallelism underlying the notation runs counter to the metrical implications of mm. 1-5. In his radical interpretation of this music, Stravinsky bars against the suggestion of a meter for which, nonetheless, he provides evidence not only at the opening of the "Glorification," but later as well.

In fact, it is as if, on a simultaneous basis, the composer had actually wanted it *both ways*. Somewhat sadistically, it can seem, conservatively inclined listeners are drawn into the comfort of a meter only to be confronted post haste with a challenge or a form of disruption. Here again, the aesthetic matter is likely to beckon, the question as to why maneuvers of this kind in Stravinsky's music should prove aesthetically exciting to the listener. And again, unfortunately, while the logic of these maneuvers can be traced, their physical and psychological effect weighed, little can be said of the pleasure that is gained, the passion that may well intervene. The lack of a rationale in this regard is owing at least in some measure to the closed-off character of the whole, of course, the latter being something other than the mere sum of its parts, to paraphrase from the cliché of Gestalt psychology. Analysis deals with parts and more or less used parts at that, even if, like a hovering ghost, the sensed whole may yet guide the analyst, theorist, critic or historian in his/her calculations.

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<sup>31</sup> See note 27. Analytical rearrangements of Stravinsky's music, designed for the most part to reveal the hidden periodicity behind the notated irregularity, were first introduced by Leonard Meyer in his discussion of the opening "Soldier's March" in *The Soldier's Tale*; see Leonard B. Meyer. 1956. *Emotion and Meaning in Music*. University of Chicago Press: 120. They have since been applied for roughly the same reasons in van den Toorn. 1987: 71; and van den Toorn and McGinness 2012, especially 18-28. The term *anti-metrical* has been used to designate "dissonant" layers of metrical pulsation in the music of Schumann; see Harald Krebs. 1999. *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 2. It has been used more specifically in relation to Stravinsky in David Huron. 2006. *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

IV.

It should not be concluded from the preceding illustrations that Stravinsky's interpretations of the bar line are invariably radical. I would guess that there are as many conservative as there are radical interpretations in his scores. The stratification at Rehearsal nos. 28-30 in the "Augurs of Spring" in Part I of *The Rite* features multiple displacements in the repetition of the flute fragment (see Example 6). Because of the conservative treatment - a 2/4 meter is sustained throughout - the displacements lie exposed to the eye. In a radical approach to this music, changing bar lines would have marked off the repeats, with the displacements obscured as a result.

Example 6: *The Rite of Spring*; "Augurs of Spring," second flute

The image shows a musical score for the second flute part of "Augurs of Spring" from Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. It consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'fl.' and 'mf' and starts with a box containing the number '28'. The music is in 2/4 time. The first measure has a quarter rest followed by a quarter note. The second measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The third measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The fourth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The fifth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The sixth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The seventh measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The eighth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The ninth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The tenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The eleventh measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The twelfth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The thirteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The fourteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The fifteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The sixteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The seventeenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The eighteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The nineteenth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The twentieth measure has a quarter note followed by a quarter rest. The word 'etc.' is written at the end of the top staff. A vertical dashed line is placed between the second and third measures of the top staff, indicating a displacement.

The concluding dance movement of *The Rite*, the "Sacrificial Dance", may be the most challenging, rhythmic-metrically speaking. Although the barring is for the most part radical, there is no mistaking the syncopation that, in the opening configuration of this movement, owes its felt presence to the sort of metrical scheme bracketed in Example 7. The configuration is the first part of another repeat structure, in which the repeat is literal and without any form of displacement. In other words, the repeat at Rehearsal no. 143 is not displaced relative to the continuing  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter.

Where the performance of *The Rite* and other Stravinsky works is concerned, the composer's lifelong insistence on a strict, metronomic approach will come as no particular surprise to readers of this inquiry.<sup>32</sup> If the play of meter, dis-

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<sup>32</sup> Statements by Stravinsky about the necessity of keeping to a strict beat when performing his music may be found in Igor Stravinsky. *Some Ideas About My Octuor*, reprinted in Eric Walter White. 1966. *Stravinsky: The Composer and his Works*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 529; Igor Stravinsky. 1956. *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl. New York: Vintage, chapter 6; and Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1956. *Conversations with Stravinsky*. New York: Doubleday: 133-35. For a chronicle of these and related comments by the composer on performance matters, see van den Toorn and McGinness 2012: 258-61.

placement, and parallelism is to make itself felt, then the beat has to be maintained at an even pace, and hence with a minimum of expressive timing or *rubato*. (The issue concerns a *minimum of rubato*, given the difficulty posed by the deadpan performance, the idea of an execution entirely without expressive timing or nuance being very nearly impossible for most performers.<sup>33</sup> The impulse to dramatize a musical structure by way of nuance is evidently too fundamentally a part of the impulse to perform itself.)

Example 7: *The Rite of Spring*; “Sacrificial Dance,” opening

Much of the criticism of Stravinsky’s music in the past century may be traced to the necessity of adhering to a steady beat, as advertised by the composer and supplemented by his own performances as a pianist or conductor. Among the many critics and performers who complained about the strict performance style, Adorno ridiculed the idea of a performance lacking any “expressive fluctuation of the beat”.<sup>34</sup> But while the strict style limits somewhat the mediating role of the performer, the expressive qualities of Stravinsky’s music are not thereby diminished. On the contrary, as we have indicated already, those qualities are enhanced. As long as the listener or performer is able to sense the style as an outgrowth of the internal logic to which our attention has been directed in this inquiry, then there should be little difficulty in keeping to an even beat. Such a beat can be maintained sympathetically, in other words, not mechanically or submissively.

<sup>33</sup> See van den Toorn and McGinness 2012: 257.

<sup>34</sup> Adorno 1973: 154.

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**JÄRVINEN**





## "They Never Dance": The Choreography of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, 1913

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### Abstract

In this text, I discuss Vaslav Nijinsky's choreography of *Le Sacre du Printemps* (henceforth *Sacre*) as it appears in the light of primary source materials from 1913. By focusing on the unique challenges Nijinsky posed to his dancers in terms of movement style and composition, I contest many of the frequently-heard claims made about this work, particularly its danced component, and argue that Nijinsky's choreographic ideas challenged both dancers and critics by questioning the ontological qualities of (art) dance in contemporary discourse.

**Keywords:** *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Nijinsky; Stravinsky; choreography; dance.

### Some Premises for the Analysis

*The fact of the matter is that there has been far too much talk about theories and too little knowledge of the art of dancing. We talk of dancing in terms of painting, music, and even literature, instead of in terms of dancing. Nijinsky is endeavouring to evolve a new school of pantomime. That is quite enough. Let us try to take it on its merits and understand what it seeks to express. (The Nation 2.8.1913.)*

The critic of *The Nation* could be speaking about the current research on the work he describes. Although much has been said of the 1913 premiere of *Sacre*, not many authors have focused on the actual bodies performing on stage. While the musical score has been canonised as a masterpiece, the choreography was only performed nine times<sup>35</sup> before it was withdrawn from the repertory of the company, leaving only scattered remains of critical reception and reminiscences in the archive. In dance, where notation is not

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<sup>35</sup> There were six performances (as well as a public dress-rehearsal) in Paris, three performances in London.

standard practice, 'works' are understood as a living tradition, transmitted from one professional or a group of professionals to the next. This embodied practice is, to use Diana Taylor's (2003: esp. 16-52) term, the repertoire, an ephemeral social practice that can be contrasted with the fixed, hegemonic documents in the archive. In my Foucauldian reiteration of Taylor's argument, the repertoire becomes a re-enacted, constantly changing reiteration of the past in the present. It is embedded in complex interactions with the archive to which we can return but which also always-already limits what we can claim to know about past performances. Thus, the disappearance of a particular work from the active repertoire (of all dance companies) does not entail an actual loss of that work as much as its transformation on the level of archive/repertoire. In a sense, the 1913 *Sacre* figures prominently in both the archive and the repertoire, even if the specific choreography has not been performed since 1913.

However, this epistemological uncertainty of dance – simultaneously ephemeral and static, changing and fixed into a canon of masterworks – is an issue particularly pertinent to the 1913 *Sacre*. In 1987, the work was 'reconstructed' by Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer who collected selected parts of the archive, forcing them together into a new saleable product for the repertoire. In the academe, this kind of re-making raised more questions about the processes of "archiving" repertoire and the epistemology of performance,<sup>36</sup> rather than provoked a critical discussion on how exactly this kind of reconstruction fixes the past by stabilising it both epistemologically and ontologically. That is how a large-scale (i.e. very expensive) reconstruction ends up *becoming a new original* and *becoming an archive*, suppressing the need to do critical research on a past work, research that is crucial to understanding the significance of the past in the present. Today, when dance audiences (including many researchers) think of "Nijinsky's *Sacre*" they actually think of Millicent Hodson's choreography, and they see this choreography as (relatively) unchanging and stable.<sup>37</sup> This means that even dance researchers disregard the huge potential for reimagining dance in 1913 – and in 2013 – still in the archive.

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<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Acocella 1991; and Fink 1999: esp. 305-312. On the problems with notions like 'authentic' and 'original' in dance, see Burt 1998; and Carter 1998.

<sup>37</sup> As in Hoogen 1997: esp. 49-53; Jordan 2000: 39-42; Launay 2003; Solomon 2011: esp. 76-77. In other words, despite their awareness of reconstruction as an *imagined* original, dance scholars tend to assert the hegemony of Hodson's interpretation in their actual *analyses* referencing her work as Nijinsky and taking what is shown on stage now as having also been there in 1913. What they miss is how Hodson (1985) builds elaborate arguments about choreography on select, mostly secondary sources, often relying on pure speculation that is obscured in the staged spectacle and by her numerous publications.

Despite its magnificent costumes and sets, a key issue with the so-called reconstruction of *Sacre* is that a source which describes movement does not necessarily describe *choreography*, understood as the spatial and temporal arrangement of movements and stillnesses, gestures and steps, rhythms and paces of a body or a group of bodies. Neither movement nor choreography require musical accompaniment, as these may not necessarily be 'dance' (Lepecki 2006: especially 1-2). In this article, 'choreography' is used in the specific sense of a composition of staged art dance, that is an aesthetic practice with a history and a canon of authors and masterworks, a practice with self-consistent form and temporally and geographically specific conventions acquired through education and practice. One of my points is that the limits of what is understood as 'dance' and how 'dancing' is defined vary; hence, any definitions of what is or is not dance at a given time contain value-judgements, often made in order to exclude certain movement practices from the definition of 'dance' (as with ragtime dances, see Järvinen 2012).

Indeed, one of the most intriguing aspects of the critical reception of Nijinsky's choreographic work is the frequency of this exclusion:

*Il n'y a pas, dans tout le Sacre du printemps, une seule ligne, un seul mouvement d'un seul personnage qui ait une apparence de grâce, d'élégance, de légèreté, de noblesse, de l'éloquence et d'expression: tout est laid, lourdement, platement et uniformément laid. Danseurs et danseuses, presque toujours serrés en groupes épais et compacts, demeurent tassés sur eux-mêmes, ne faisant que des gestes maladroits, raccourcis, rétrécis, étriqués, des gestes d'infirmes et d'ataxiques. Ils agitent leurs bras comme des moignons, et leurs jambes comme si elles étaient en bois. Ils ne dansent jamais: ils ne font que tressauter, trépigner, piétiner et trembloter convulsivement sur place; et lorsqu'ils ont commencé de faire un mouvement quelconque, ils le répètent indéfiniment, jusqu'à la satiété, jusqu'à l'ennui, jusqu'à l'agacement, jusqu'à l'irritation. (Pierre Lalo in *Le Temps* 3.6.1913.)*

Here, Pierre Lalo, the son of the composer Eduard Lalo, not only lists qualities expected of the kind of dance that claims to be art – "grace, elegance, lightness, nobility, eloquence, and expression" – but also describes the aesthetic qualities of *Sacre* – "ugly" – and even some aspects of Nijinsky's choreography – compact groups, repetition of movements, remaining in place – as 'not dancing'. This shows how our understanding of movement, including staged movement, is embedded in assumptions about aesthetic evaluations of beauty and ugliness as well as in codes of appropriateness (propriety and decency), political anxieties about encountering the other (particularly *en masse*), the historical specificity of bodies, affects and cultural signs. In short, it refers to what Reinhardt Koselleck (2004: 255-275) has called "the horizon of expectations" at a given time and place. For the Parisian audiences of 29 May

1913, this horizon of expectations also included (if reminiscences are to be believed) violent protests at the company's audacity of presenting this *thing* as dance.

Although Lalo is repeating a view about dance (graceful, harmonious movement) hegemonic amongst contemporary dance aficionados,<sup>38</sup> his indignation actually shows the novelty and importance of the kind of choreography he criticised. But Lalo, like so many people who have discussed *Sacre* since, never pauses to think *why* a Russian dancer known as a virtuoso in precisely this kind of graceful movement and lauded as a genius of his art form, would be interested in this kind of movement language or these kinds of choreographic devices. Moreover, he does not consider how a dancer, accustomed to the same hegemonic view about what they should be doing on stage, might react to the choreographer's demands.

### Primitivism in the Russian Context

In contemporary reviews, the most common justification for the movement qualities that Lalo lists – for better or worse – was that Nijinsky was representing primitive humans (e.g. Boschot in *L'Echo de Paris* quoted in Bullard 1971(ii): 12; Lunacharsky in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 9./22.6.1913). Leaving aside ridiculous claims about Nijinsky and his collaborators recreating a primitive ritual,<sup>39</sup> the question of the primitive clearly did not arise solely from the theme of the ballet, pagan Russia, but rather from the Western perspective on Russia as a primitive nation and on dance as a primitive practice.<sup>40</sup> The prevalence of this discourse is still evident in the research on *Sacre*.

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<sup>38</sup> See e.g. André Suarès in *La Nouvelle revue française* 1.8.1912; Crawford Fitch 1912: 24 on dance as joy; or how Johnson 1913: 186 and *The Dancing Times* August 1913 represent Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'Faune* (1912) as *unnecessarily* restricting dancers to a seemingly two-dimensional stage picture. Later, this kind of dance, "diametrically opposed to his potentialities and natural gifts" (Sert 1953: 125-126) has been represented as indicative of mental illness, because Nijinsky was institutionalised as insane in 1919.

<sup>39</sup> As in Hodson 1985 and 1985b; and Hoogen 1997. These interpretations rest on a theoretical tradition associating dance with primitive rituals that has been repeatedly and thoroughly discredited in dance anthropology – see Buckland 2001/2002: 415. Specifically, they owe much to the set designer of *Sacre*, Nicholas Roerich – in particular his interview in *Rech* 22.11./5.12.1912. Although both Stravinsky and Nijinsky seem to have respected Roerich as an authority on pagan Russia, Nijinsky specifically requested that he not be present at the rehearsals. Diaghilev to Stravinsky 20.12.1912/2.1.1913 in Stravinsky 1997(i): 398.

<sup>40</sup> See below on the Ballets Russes according to Jacques Rivière, who was merely following a trend in the reviews where the Russians were regularly discussed as the guardians of mystical memories of primitive ancestors (to cite *Le Figaro* 27 May 1909) and "the virile impulses of an untamed race" (Johnson 1913: 161). On dance as the primitive origin of art, see e.g. St.-Johnston 1906: 10-3; Fitch 1912: 15-9; Caffin & Caffin 1912: 21-5.

With *Sacre*, the generally positive tone of Russian reviews is also in stark contrast to the generally negative Russian view of Diaghilev's enterprise and the mixed opinion of Western critics (Järvinen 2013). For example, the future Commissar of Enlightenment in the Soviet Union, Anatoly Lunacharsky (in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 9./22.6.1913), discussed how this work overhauled traditional notions of beauty in ballet and, like the former Director of the Imperial Theatres, Prince Sergei Volkonsky (in *Apollon* 6/1913), emphasised that *Sacre* did not aim for archaeological accuracy or ethnographic authenticity in its representation of the primitive.<sup>41</sup> Although it never occurred to Lunacharsky that Nijinsky would have viewed primitive form (as well as primitivist developments in contemporary art) as beautiful *in and of itself*, he at least did not mistake Russians *for* primitives in the manner of many of the French critics praised in research as truly understanding *Sacre*.<sup>42</sup> As an example of the latter, in his first article on *Sacre* for *La Nouvelle revue française* (August 1913), Jacques Rivière claimed that the Russians had a kind of a primitive hive mind and he explicitly rested his appraisal of the new work on this presumed racial, that is, biological difference:

*Cette petite troupe d'hommes n'a pas été entamée. [--] Entre eux et nous il y a la distance d'une race à une autre. [--] S'il leur est impossible de communiquer avec nous, lorsqu'ils sont entre eux, ils ont une extraordinaire faculté de mêler leurs âmes, de sentir et de penser la même chose à plusieurs. Leur race est trop jeune encore pour que se soient construites en chaque être ces milles petites différences, ces délicates réserves personnelles, ces légères mais infranchissables défenses qui abritent le seuil d'un esprit cultivé. L'originalité n'est pas en eux cette balance fragile de sentiments hétérogènes qu'elle est en nous. Elle a quelque chose de plus libre, de plus rude, de moins facile à endommager. C'est pourquoi elle peut s'engager et se perdre un instant dans les autres.*

The fact that Rivière explicitly rests his praise of the new work on the inherent and irrevocable difference between the "untamed" Russians and the "cultivated" French is why it is so suspect that in his famous second article in

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<sup>41</sup> Both quoted in Järvinen 2013. Both critics also disliked Roerich's costumes: the former thought them unoriginal and the latter called them "рубення" (provincial). In contrast, the usual advocate of Diaghilev's enterprise, Valerian Svetlov (in *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 23.5./5.6.1913) focused on Roerich's contribution, apparently because Nijinsky's choreography made him very uncomfortable.

<sup>42</sup> Such as Rivière - see e.g. Kirstein 1975: 144, 164-168; Garafola 1992: 69-70; Launay 2003. What truly indicates the remarkable Orientalism of research on the Ballets Russes is that familiarity with Russian materials or ability to read Russian are not deemed necessary for expertise on the company. Russian reviews are also conspicuously absent from the reconstruction materials Hodson uses.

*La Nouvelle revue française* (November 1913), he speaks of *Sacre* as a "biological" ballet. Indeed, this blatant racism of contemporary discourse, where race was a natural category, is rarely addressed in research on the Ballets Russes.

Primitivism – seeking aesthetic ideas in the products of contemporary cultures perceived as incapable of progress, eternally representing the past of humankind – certainly affected the choreographic ideas of Nijinsky who was commissioned to translate the libretto of the new ballet into a *misé-en-scène*. Although no notation of *Sacre* by Nijinsky has survived,<sup>43</sup> Nijinsky was highly interested in Cubism and even claimed that: "Моя новая формула движения подчеркнет механизм жеста и линий. Я применил к хореографии теорию живописцев-кубистов."<sup>44</sup> Also the fact that his contemporaries immediately associated particular kinds of gestures with the primitive and the savage – for better or for worse – attests to a shared understanding of what 'primitive' connoted in aesthetic terms.<sup>45</sup> However, the *significance* of primitive differed greatly between the Parisian spectators, who feared that the demise of their empire was already visible in the degenerative effects of over-civilization, and the Russian audiences, for whom the primitive was imbued with ideas about neo-nationalist revival.

The critics' own views on the role of this neo-nationalism in Russian art greatly influenced how they interpreted what they saw of it in *Sacre*. Regardless of whether they liked Nijinsky's choreography, Russian critics were inclined to see a connection between the danced gestures and old native Russian forms of art, notably icons and *lubki* (popular prints); but they simultaneously stressed the *interpretation* of these forms in the dance was inherently modern.<sup>46</sup> However, whereas both Lunacharsky and Volkonsky saw this modernism as a (more or less) positive tendency, Levinson clearly posited himself against the *narodnik* (Populist) tradition of neo-nationalism, where true Russianness stemmed from a connection to the soil and the

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<sup>43</sup> There are no hand-written notes to Stravinsky's piano score in the manner of Nijinsky's notes on Debussy's *Jeux* (Debussy & Nijinsky s.a.)

<sup>44</sup> "My new formula of movement emphasises the mechanism of gesture and line. I apply to choreography the theory of Cubist painters." Nijinsky quoted in *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 15./28.4.1912 (quoted in Zilberstein & Samkov 1982(i): 448, my translation). His interview in *Comœdia* 18.4.1912 headlined "Nijinski va faire dans l'Après-midi d'un Faune' des essais de chorégraphie cubiste".

<sup>45</sup> However, see Berliner 2002: 7 on the distinction between the 'sauvage' and the 'primitif'.

<sup>46</sup> See Lunacharsky in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 9./22.6.1913 on *lubki* and primitive painting; Levinson in *Rech* 3./16.6.1913 on "icon-painting-like gestures" and "naïve *kustarnost*" (*kustari* being peasant manufactures, *kustarnost* means their products); Volkonsky in *Apollon* 6/1913 on "cubist icon-painting". All these stress the connection to painting (flatness, stylisation). More in Järvinen 2013: esp. 11-19.

(idealised) peasants.<sup>47</sup> This observation not only points to the co-existence of different nationalisms in Russia and their significance to the critical reception of a work seemingly about Russia's past (and its future), but also suggests caution in assuming that any critic (particularly a foreign critic) understood the "truth" of *Sacre*.

Although it is likely that the frequency of associating Nijinsky's choreographies with Cubism was due to the choreographer's published claims, it is also crucial to note that Russian and Western reviews differ in their reading of this Cubism. In the West, Nijinsky's stylisation – his choreographic focus on simple movements and idiomatic gestures – was usually deemed ugly, unsuited to dance as an art form, and, more specifically, a foreign tendency threatening the 'authenticity' of the Russians.<sup>48</sup> In Russia, these formal qualities were seen as imbued with national spirit, making the work *more* Russian as well as engaging with contemporary concerns in Russian art. This is why it is crucial that Nikolai Minsky (pseudonym of Nikolai Maksimovich Vilenkin) labelled Nijinsky's choreographic style 'neo-realism' – a word he used of the Acmeist<sup>49</sup> poets. For Minsky, Nijinsky's choreographies were a stylised form of everyday reality, a new kind of formalism misunderstood for the same reason similar modernist ideas of beauty were misinterpreted in other art forms. In his review of *Sacre* for *Utro Rossii* 30.5./12.6.1913, Minsky distinguished this neo-realism from realism, the style favoured by the *narodniki*, emphasising that in the former, reality was but a starting point: the goal was artifice, as in all great art. Since Minsky also chides Mikhail Fokine, Nijinsky's predecessor as the principal ballet master of

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<sup>47</sup> Like most advocates of the 'old ballet' of Petipa, Levinson was politically aligned with the *zapadniki* (Westernisers), for whom Russians imported Western cultural products to improve them for the greater glory of the nation. See Mikkeli 1999: 149-155; Vihavainen 1999: 168-169; Williams 1999: 3-18, esp. 11. Ballet was one of these 'improved imports' associated with the Petrine reforms. In contrast, *kustari* were the domain of the *narodniki* (Populists) who sought the Russian soul in the folk traditions of the peasants. Many of the *narodniki* embraced primitivism, which utilised the crafts of peasants to create designs for the modern consumer. Salmond 1996; also Rhodes 1994: 24-31. As a socialist, Lunacharsky would have been closer to the *narodniki* whereas Volkonsky, a Baltic nobleman, is a more complex case.

<sup>48</sup> This is particularly true of the French reviews, e.g. Gaston Carraud in *La Liberté* 31.5.1913 quoted below. Similar claims had already surfaced with Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* of 1912, and again with *Jeux*, also to Debussy's score, a fortnight before *Sacre*: see e.g. Camille Mauclair in *Le Courrier Musical* 15.6.1912. However, exceptions also exist: Octave Mauss *L'Art Moderne* quoted in Bullard 1971(ii): 72-76; and Jean Marnold in *Mercure de France* 1.10.1913, who shared Rivière's opinion of the Russian race as an atavistic collective. In England, where critics were less hostile towards Nijinsky's choreographies, some really made an effort to understand with *Sacre* – see Francis Toye in *The Graphic* 19.7.1913 (negative); cf. Toye in *The Bystander* 23.7.1913 (positive).

<sup>49</sup> The Acmeists were a loose group of poets including Anna Akhmatova and Osip Mandelstam as well as Minsky himself.

the Ballets Russes, with the words of Tolstoy, his point is clearly a modernist re-appropriation of the Russian realist tradition. Nijinsky's later interest in Tolstoy makes this connection almost too neat to be credible.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast, Western critics had a tendency to represent Nijinsky's works as "une phase nouvelle de la lutte de l'idéalisme contre le réalisme dans l'art scénique" (Vuillermoz in *S.I.M. Revue musicale* June 1913), as a new kind of *anti-realist* art. However, Minsky's reading of *Sacre* is plausible because what he says is also close to Nijinsky's (in *Le Figaro* 14.5.1913) insistence that dance should utilise contemporary movements:

*L'homme que je vois avant tout autre sur la scène, dit-il, c'est l'homme moderne. Je rêve d'un costume, d'une plastique, d'un mouvement qui seraient caractéristiques de notre temps. Il y a sûrement dans le corps humain des éléments qui sont significatifs de l'époque où il s'exprime. Lorsqu'on voit aujourd'hui un homme se promener, lire un journal ou danser le tango, on n'aperçoit rien de commun entre ses gestes et ceux, par exemple, d'un flâneur sous Louis XV, d'un gentilhomme courant le menuet, ou d'un moine lisant studieusement un manuscrit au treizième siècle.*

For Nijinsky, a man on the modern streets did not walk like a man from the seventeenth century, the dances of the 1910s were not minuets and a newspaper was not read reverentially. What is at stake, here, is more than period style, it is the aesthetic of grace and harmony: when movement is no longer something eternal, ideal or 'natural' in the manner of contemporary dance discourse, dance can no longer act as a 'cure' to modernity.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, the role of the primitive in *Sacre* was to allow for experimentation with form, to find an excuse to do away with precisely those aesthetic qualities that were usually seen as *ontological*: grace, harmony, lightness, flow. For this reason, although meant as a joke, there is no actual contradiction in Alfred Capus (in a satirical front-page editorial to *Le Figaro* 2.6.1913) calling one of the characters "le type bien moderne de la femme de trois cents ans", a woman both modern and ancient.

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<sup>50</sup> During the war, Nijinsky began to plan a school of dancing. He drafted charters for the school, beginning each with quotations from Tolstoy - see Krasovskaya 1979: 326, 336. He also became a vegetarian, adopted Tolstoyan religious ideas and reinterpreted his life and career in his so-called *Diary* (Nijinsky 1999, written between 19.1.-4.3.1919 under the influence of psychoactive drugs administered by a sports doctor in love with Nijinsky's wife - see Ostwald 1991: esp. 174-175, 184), eerily similar at times to Tolstoy 1904.

<sup>51</sup> This relates to how, before the First World War, only *certain kinds of dance* were acceptable in the discourse. Ragtime dances or the tango that Nijinsky mentions were not; they were a "degenerate" form, the opposite of modern art dance (including ballet) in contemporary dance literature. See Järvinen 2012 for a discussion; also, first paragraph of the next section.

### Simple Movements, Stylised Gestures

What, then, were the specific movement qualities associated with *Sacre*? Based on the reviews, these could be labelled 1) pedestrian simplicity, 2) asymmetry, 3) repetition, 4) stillness, and 5) submission to gravity. As I noted in conjunction with Lalo's review, all these qualities were seen as refuting the ontological premises of art dance: in order to be art, dance was supposed to be graceful, harmonious, unique, flowing and light movement. In contemporary dance discourse, where the primitive was usually associated with ragtime dance (e.g. Caffin & Caffin 1912: esp. 255-279), introducing these qualities to a ballet about primitive Russians meant imitating the subject-matter too literally. Coming from Russians, moreover, it revealed the essential primitivity of the Russians themselves, their reversion to type.<sup>52</sup>

Since Nijinsky left no notes on *Sacre* – it being the only one of his four choreographies he does not mention in his so-called *Diary* (Nijinsky 1999) – some aspects of the choreography can be inferred from what is known of these other works. Ann Hutchinson Guest's and Claudia Jeschke's 1987 reconstruction of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* (1912, henceforth *Faune*), based on Nijinsky's notation for this choreography, should serve as an example of how and why contemporary opinions on movement qualities in Nijinsky's choreographies should be taken with a grain of salt. Setting aside the problems of recreating performance from the archive, this reconstruction has shown how the qualities of jerkiness and angularity that contemporary critics and later reminiscences and reconstructions have ascribed to this work (and Nijinsky's choreographic aesthetic more generally) are contingent upon a hegemonic assumption of what dance should be rather than any intrinsic qualities of the choreography.<sup>53</sup> For today's spectator, there is nothing stiff, constrained or unnatural about *Faune*, because we are accustomed to a different aesthetic. Similar responses of critics indicate that with the exception of the extraordinary dance of the Chosen Maiden in the second act of *Sacre*, there was little virtuosity in this work.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> See e.g. Jean Perros in *La Critique Independante* 15 June 1913; Victor Débay in *Le Courrier Musical* 15.6.1913.

<sup>53</sup> See Guest & Jeschke 1991: 1, 17-18; Gerhard 2000: 32-33; *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* 1991. Particularly because the reconstructors stress theirs is an interpretation of a score, this work also shows the critical potential of reconstruction as a practice, as discussed by Franko 1989, even if in actual performance practice, such conditioning is only evident in the programme booklets, not on stage.

<sup>54</sup> Or, rather, the virtuosity is of a different order: it does not lie in physical bravado but in rhythmic precision, a subdued virtuosity of the professional dancer. See e.g. Volkonsky quoted in note 66 below.

In 1912-1913, it was self-evident that natural movement on stage was always learned and cultivated movement striving for beauty and grace. In the words of Louis Laloy (in *La Grande revue* 25.5.1913), the purpose of dance was to create “combinaisons inédites, plus belles et plus vraies que celles du quotidien usage,” meaning that which was *better than the real*. The stage was an improved reality, so any staged expressions had to be aesthetically pleasing. As in contemporary theatre (Hatt 1999: 251-253; Brewster & Jacobs 1997: esp. 93-96, 140-141), the imperfect, untrained and undisciplined body was offensive – in other words, on stage, 'natural' or 'realistic' movements did not aim at *verisimilitude*. Everyday movement (as in *Jeux*, Nijinsky's second choreography that Laloy here attacked) was not acceptable in dance that claimed to be art.<sup>55</sup>

Apart from adherence to grace and harmony, training was imperative because only the cultivated 'natural' body expressed emotion directly and without ambivalence. Gestures were a universal language that, if executed correctly, conveyed the desired message and affect of dance.<sup>56</sup> Nijinsky's predecessor as the principal ballet master of the Ballets Russes, Mikhail Fokine, thought awkwardness was always the result of poor training; hence, it was unnatural, ugly and suited only for sideshow material (Fokine 1961: esp. 251-254; Nelson 1984: 8). Together with the critics' concern over grace and 'plastique', these ideas greatly limited what was permissible on stage. It seems that Nijinsky was tired of these limits.<sup>57</sup> *Sacre* utilised precisely these 'unseemly' movement qualities to great effect.

Early silent films may give us an idea what 'natural' gestures and mimicry meant for turn-of-the-century audiences – for historical reasons, we see these expressions as excessive, even histrionic.<sup>58</sup> Ever since *Faune*, Nijinsky had been known for eliminating precisely this kind of acted expression:

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<sup>55</sup> These views were widespread amongst contemporary dancers as well: see Isadora Duncan quoted in Kinney & Kinney s.a.: 243; Duncan 1977: esp. 79. See also e.g. Koritz 1994: 70; Carter 2011.

<sup>56</sup> See Mikhail Mordkin's description of how to correctly represent affects on stage in *The Literary Digest* 10.2.1912; or Isadora Duncan quoted in Flicht 1912: 107.

<sup>57</sup> See Nijinsky in *The Daily Mail* 14.7.1913; also, Lady Ottoline Morrell 1963: 227 reminisced that: “Such ballets as *Le Spectre de la Rose* did not interest him; he said it was *trop joli* and was rather annoyed when people admired it.”

<sup>58</sup> Of course, any stage gestures have to convey emotional impact even for members of the audience sitting at the back row. As Brewster and Jacobs (1997: esp. 81-108) have demonstrated, particular concerns of the cinematic stage space (especially the close-up shot and larger-than-life screens which heightened the visibility of the smallest detail) induced reduced gesturing also in theatre. This new cinematic acting style gradually became the standard by which we now evaluate staged gestures as 'natural'.

*Once when a new girl had to learn Nijinsky's sister's part, in which the Nymph suddenly sees the Faune, turns away and walks off – he said to her: 'Why do you look so frightened?'*

*She said she thought she was meant to be. Thereupon, quite in a rage, he said that the movement he gave her was all that was required of her, he was not interested in her personal feelings.<sup>59</sup>*

Although Nijinsky's notation for *Faune* is impossible to execute,<sup>60</sup> it provides at least some idea on what his first choreography looked like. Clearly, Nijinsky did not do away with mimicry as much as stylised and conventionalised it, replacing the acted-out expressivity of an individual dancer with choreographed expressivity, set for all dancers dancing a particular role. Thus, in *Faune*, the dancers' fingers indicate the character's emotional responses (the Faun's thumbs, for example, went up to indicate interest and arousal), *no matter who danced this particular part*.

From the perspective of the dancers, only recently accustomed to the kind of theatrical acting Nijinsky opposed, the choreographer seemed to deprive them of precisely those qualities they would have associated with stardom (individuality and self-expression). In the 'new ballet',<sup>61</sup> although the corps de ballet was still the scenery for the main action, it was common for ballet masters to give the dancers in the corps the freedom to improvise their particular tasks for crowd scenes.<sup>62</sup> This not only broke the traditional uniformity of the corps, but also allowed greater liberties in interpretation for precisely the dancers traditionally deprived of such rights – a likely reason for Fokine's great popularity amongst the Ballets Russes corps-de-ballet dancers.

Nijinsky's choreographic practice of thinking over the smallest detail *before* rehearsing the work with the dancers deprived the dancers of the power to influence the end result to the extent to which they were accustomed. Hence, the dancers often referred to Nijinsky's choreography as 'unnatural' and 'constraining'; the choreography, they said, made them feel like they were made of wood or stone – as if they were materials shaped by the

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<sup>59</sup> Rambert 1983: 62. According to Marian Smith 2000: 35, 46-47, mime passages have been well-nigh eliminated in today's versions of nineteenth-century ballets.

<sup>60</sup> Guest & Jeschke 1991: especially 192-194 on compromises necessary for rehearsing the choreography from Nijinsky's notation, where Nijinsky "wrote the degree of bend and placement of each finger and thumb for holding the flute." Guest 1992: 424. Also e.g. Rambert 1975; Rambert 1983: 61-62 on Nijinsky's extraordinary demands for precision.

<sup>61</sup> In Russia, 'new ballet' was an early-twentieth-century choreographic style emphasising dramatic acting associated with Aleksandr Gorsky and contrasted with the 'old ballet' of Petipa. See e.g. Järvinen 2013, 10.

<sup>62</sup> See e.g. Karsavina 1981: 287; Rambert 1983: 61, 78; Nijinska 1992: esp. 286, 466 on Fokine. At the time, no choreography was expected to remain the same from one performance to the next: see Petipa quoted in Wiley 1985: 2.

choreographer (Nijinska 1992: 428; Sokolova 1960: 40-41). This indicates the emergence of the idealist view of dance composition, where the choreography is an abstraction in the head of the singular, new author of dance, the choreographer; and where the dancer is an always-already imperfect executioner of the will of this author-figure (Monni 2007: 39-43). This idealist view is, of course, close to the manner in which music is understood in formalist musicology (e.g. McClary 1995), but it is important that it emerges with Nijinsky's authoritative statements about his choreographic compositions, made possible because of his celebrity status as a dancing genius.<sup>63</sup>

### **Anonymous Asymmetrical Masses**

In dance, the concern with grace and harmony links these ideas of a 'natural' cultivated body language to asymmetry, the second movement quality I mentioned. Lalo's description of the infirm gestures of the ataxic dancers indicates contorted or jerky movements, but as with other Nijinsky choreographies, these qualities have been exaggerated out of all proportion in later research. The "jerkiness" in Nijinsky's choreographies seems to have been the quality of everyday movement that contemporary dance discourse deemed unfit for the stage, an indication of how the modern world was desperately in need for a cure to modernity (see e.g. Fritch 1912: 103-104 quoted in Järvinen 2009: 51).

However, asymmetry relates not only to the asymmetry of gestures or the line of an individual dancer's body but to how dance was arranged on stage. There is some evidence that audiences, unaccustomed to intentional asymmetry and arrhythmia in choreography, interpreted their appearance in Nijinsky's choreographies as the dancers' "mistakes".<sup>64</sup> In ballet choreography, the conventional manner of arranging dancers on stage was based on the principals. Fokine preferred diagonal and circular floor-patterns that emphasised the three-dimensionality of the stage and also skilfully utilised the corps de ballet to emphasise the principals.<sup>65</sup> The effect shows in a review in *The Lady* (3.8.1911):

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<sup>63</sup> See Järvinen 2009: 54-55; e.g. Chantavoine in *L'Excelsior* 30.5.1913 made a distinction between Nijinsky as dancer and Nijinsky as choreographer to disparage the latter.

<sup>64</sup> For example, *Pall Mall Gazette* 18.2.1913. When Nijinsky re-rehearsed *Faune* for the second North American tour of the Ballets Russes in 1916, after the critics had seen a memory-based version of the work, *The New York Herald* 25.10.1916 wrote that "The chorus seemed to dance not quite so smoothly as last season, but, no doubt, it was because of a lack of time for rehearsals." In actuality, the reverse was true.

<sup>65</sup> Jeschke 1990: 103-104. However, Russian critics complained that Fokine had lost sight of choreography as *composition*, his staging was "real, not represented, disorder" according to Volkonsky in *The Nineteenth Century and After* June 1913; similarly, Levinson in *Apollon* 9/1911; Homo novus [Aleksandr Kugel] in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 1/14 June 1912.

*I remember a circular movement, many figures running round and rising high in the air, and from their centre, as from the middle of a bright, glittering flower in the wind, a man rising head and shoulders above them, pirouetting in the air, resting on the air, a creature who has defied gravitation's laws – Nijinsky!*

Although Fokine and other 'new ballet' choreographers did away with some of the geometric rigidity of the 'old ballet', they retained the hierarchy of the dancers that emphasised the principals over the ballet 'crowd', the corps de ballet (see e.g. Svétlow 1912: 7). Contrary to what is often presented, this is true even of the Ballets Russes ensemble pieces like *Les Danses Polovtsiennes*, possibly the biggest success of the 1909 season, starring Adolph Bolm.<sup>66</sup>

Like the fact that dance was graceful and harmonious, the manner in which dance was set on stage was so self-evident that prior to Nijinsky breaking the rules, reviews said very little about *choreography*: how Fokine created or developed the ensemble effects on stage, what were the relationships of different dancers (men and women, soloists versus chorists), or how the choreographic devices expressed the plot or related to the music. Outside of Russia, Fokine was almost never interviewed, the star dancers received all the media attention.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, in Western reviews, dance was quite secondary to the plot, the visual design and the music: descriptions of the actions of even the *principal* dancers are rare. But Nijinsky's *Faune* shows such a drastic change in how dance was discussed that it actually belies the frequently-heard claims about the inability of Western critics to write about dance.<sup>68</sup>

However, like *Jeux*, which only had three dancers, *Faune* was a small work where critical attention could focus on detail. *Sacre*, in contrast, was a massive piece, involving most of the dancers of the company and a series of events flowing into one another and multiple dances happening simultaneously. Hence, the *Sacre* reviews were rather vague about specific choreographed moments outside of a handful of significant instances (notably, the dance of the Chosen Maiden in the second act). Instead of a detailed description of specific movements or choreographic devices, the texts contain general comments on the movement style. Having said this, many critics also noted

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<sup>66</sup> True ensembles, of course, should not have stars in this manner. See e.g. *Gil Blas* 20.5.1909; *Comœdia Illustré* 1.6.1909.

<sup>67</sup> For a rare exception, see *Gil Blas* 4.6.1912 where Fokine discusses period art and costuming as his "method" for transferring the story to stage.

<sup>68</sup> E.g. *The Times* 4.11.1911 said of Nijinsky that "His dancing, too, has new elements in it, wonderful, rhythmic patterns of the body which he has not shown us elsewhere." Although this was far more than was usually said, nothing followed to tell the reader what these new elements of Nijinsky's dancing actually were. Cf. the detailed description of the line of the nymph's body in Henri Bidou's review for *le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 10.6.1912, quoted in Järvinen 2009: 47.

similarities between the three works that can be used to infer other similarities on the level of choreography.

The choreographer of *Sacre* did not exactly facilitate the formation of this critical discourse. Himself a star of unprecedented magnitude, Nijinsky had a penchant not to give proper names to the characters in his works.<sup>69</sup> When it comes to *Sacre*, he claimed that,

*There are no human beings in it. It is only the incarnation of Nature – not of human nature. It will be danced only by the corps de ballet, for it is a thing of concrete masses, not of individual effects.*<sup>70</sup>

In an unprecedented choreographic move *Sacre* had no stars to dominate the attention of the spectator or principals whose story they could follow – none of the characters in the first act appeared in the second. This was not something designated by the libretto, let alone the programme notes (see *Théâtre des Champs-Élysées: Saison Russe 2.6.1913*), which, in actuality, allow for a very traditional ballet about the kind of fanciful peasants that Lunacharsky ridiculed in his review.<sup>71</sup> This tradition is clearly also what the audiences expected, after the previous successes of Ballets Russes "ensemble" works like *Les Danses Polovtsiennes*. Sensibly, in casting the work, Nijinsky did not engage the top tier of the Ballets Russes roster of dancers, including himself and his partners in *Jeux*, Tamara Karsavina and Ludmila Schollar. Yet the fact that Nijinsky himself did not dance turned out to be a cause for further critical displeasure – in *L'Eclair* (31.5.1913 quoted in Bullard 1971(ii): 67-68), Paul Souday ended his rant about the ugliness of *Sacre* with an exclamation: "And M. Nijinsky did not even dance!" Similarly, Gustave de Pawlowski asked in *Comoedia* (31.5.1913) whether just one appearance by Nijinsky himself would not have brought the ballet back on track.

Again, the Russian critics, familiar with Petipa's ensemble effects and with the nationalist ideas of Russian spiritual community (соборность), saw nothing wrong in this emphasis on the crowd. Prince Volkonsky wrote for *Apollon* (6/1913) of how this brought forth the element of rhythm in the choreography:

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<sup>69</sup> Whereas Nijinsky would have danced "Count Albrecht" in *Giselle* or "Vaiu" in *Le Talisman*, in his four choreographies, the only character that had a proper name was "Till Eulenspiegel" in the eponymous ballet of 1916. In practice, this meant most dancers were not individualised in the programme notes, which again reduced their claim to stardom.

<sup>70</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette* 15.2.1913. This sounds curiously similar to the ideas of some of his Russian contemporaries: see Douglas 1986: 187.

<sup>71</sup> "знаменитыхъ пейзажъ въ шелковыхъ рубахахъ и плисовыхъ шароварахъ." I.e. "the usual peasants in silk shirts and corduroy trousers." Lunacharsky in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 9./22.6.1913, my translation.

*Надо сказать и то, что исполнено это было восхитительно, – ровно, однотонно: двигались не люди, двигалась вся линия, какъ нѣчто одно, само по себѣ живое, – человеческое ожерелье, связанное невидимою нитьвю ритма...*

*Большое воспитательное значеніе имѣетъ это подтвержденіе хористическаго начала въ томъ искусствѣ, которое до сихъ поръ было самое ‘солистическое’ изъ всѣхъ. Забвеніе своего ‘я’ – первое условіе искусства, и въ этомъ смыслѣ новое направленіе нельзя не привѣтствовать, какъ элементъ художественнаго здоровья.<sup>72</sup>*

The emphasis, here, on dance as an art of the individual and of the soloist was even more accurate in contemporary dance outside of ballet – most of the period's famed stars (Letty Lind, Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan) danced alone.

With *Sacre*, however, this lack of stars drew critical attention to choreographic composition. Hence, the critics spoke of how the masses were balanced on stage and how they played against and with the music and décor. They noticed associations between certain dancers and particular instruments; for instance, between the women and the oboes, also evident in Stravinsky's notes (1969: 39). Although the dancers would not have been aware of all of these correspondences until the final rehearsals in Paris in May 1913,<sup>73</sup> their execution struck several critics as wonderful. *The Times* (26.7.1913) admired how

*even the colours of the dresses are to some extent reflected in the orchestration – as, for instance, in the first scene, when a group of maidens in vivid scarlet huddles together to the accompaniment of closely-written chords on the trumpets. Movements, too, are mirrored in an equally realistic way, when, a little later on, the dancers thin out into a straggling line, while the orchestra dwindles to a trill on the flutes; then a little tune begins in the woodwind two octaves apart, and two*

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<sup>72</sup> “It must be said that the execution of this was wonderful – steady, monotonous; the people did not move, only the lines moved, as if no-one lived alone, on their own – a human necklace tied by the invisible string of rhythm...”

The great pedagogic significance [of *Sacre*] is this strengthening of the choristic foundation in an art, which up to now has been the most ‘solistic’ of all. The forgetting of one’s ‘I’ [is] the first imperative of art, and in this sense the new trend can only be welcome as an element of artistic health.” My translation.

<sup>73</sup> The dancers had first rehearsed on stage 18.5.1913 (after the premiere of *Jeux*), but the only rehearsals of *Sacre* with the full orchestra took place 26. and 27.5.1913, with the public dress rehearsal on 28.5.1913. Although by today's standards this seems like extraordinarily few rehearsals, it would have been normal for a touring company like the Ballets Russes, where the dancers rehearsed to a piano score over several months - see next fn.

*groups of three people detach themselves from either end of the line to begin a little dance that exactly suits the music.* (Similarly, ProPERT 1972: 79)

This kind of design where synesthesia (the mixing of sensory perceptions) is implicit, required an unprecedented amount of forethought on the part of the collaborators, complicated by the fact that Nijinsky did not have either the orchestration of the music or Roerich's designs at his disposal during most of the rehearsal process – the designer had sent the designs to the composer who, despite several requests, did not forward them to the choreographer.<sup>74</sup> The orchestration also proved to differ in several places from the piano score.<sup>75</sup> However, Stravinsky and Nijinsky must have discussed the orchestral colour for the effect to have been visible for the contemporary spectators to the extent that it seems to have been; and Nijinsky may have focused on it with the dancers as well. Despite his later claims, it seems that Stravinsky was quite willing to listen to the choreographer, although he was reluctant to live up to his promise to return to help with the rehearsals – and when he did – it proved somewhat counterproductive.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to the associations between groups of dancers and the music, the critics also commented on how the choreography utilised counterpoint, setting one group against another – one moving lightly, one heavily, the Elders moving twice as slow as the Adolescents, and so on.<sup>77</sup> In an attempt to

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<sup>74</sup> Writing to Roerich on 1./14.12.1912 (in Stravinsky 1997(i): 383-384), the composer scolded the designer for sending him the designs he had told him to send to Nijinsky. The régisseur of the company, Sergei Grigoriev, gave the lack of costume designs as the excuse for not beginning the rehearsals in a letter to Stravinsky 5./18.12.1912 (in Stravinsky 1997(i): 390). Diaghilev telegraphed Stravinsky 20.12.1912/2.1.1913 (Stravinsky 1997(i): 398) urging him to send the designs, but the costume designs for the second act were not delivered to Nijinsky until the end of March at the earliest, as on 10./23.3.1913 (in Stravinsky 1997(ii): 42) Diaghilev again told Stravinsky to send Roerich's books and designs. As Jane Pritchard and Lynn Garafola pointed out to me in conversation (20.4.2013), Nijinsky also could not have held on to the designs, as they had to return to St. Petersburg for Ivan Caffi's firm to actually make the costumes by May. The odyssey of the costume designs belies the reconstructors' extravagant use of the designs for the choreographic patterns: Hodson 1986: especially 77n31; Hodson 1996: especially 106, 116.

<sup>75</sup> “[Nijinsky] showed me certain passages in the piano score that are not in agreement with the orchestra score, and he told me that the orchestra score is correct.” Monteux to Stravinsky 22.2.1913 in Stravinsky 1984: 51-52.

<sup>76</sup> Stravinsky was in London in February 1913 and certainly conducted one rehearsal with the dancers in Paris 13.5.1913 (Stravinsky & Craft 1978: 95, 99), but the latter may not be the occasion when the composer managed to frighten the dancers, as Rambert (1983: 58-59) recalled.

<sup>77</sup> E.g. *The Times* 26.7.1913 wrote of the “curious mouse-like shufflings of the old woman against the rapid steps of the adolescents” (the ‘reminiscences’ of Beaumont 1951: 72 largely rest on this review). Similarly, Kirstein paraphrasing Rambert's letter in Stravinsky & Craft 1978: 513; and ProPERT 1972: 81, which Hodson 1987: 60 erroneously claims to be an observation “at the time of the première”.

describe the work for American readers, Carl Van Vechten (1915: 107) pointed to how some individuals counterpointed group movements and how these related to the orchestral score:

*At the beginning of the ballet the adolescents pound the earth with their feet, while a little old woman runs in and out between their legs, to the reiterated beat of a chord of F flat, A flat, C flat, F flat; G, B flat, D flat, and E flat, all in the bass (begin from below and read in order), while an occasional flute or a piccolo screams its way in high treble.*

When re-reading his *Sacre* notes in 1967, Stravinsky himself was surprised by:

*the principal choreographic accents and phrase units, which were seldom coterminous with the accents and phrases of the music. In addition, I cancelled the metrical units of the music on the assumption that to count beats instead of measures of irregular lengths would approximate ballet routine [-.] The dance is almost always in counterpoint to the music.*<sup>78</sup>

Here, Stravinsky shows an understanding of ballet routine – in 1913, he would have had experience of writing two other ballets – and directly contradicts his earlier reminiscences on Nijinsky's choreography. His cancellation of the metrical units created choreographic phrases that were (usually) easier for the dancers to remember. For example, “count the next six measures in 6/4”.<sup>79</sup>

This concern over how dancing keeps pace with the music is even more striking when one remembers that in the scenario, the only distinct choreographic movement is at the end of the first act: “Chacun piétine la Terre avec extase.” (*Théâtre des Champs-Élysées: Saison Russe 2.6.1913.*) Certainly, this stomping – both at the beginning and at the end of the first act – did receive more than its share in the reviews. It is connected to the third of the movement qualities, repetition, a quality shared by both the choreography and Stravinsky's musical score.

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<sup>78</sup> Stravinsky 1969: 35, see also 37. According to Hodson in *Les Printemps du Sacre* 1993, Nijinsky set five rhythmic elements over the two in Stravinsky's score, but actually it was Stravinsky who had marked the jumps for the dancers in the score – Stravinsky 1969: 36.

<sup>79</sup> Stravinsky 1969: 37, also 35, 37 on the surprising complexity. Stravinsky brought the piano score to Nijinsky in Berlin 27.11.1912. However, Nijinsky alludes to *Sacre* already in an interview to *L'Intransigeant* 13.6.1912.

### Beating and Falling

By all accounts, following the lyrical introduction, the first scene of the ballet shocked, because the dancers kept jumping in place, stomping the ground and, as Van Vechten notes above, *kept repeating* these movements. Indignant, Adolph Boschot (in *L'Echo de Paris* quoted Bullard 1971(ii): 12) wrote of how the dancers

*paw the ground, they stamp, they stamp, they stamp, they stamp and they stamp.... Flash! They break into two groups and salute each other. And they stamp, and they stamp, and they stamp.... Flash! A little old lady falls on her head and shows us her third petticoat. And they stamp, they stamp....*

The recurrence of the stamping motion, together with the musical recurrences in the score that accompanied them, created a strong sense of the work 'going nowhere' – for example, Gustave de Pawlowski complained (in *Comœdia* 31.5.1913) of having to suffer through two acts of primitives *doing nothing*.

It is tempting to see the process of how repetition becomes a non-event as parallel to European contemporary dance choreography half a century later – in other words, with dance that has rejected spectacle and hence required an ontological re-positioning for the audience (see Burt 2008) – however, doing so would easily lead us to read our attitudes into the responses of 1913. Such fallacious *post hoc* arguments aside, new critical dance and dance scholarship have drawn my attention to aspects of past choreography that cannot be fully addressed in this article. As André Lepecki (2006: esp. 63) has pointed out, repetition is a kind of a fall into temporality because it is "reiterating what is forever not quite the same". This "triggers the possibility for the secretion of a temporality which allows the body to appear under a different regime of attention and stand on a different, less firm (ontological) ground." Although Lepecki is discussing the still act of contemporary dance, I would say that the critical reception of *Sacre* – specifically, the need to deny the work the ontological status of dance – amply proves the sudden epistemological uncertainty created by and in the choreographed repetition.

Furthemore, the idea that repetition deducts from rather than adds to meaning cut likens *Sacre* to Nijinsky's earlier works, specifically his interest in circular, undramatic storylines that downgraded the importance of narrative to ballet as an art form:

*Un sujet de ballet, reprit alors Nijinsky, doit être 'nul' ou connu de tout le monde. On ne réfléchit pas plus au cours d'un ballet que devant un tableau ou durant une symphonie.*<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Nijinsky according to Cahusac in *Le Figaro* 14.5.1913. The idea is curiously similar to what Cocteau later wrote to Stravinsky 4.2.1914 (in Stravinsky 1982: 74): "The dance must not express

Again, this is not to say Nijinsky's aim would have been a modernist abstraction – all of his choreographies had a theme if not exactly a conventional plot, and *Sacre* more so than *Faune* or *Jeux* – but they became more like contemporary free-form dance in their narration. The aforementioned replacement of 'natural' gestures with stylised movements required that the audience worked out their own interpretation of the events rather than assumed the kind of straightforward illusionistic mimesis of naturalist theatre for which Nijinsky's predecessor, Fokine, had striven.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, as I will shortly demonstrate, in Nijinsky's works, choreographic compositional devices, such as unisono or tableau, became part of the *narration*.

However, the dancers' stomping on stage is significant also because it went against the presumed quality of good dancing as silent and effortless: Nijinsky was famous for the noiseless landings of his leaps, which had given a quality of ethereal lightness to his dance.<sup>82</sup> In contrast, the dancers of *Sacre* beat out a complex rhythm that complemented the regular pulse of the orchestra. For example, in the *Auguries of Spring*, bar [13], when the music beat out tempo giusto 4/8, Stravinsky marked accents for the jumps of the young men as [3]: on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, [4]: none, [5]: 2<sup>nd</sup>, [6]: 1<sup>st</sup>, [7]: 1<sup>st</sup>, [8]: 2<sup>nd</sup> bar.<sup>83</sup> This thumping was read as "noise" – it was not the sound of one individual occasionally landing with a thud, it was an intentional and prolonged use of a physical action that was considered dangerous: several articles commented on how *Sacre* caused headaches, "shock[ed] the ear and assault[ed] the nerves"<sup>84</sup>, and *The Daily Telegraph* (26.7.1913) even claimed that Maria Piltz had been forbidden by her doctor to perform the Chosen One. Upon retrospect, it is remarkable that the dancers would agree to subject themselves to what would have seemed like outrageous demands of the young choreographer.

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anything. The [dancer's] body must arouse itself in a burst, becoming another instrument in the orchestra."

<sup>81</sup> One of the few to note the significance of specific mimed gestures was Louis Vuillemin in *Comœdia* 31.5.1913.

<sup>82</sup> E.g. Levinson 1982: 87; Bourman 1938: 10 on Nijinsky landing softly; also *The Athenaeum* 5.6.1912.

<sup>83</sup> Stravinsky 1969: 36. The section is reproduced in Hodson 1996: 3 who gives all the dancers different movements for this section – something not corroborated by contemporary sources which, if anything, stress the unisono.

<sup>84</sup> *The Fortnightly Review* September 1913; similarly, Victor Valter quoted in Taruskin 1996: 1026. The reminiscences of Beaumont 1951: 75; and the conductor Monteux (quoted in Schouvaloff 1997: 293) noted the work caused headaches.

Few of the critics were as flexible in their attitudes. A massive work lasting three quarters of an hour, *Sacre* clearly was meant to overwhelm the spectator, an experience Émile Vuillermoz (in *S.I.M. Revue musicale* June 1913) summarised as:

*vous êtes lié à cet orchestre comme Mazeppa à la croupe de son cheval et vous êtes bien forcé de galoper, bon gré mal gré, par dessus les monts et les plaines et d'aller où il lui plaît de vous conduire.*

Hurled along by the centrifugal force of the work, the poor critic is reluctantly hurled along by the centrifugal force onstage – the image of the cyclone in the orchestra emphasises his reluctance – Vuillermoz is an unwilling victim; he does not wish to lose himself in the work; he resists and fears its power. In part, his reaction may be attributed to the fear of the (racial, primitive) other or the fear of the crowd, likened to the idea of threatening otherness in much of the social theory of the period (see e.g. Ledger & Luckhurst 2000: 55-66). But like the Chosen Maiden, trapped by the unseen gods of her tribe, the off-stage victim also struggles in vain.

The last of the movement qualities listed above relates to the prominence of falling in the choreography. Like asymmetry and arhythmy, stumbling and falling were read as mistakes, as failures in and to dance.<sup>85</sup> In the Stravinsky and Rambert notes on *Sacre*, different kinds of falling occur in *Sacre*: for example, the Old Woman falls at the end of the Augurs of Spring [22] “with her little feet in the air”,<sup>86</sup> and during the The Games of Two Cities in [58] the three maidens throw themselves on the ground. In the second act, the Maidens prepare the ground for the sacrifice by falling down in [121] and [127]; and the Chosen One gets chosen because she stumbles and falls down on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bar before [201].<sup>87</sup> These falls signify differently but all direct attention to the heaviness of the dancers' bodies, in stark contrast to how, in contemporary discourse on dance, “[d]ancing is not, on the other hand, a matter of leaping in the air, but a matter of annihilating weight and giving one the impression of spirit.” (*The Bellman* 29.1.1916.) Falling, in other words, was corporeal, drawing attention to the weight and to the bodies conditioned by gravity.

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<sup>85</sup> Hodson 1987: 58 notes this. However, her argumentation is simplistic – the significance of falling depends on the context. See Lepecki 2006: esp. 63.

<sup>86</sup> Hodson 1996: 19 quoting the Rambert score. This is apparently the moment Boschot (quoted above) describes.

<sup>87</sup> Stravinsky 1969: 36-38. Stravinsky is obviously not clear how long it will take the dancers to execute the dance – he writes “*if* the abduction is concluded here” (emphasis added) in bars 4-5 of [47]; Fink 1999: esp. 325 on Stravinsky’s variable tempi; Hodson 1996: 57-62, also 135, 148-153 on the other falls.

Geoffrey Whitworth (1913: 96) chose a scientific parallel to describe this quality in *Sacre*, which he deemed

*a studied demonstration of the attractive force of the earth and of the triumph of gravity. I have heard that if we were transported all at once to a planet like Jupiter, much greater in bulk than our earth, the sense of bodily weight would be so increased that we should find it difficult to walk upright. Such apparently is the feeling of the people in Le Sacre du Printemps. The earth seems like an enormous magnet which continually drags them downwards to itself and even leaps are purely ritual.*

Whitworth's use of the word 'ritual' to signify 'for the sake of convention or habit' again draws attention to the multivalence absent from 'ritualistic' readings of this choreography (such as Hodson's). More importantly, besides his interesting reference to physics, which recalls other scientific metaphors used to describe *Sacre*,<sup>88</sup> Whitworth's description points to the novelty of a dance that did not pretend to lightness.

In contemporary aesthetics, showing the actual effort of dance was unseemly: virtuosic movements such as an extended series of pirouettes (the 32 *fouettés en tournant* for a ballerina) or difficult leaps (such as *tours en l'air* for male dancers) had to be executed with both precision and apparent ease (again, a feature associated with Nijinsky's dancing).<sup>89</sup> Virtuosity, of course, emphasised *individual* skill, and unsurprisingly, the only part acknowledged as virtuosic in *Sacre* was the solo of the Chosen Maiden in the second act, where she was set in the middle of circles – first of maidens dressed in costumes identical to hers, then, during her sacrificial dance, of (the spirits of) the Ancestors (see pastels by Valentine Gross in Kahane 2000: 82-83). Her final dance, the only solo of the work, received a great deal of attention from reviewers, and even those disliking Nijinsky's choreography praised the efforts of Maria Piltz.<sup>90</sup> However, since the Chosen Maiden was separated from an identically dressed group only through her (choreographed) action, critics professed uncertainty as to what led to this dance (e.g. Johnson 1913: 204). In other words, the essentially choreographic selection of the Chosen Maiden may have led to the impression that her choosing was random, which

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<sup>88</sup> E.g. Vuillermoz in *S.I.M. Revue musicale* June 1913 spoke of the electrocution of the dancers; Rivière in *La Nouvelle revue française* November 1913 on *Sacre* as a biological ballet.

<sup>89</sup> See e.g. *Comœdia* 20 May 1909: "les difficultés techniques n'étaient que jeux pour lui"; *Comœdia* 15 June 1910; Flitch 1912: 155; Whitworth 1913: 25-6; Van Vechten 1915: 77-8. However, although new ballet choreographers tended to dislike virtuosity, Nijinsky ended Fokine's choreography in *Schéhérazade* (1910) by spinning on his head: e.g. Beaumont 1951: 36.

<sup>90</sup> See Jullien in *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 8.6.1913; *The Times* 26.7.1913; Johnson 1913: 204-206; Levinson in *Rech* 3./16.6.1913; Svetlov in *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 23.5./5.6.1913.

would have made her death seem senseless – an interpretation that contributed to how *Sacre* became symbolic of the First World War.

### **Rehearsing the Dance**

With the kinds of movement qualities listed above, it is no wonder Nijinsky had difficulties with the dancers, even if they did not outright refuse to perform in the work. With his first choreographic composition, *Faune* (which had premiered in May, 1912), Nijinsky had already struggled to get the Ballets Russes dancers to understand what he required of them. Perhaps noticing that using ballet vocabulary caused dancers to fall back on what they already knew, he started describing the poses in Russian (see Nijinsky's notes in Debussy & Nijinsky s.a.). His notations show extreme precision in coordinating dance with musical rhythm,<sup>91</sup> an exponentially more difficult issue with the rhythmically complex score of *Sacre*. From contemporary accounts, it is clear that dancers and audience members alike seemed to expect dance to relate to the musical score in what can only be called simplistic manner: accents of danced movement corresponded with musical accents much like in social dances; accelerando or crescendo were reflected in identical changes in both the pace of movements on stage and the dancers' expansive use of the stage space. In one interview, Lydia Sokolova (1998: 146) expressed the view that her fellow dancers equated music with melody. "They played to sounds, to melodies," and added that her earlier musical studies helped her greatly to come to terms with Nijinsky's choreographic requirements.

The solution to the choreographer's dilemma was to hire someone to teach the complexities of musical rhythm to the dancers, and the obvious person to provide such a teacher was the Swiss composer and pedagogue, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950). Nijinsky and Diaghilev went to visit Dalcroze's school in Hellerau near Dresden (reported in *Comædia* 18.4.1912), possibly because Prince Volkonsky ([1914], 23-35) was a great advocate of Dalcroze's eurhythmics in Russia. Since this visit predates the premiere of Nijinsky's first choreography, *Faune*, it has become a common misperception that Dalcroze's method was crucial to Nijinsky's understanding of choreography.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Guest & Jeschke 1991: especially 20, 169-170 on timing. In a book edited by Richard Buckle, Sokolova 1960: 40 portrays Nijinsky as insane but nonetheless claimed *Faune* was a difficult work and cites the choreographer's instructions as "You must try to walk between the bars of the music and sense the rhythm which is implied." However, in an interview with John Drummond for his 1968 Diaghilev films for the BBC, Sokolova (1998: 146) recalled that "once you mastered it, and you could hear yourself, or feel yourself dancing in sound, it was the most delightful thing to dance in that you could possibly imagine."

<sup>92</sup> E.g. Barker 1982: 58 believes this so firmly she thinks Nijinsky's going against Dalcrozian principles was due to the fact that he composed the work to the piano score. However, her

Late in 1912, when the rehearsals of *Sacre* were due to begin, Diaghilev hired a Dalcroze student, Marie Rambert (Miriam Ramberg), as Nijinsky's choreographic assistant. Rambert was to teach musical rhythm and timing to the dancers so that they would understand Nijinsky's choreographic instructions – not to teach Dalcroze to Nijinsky. The fact that the choreographer thought the professional ballet dancers of the Ballets Russes would *need* classes in this subject indicates that he doubted their abilities to cope with what he planned for the choreography of a score of which only a piano rendering existed at this stage. Unfortunately, the dancers were so opposed to Rambert's classes that they were quickly discontinued.<sup>93</sup> Rambert also later claimed that Dalcroze was of no use to her with the music of Stravinsky, and (rather modestly) said she contributed little to Nijinsky's choreographic composition.<sup>94</sup>

This misperception of Nijinsky's choreography as "Dalcrozian" also owes something to a letter Claude Debussy wrote to Robert Godet, a French advocate of Dalcroze's system:

*Permettez-moi de comprendre parmi ces derniers [événements bien inutiles], la représentation de Jeux, où le génie pervers de Nijinsky s'est ingénié à de spéciales mathématiques! Cet homme additionne les triples croches avec ses pieds, fait la preuve avec ses bras, puis subitement frappé d'hémiplégie, il regarde passer la musique d'un œil mauvais. Il paraît que cela s'appelle la "stylisation du geste"... C'est vilain! C'est même dalcrozien, car je considère monsieur Dalcroze comme un des pires ennemis de la musique! Et vous supposez ce que sa méthode peut faire de ravages dans l'âme de ce jeune sauvage qu'est Nijinsky!*<sup>95</sup>

In what is clearly a tongue-in-cheek manner, Debussy attacked Nijinsky for doing a disservice to his own music – Nijinsky's choreography to Debussy's *Jeux* that premiered only a fortnight before *Sacre*. However, the composer

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apparent source, Valentine Gross in *Comoedia Illustré* 5.6.1913, *does not actually say this*. Similarly, Bullard 1971(i): 34-35; Pasler 1981: 178 cf. 194; and even Odom 1992: 75 attribute too much to Dalcroze and Rambert; cf. Buckle 1993: 317-318; and next two fn.

<sup>93</sup> Rambert 1983: 55-57; Rambert 1975. The company régisseur Sergei Grigoriev 1953: 81 claims it was his idea that Rambert's classes were combined with Nijinsky's rehearsals to save time – the dancers called them "arithmetic classes". Nijinsky's sister Bronislava Nijinska (1992: 450-457) professed her utter disdain of Dalcroze and of Rambert.

<sup>94</sup> Rambert quoted in Hodson 1985b: 37-38: "But Dalcroze's method, which is terribly simple, didn't help because Stravinsky didn't care a hoot if one bar was three-four and the next seven-eight, then from three-four to five-three. I mean it was absolutely impossible." Rambert told Buckle 1998: 327 that her only contribution to the choreography was to once suggest to Nijinsky that he would use several small circles instead of one big one.

<sup>95</sup> Debussy's letter to Robert Godet quoted Nectoux 1992: 62-63; also Odom 1992: 76.

certainly misinterpreted Nijinsky's use of stillness as Dalcrozian – nothing would have been more contradictory to Dalcroze's thinking than stopping still when the music suggested movement!

Based on contemporary reviews and illustrations, the choreography of *Sacre* did retain some of the uniformity and emphasis on group movements that characterised the Dalcroze system at this time, even if Dalcroze favoured much more symmetrical and harmonious groupings than are evident in the surviving drawings of *Sacre*.<sup>96</sup> Needless to say, Dalcroze intensely disliked Nijinsky's *Faune*, and complained that it lacked "continuity of movement and of plastic phrasing"<sup>97</sup> – qualities notably missing from *Sacre* as well. What Nijinsky's contemporaries usually meant by a 'Dalcrozian influence' was a schematic correspondence of danced rhythm and musical rhythm: "if real tears had been forthcoming one is sure that they, too, would have fallen in semiquavers." (Proper 1972: 78 on *Jeux*.) Nijinsky's sister, Bronislava Nijinska, who was originally meant to dance the Chosen Maiden, recalled

*one particular incident during the early rehearsals in Monte Carlo. Nijinsky demonstrated a pas-mouvement in the choreography to the musical count of 5/4. During his huge leap he counted 5 (3+2). On count 1, high in the air, he bent one leg at the knee and stretched his right arm above his head, on count 2 he bent his body towards the left, on count 3 he bent his body towards the right, then on count 1, still high in the air he stretched his body upwards again, and then finally came down lowering his arm on count 2, graphically rendering each note of the uneven measure.*<sup>98</sup>

To clarify the connection between music and choreography, Nijinsky counted beats out aloud to the dancers and he kept this up even during the performances.<sup>99</sup> According to Sokolova (1960: 42) and Piltz (in Krasovskaya

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<sup>96</sup> See Gross 1971: 132-141; Gross in Hodson 1996: *passim*, esp. 2, 8, 66; *The Daily Mail* 12.7.1913 on "twenty-four dances performed by twenty-four dancers to twenty-four different tunes played simultaneously"; Rivière in *La Nouvelle revue française* November 1913 on how the music and the choreography were both fragmented, their units distinctively free of each other, colliding, meeting, passing each other.

<sup>97</sup> Jaques-Dalcroze 1921: 267-268. In 1913, Dalcroze invited Stravinsky to visit his school and praised his music in the same letter where he scolded the Russian dancers who "do not yet understand music" and Nijinsky who "dances *next to* and *against* music". Dalcroze's letter to Stravinsky 7.1.[1913] in Stravinsky 1984, 77-79.

<sup>98</sup> Nijinska 1992: 460; cf. Hodson in Hodson in *Les Printemps du Sacre*. Hodson 1993: 168 used this for Act II, Scene 5, [144], dance of the Chosen Maiden where the musical count is 4/16 and 5/16, but Nijinska 1992: 460-461 clearly implies it was a *pas* in Act I: "I had been coming to Vaslav's rehearsals in Monte Carlo, even though he was *working with the artists of the first scene*".

<sup>99</sup> Nijinska 1992: 450; Rambert 1983: 64; also Cocteau 1918: 66; Stravinsky 1975: 45. However, Nijinsky certainly could not have shouted cues to *all* the dancers.

1979: 268), some of the dancers were close to panicking in the orchestra rehearsals when they heard what seemed like a different piece of music.

Although Nijinska's description of the pas-mouvement sounds a little like a Dalcroze exercise, as Selma Odom notes, relatively few critics mentioned Dalcroze in the reviews.<sup>100</sup> Even Prince Volkonsky did not claim Nijinsky was in any way emulating Dalcroze or that the end result looked 'Dalcrozian' – after all, Dalcroze himself was still modifying and refining his pedagogical ideas and would do so for years to come.

*Я видѣлъ незабываемую репетицію. Нижинскій проходилъ сцену съ одной изъ танцовщицъ, которая должна была замѣнить другую. Репетиція въ залѣ, - они двое и акомпаниаторъ, больше никого. Это была восхитительная работа переложенія музыки въ движеніе. Тактъ за тактомъ, нота за нотой, воспринимались ухомъ, усваивались сознаниемъ, отбивались въ ладоши и потомъ воспроизводились въ танцовально-мимическомъ движеніи. Только у Далькроза видалъ я такое тѣсное, до полной сляянности тѣсное, сочетаніе музыки и движенія. Какъ эта маленькая сценка, так былъ разученъ весь двухактный балетъ Стравинскаго «Священная Весна». Что меня поразило въ этомъ балетѣ, это, рядомъ съ ритмичностью задуманныхъ балетмейстеромъ картинъ, удивительная ритмичность исполненія. Кордебалетъ, который можетъ это, представляетъ собою изумительный ритмическій матеріалъ. И вотъ, когда видишь этотъ поразительный матеріалъ и при этомъ вспоминаешь нѣкоторыя наши балетныя постановки, спрашиваешь себя, какъ же это возможно, чтобы такой кордебалетъ осуществлялъ такія антиритмичныя картины, какія мы иногда видали? И приходится заключить, что дѣло не въ кордебалетѣ, а въ балетмейстерахъ.<sup>101</sup>*

<sup>100</sup> Odom 1992: 75. One example is Vuillermoz in *S.I.M. Revue musicale* June 1913. Dalcroze advertised profusely in this paper.

<sup>101</sup> "I saw an unforgettable rehearsal. Nijinsky went on stage with one of the dancers, who had to replace an other [dancer]. Rehearsal in the hall - only the two [of them] and the accompanist, no others. This was charming work of arranging music with movement. Bar by bar, note by note, receiving by ear, absorbing understanding, taken from his hands and then reproduced in dancing-miming movement. Only in Dalcroze have I seen such strictness, such complete fusion, combination of music and movement. Like this little scene, so all [dancers] would learn Stravinsky's two-act ballet "Sacred Spring". What struck me in this ballet, next to the rhythm of [stage] pictures conceived by the ballet master, it is their amazing rhythmic execution. A corps de ballet *that can [do this]* is capable of marvellous rhythmic execution. And so, when you see this amazing execution whilst recalling some of our ballet productions, you ask yourself, how is it possible that such a corps de ballet realised such anti-rhythmic [stage] pictures that we have sometimes seen? One must conclude that what is the matter [there] is not in the corps de ballet but in the ballet master."

In a description reminiscent of Nijinska's recollection of the rehearsals, Volkonsky mentioned his hero, Dalcroze, as the only one with a similar demand for precision. Praising the company, he thought that Nijinsky had whipped the Ballets Russes into shape, showing the dancers to their advantage. Volkonsky thus positioned himself against the 'new ballet' of Fokine in the contemporary Russian debate on the future of the art form.

What has confused some researchers is that in contemporary texts, the terms 'eurhythmics' and 'rhythmic gymnastics' that Dalcroze used to describe his system did not automatically connote the work of this particular theorist – eurhythmy simply means harmonious composition (as in Ferdinand Hodler's 1895 painting *Eurhythmie*, see Levinson 1982: 58). At the time, many theatrical practitioners were interested in rhythmic movement and gymnastics as means to self-improvement and creation of staged effects – from theatrical forms in the Delsarte tradition like those developed by Isadora's brother Raymond Duncan to Vsevolod Meyerhold's biomechanics. *The Sketch* (23.7.1913) associated *Sacre* with "Swedish-exercise-like movements", *Teatr i iskusstvo* with Meyerhold,<sup>102</sup> and Nijinsky alludes to the work of Raymond Duncan in one interview.<sup>103</sup> Although this is not to say Nijinsky did not take something from Dalcroze *as well*, it is obvious that he, like choreographers before and since, also had other sources for the ideas he wanted to stage – down to the wooden duck that the conductor Edwin Evans had given the choreographer (Pritchard 2010, 80-81 quoting Evans). In other words, to exaggerate the significance of Dalcroze is to downplay the originality of the choreography of *Sacre* and to simplify contemporary reactions to it. Therefore, it is good to keep in mind Volkonsky's point that, despite grumbling about hard work, the dancers managed to master a difficult and unfamiliar dance idiom and perform it to the hoots and whistles of an audience like the true professionals they were.

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*Apollon* 6/1913, my translation, emphasis in the original. Similarly, when *The Times* 26.7.1913 writes that Nijinsky "joins hands with such workers as M. Jaques-Dalcroze", the critic continues to speak of *Nijinsky's* theories on ballet.

<sup>102</sup> N.N. in *Teatr i iskusstvo* 26.5./8.6.1913. Minsky in *Utro Rossii* 24.5./6.6.1912 had already made the same connection.

<sup>103</sup> In *L'Intransigeant* 13.6.1912. Minsky in *Utro Rossii* 24.5./6.6.1912 had also made this connection, which may imply that Nijinsky had read his review.

### The Still Tableau

Besides movement qualities, the choreographic composition of *Sacre* flaunted convention in other ways. The most notable of these was doing away with the principal means for making sense of dance narrative, the tableau (or stage picture). The libretto of *Sacre* and the programme notes let the audience expect a set of pictures from pagan Russia ("Tableaux de la Russie Païenne"), but the stage action did not fulfill these expectations. As one contemporary critic complained, "The incidents [--] cannot be called dramatic, for they follow each other without much feeling for rational sequence or climax."<sup>104</sup> This is one reason why critics deemed the authors incapable of communicating their ideas to the audience,<sup>105</sup> but one that has rarely been addressed in research on the work.

Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs have convincingly argued that in contemporary theatre and early cinema, the purpose of the tableaux was to divide the scene into easily manageable parts: they punctuated the action, stressed and/or prolonged a dramatic situation, and sometimes also gave allegorical or abstract significance to the events (emphasising the morality of the play, for example). The tableaux were marked by a change of scenery, and/or musical cue, and/or choreographic action, usually an exit/entrance pause that preceded the new scene (Brewster-Jacobs 1997: esp. 8-13, 29, 35-38.) As with Nijinsky's earlier choreographies, *Sacre* failed to follow this self-evident theatrical convention, and to provide the audience with the necessary cues to 'read' a change of tableau into the stage action. Stravinsky, too, was very proud of his smooth musical junctures between the different pieces of the libretto (Stravinsky to Roerich 13./26.9.1911 in Stravinsky 1997(i): 300).

As with *Faune* and *Jeux*, Nijinsky misplaced the expected choreographed stillness used for marking tableaux. The misplaced stillness 'read' wrong, which broke the 'flow' so integral to the meaning of dance for contemporary audiences. However, it also created choreographed counterpoints on stage by, for example, placing one still group against another moving,<sup>106</sup> a still individual amidst a moving group,<sup>107</sup> or a still group with one individual

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<sup>104</sup> *The Times* 26.7.1913. Also Taruskin 1995: 18-19 notes the Russian critics wrote of the music as immobility, disunity and disjunction.

<sup>105</sup> Bullard 1971(i): 205. This relates to the argument above about the presumed racial difference between the Russians and the French.

<sup>106</sup> E.g. in bar [135], according to Stravinsky 1969: 42; for 15 bars in the Cortège du Sage [67], according to Rambert quoted in Hodson 1996: 98.

<sup>107</sup> E.g. the Old Woman at [17] bar 3, falls on her knees amidst the young men (Hodson 1996: 11) and is apparently still until [19] where she "moves her head" (*op.cit.*: 13) just to fall in [22] (*op.cit.*: 19).

moving.<sup>108</sup> In the first act, stillness is marked at least for 2 bars of [22]; for 2 bars before [41]; in 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> bars before [47]; in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> bar before [50]; and 1 bar before [72]. Similarly, in the second act, 1 bar before [101]; 1 bar before [102]; and 1 bar before [117].<sup>109</sup> Of these, the last one in the first act and the second to last one in the second are traditional tableau pauses, occurring just before the Dance of the Earth and at the moment of the choosing of the Chosen Maiden – the culminating points, respectively, of each act. Contrary to Hodson’s interpretation (based on the disparities between the Rambert and Stravinsky notes), it seems likely that at some of these points the entire ensemble stopped moving. Such a sudden, complete stillness onstage is a striking device that would also emphasise the stop-and-start beat of the orchestra. As Pasler (1981: 200) notes, the orchestra paused at [71] to allow the dancers to run and surround the Sage, contrasting rapid movement with silence, followed by stillness as the music resumed.

However, the most striking, unconventional use of stillness in the choreography precedes the solo of the Chosen Maiden. During the *Danse Sacrale*, precisely when the music seems to indicate rapid movement, this soloist stands absolutely still amidst other moving dancers.<sup>110</sup> According to the notes printed in the Stravinsky score,<sup>111</sup> her immobility lasts from [103] to [142]: “Jusqu’à la danse sacrale l’élue reste immobile.” (Printed on the musical score Hodson 1996: 137 uses.) Although Nijinsky by no means invented this device – it had even been used in cinema (Brewster & Jacobs 1997: esp. 51-52) – it was the direct opposite to the way things had been done – traditionally, the corps de ballet stood still, or at least moved to the sides, when the principals came on stage.

Moreover, the unprecedented length of this stillness – if the Stravinsky score is to be believed, nearly a fifth of the entire ballet – created a very specific experience for the audience. Some critics’ remarks reveal how this stillness extended the temporal experience of the audience: “it was oddly painful to

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<sup>108</sup> Apparently, the ancestors stand watching the Chosen One, and move when she tries to stop her dance from [159] to 2<sup>nd</sup> bar before [161]: “from here the Chosen One again dances”, and they move to catch her when she falls down dead in [201]. Stravinsky 1969: 42-43; also Krasovskaia 1971(i): 440-442 quoting Nijinska’s recollection.

<sup>109</sup> Stravinsky 1969: 36-41; cf. Hodson 1996: 19 writes *the men* do not move in [22], 47 notes five bars of stillness and 65-66 writes no-one *except* the three tall women move in [49] (as Rambert says they do). Also Pasler 1981: 106-206 on the close association between the musical organisation and the choreography.

<sup>110</sup> Fink 1999: 338. Several reviews noted this moment, usually to disparage Nijinsky’s choreographic choice: Gaston Carraud in *La Liberté* 31.5.1913; Adolphe Boschot in *L’Echo de Paris* 30.5.1913 quoted in Bullard 1971(ii): 10-15; *La France* 4.6.1913 quoted in *op.cit.* (ii): 94-99.

<sup>111</sup> If this was in any manner similar to how Nijinsky’s notes were transcribed on a piano score of *Jeux*, these were quite precise stage instructions. See Debussy & Nijinsky s.a. cf. Debussy 1912.

observe [her] standing in complete rigidity during (it seemed) ten minutes, in the trance which precedes her frenzied dance.”<sup>112</sup> Besides bringing in the critic's subjective, emotional reaction to the choreographed action (largely absent from reviews of Ballets Russes productions prior to Nijinsky's works), such remarks point to how *Sacre* created a sense of the work going nowhere, an inertia that the audiences read in conflicting ways.<sup>113</sup> As Taruskin (1995: 18) notes, Russian critics actually discussed Stravinsky's score as stillness – an impression that emerges from repetition.

Nijinsky's use of stillness in the choreography also explains the frequent complaints in contemporary press about the jerks and disturbing fragmentation of the action. As with *Faune* and *Jeux*, *Sacre* provoked complaints about excessive theorisation and 'cerebralism'. For Gaston Carraud (*La Liberté* 31.5.1913), Nijinsky

*s'agit, sous prétexte de "stylisation", comme disent les gens bien informés, de prendre pour modèle, non pas nature, ce qui serait trop simple, mais les interprétations que l'art a déjà fournies de la nature; c'est-à-dire de donner l'impression du mouvement par l'immobilité.*

Although meant as an admonishment, this is a striking claim: the impression of movement achieved through immobility. The critic may have thought of the contrasts between movement of certain figures and stillness of others, or the displaced stillness of the tableaux, but nevertheless he managed to point out that the still figure was not without movement but rather, as H.T.P[arker] wrote in his long interview with Nijinsky (*Boston Evening Transcript* 9.11.1916), stillness "intensified projection by subtler and keener means than action".

Just as Stravinsky's music accumulated towards the end of the first act, so did the choreography, until it created "a rhythm of unwearying persistence that throbs through all the festival, so that at last the whole broad earth seems to be throbbing, throbbing to the beat of it" (Whitworth 1913: 92). A similar accumulation took place in the second act (Taruskin 1996: 957-962), which culminated in the death of the only soloist. This accumulation, predicated on repetition, was yet another reversal of what and how dance signified: in contemporary discourse, dance was about life, not about death,<sup>114</sup> and the ending of *Sacre* lacked the kind of apotheosis that audiences expected of a ballet – an affective justification of the Maiden's sacrifice through some kind

<sup>112</sup> *The Daily Mail* 12.7.1913. Similarly, Svetlov in *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 23.5./5.6.1913; Chantavoine in *L'Excelsior* 30.5.1913.

<sup>113</sup> See Johnson 1913: 206 on how the work does not bore; cf. Levinson in *Rech* 3./16.6.1913 on the work as boring. Also Pasler 1981, 313 on Debussy similarly using static moments and repetition in *Jeux*.

<sup>114</sup> For example, Flicht 1912: 24; Suarès in *La Nouvelle revue française* 1 August 1912.

of a resurrection or supernatural intervention (Acocella & Garafola & Greene 1992: 68-69; Scholl 1994: 73). Here, the sacrifice seemed senseless: even the ancestors in bear-skins could be understood as actors, as human beings dressed in ceremonial garb. The ballet ended in a pessimistic tone, emphasised by the lack of harmonic development in the music.<sup>115</sup>

In later interpretations, the death of the maiden became the symbolic death of a generation on the battlefields of the First World War – in the words of Jean Cocteau (1918: 63), writing in 1918, “J’y distingue les prodromes de la guerre”. In 1913, when fears of Russians as warmongers were on the rise,<sup>116</sup> the association was rather with the foreignness of the aesthetic of Nijinsky, whom Alfred Capus (in *Le Figaro* 2.6.1913) jokingly called “sorte d’Attila de la danse”, a leader of the invading Russian horde. For more xenophobic critics, such invasion was distinctly unwelcome (e.g. Jean Perros in *La Critique Independante* 15.6.1913).

After the war, *Sacre* became a symbol of the lost ability of the avant-garde to shock the audience into rioting: a work about youth, spring, and violent renewal rejected by the conservative audience and (felicitously) lost so quickly that no-one could ever dispute its shocking novelty (e.g. Vaudoier 1929: 710; Propert 1972: 81). However, in the process, certain aspects of *Sacre* had to be suppressed. The nature of *Sacre* as a stage spectacle, programmatic music fused with danced performance, became cumbersome as modernism moved towards formalism and its demands of ‘purity’ of art forms. Stravinsky did everything in his power to dissociate his music from Nijinsky’s choreography, and consequently, the ‘craziness’ in the *reception* of the work was ascribed to the *choreographer’s* mental illness.<sup>117</sup> Similarly, the ideas of abstraction as the highest goal for modernist art, the messianic Russian nationalism of *Sacre*, and its narrative structure had to be erased from the equation. The easiest way to do this was by forgetting the choreography.

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<sup>115</sup> E.g. Touchard in *La Nouvelle revue* 1.7.1913 commented he would have preferred the development.

<sup>116</sup> See e.g. Kern 2000: 261, 280-284 on this believed to be the last moment to stop Slavic invasion.

<sup>117</sup> Acocella & Garafola & Greene 1992: 69 on how Nijinsky’s insanity became associated with the loss of the ballet; similarly, Hodson 1996: x-xii (however, *op.cit.*, xix she predetermines madness as Nijinsky’s destiny). The first negative comments on the Nijinsky choreography appeared in 1920 in *Les Deux Sacres*, attributed to Stravinsky but in reality written by Michel Georges-Michel. Quoted in Lesure 1980: 53; see also Bullard 1971(i): 32-33; Stravinsky & Craft 1978: 511-512. Nijinsky’s madness both confirmed the destructive effect of the ballet and showed how the genius predicted the universal human destiny at the risk of his own life. Thus, for the defenders of Nijinsky, *Sacre* became important because it was the epitome of his martyrdom, a lost masterpiece, the transcendental truth of which went unnoticed.

### Some Concluding Remarks

Setting aside the riotous behaviour of the Parisian audience,<sup>118</sup> Nijinsky's *Sacre* provoked critics to reflect on choreographic elements, such as how the dances counterpointed the music, or how the groups were balanced on stage. There was no pre-existing vocabulary for the movements, no soloists to focus on, and the narrative made no sense. On the other hand, Nijinsky's previous works had already utilised a similar stylisation of gestures, a downplaying of virtuosity, an emphasis on structure and contrasts between stillness and movement, giving the works a signature style attributed to the new author-figure of dance, the choreographer.

Despite numerous hostile commentaries, in 1913, *Sacre* was clearly seen as a major work – even many of the negative reviews asserted this. But with two very young authors – Stravinsky and Nijinsky – the work was also seen as important more for the *potential* it showed than as a finished piece in and of itself. In some ways, of Nijinsky's 1912-1913 choreographies, the pagan primitives of *Sacre* were the easiest to accept, and the reputation of the work might have been very different had it remained in the repertoire of the Ballets Russes even for one more season. Yet, as I hope to have shown, the disappearance of the choreography from the repertoire or the changing meanings it has attained over time (and in various reiterations) in the repertoire do not preclude an analysis of what remains of it in the archive, even if the tendency to treat a much later invention (the reconstruction) as this archive is a fallacy that reduces the potential for such reimagining of choreographic practice.

By not dancing in his third choreography Nijinsky established himself in the traditional authorial role reserved for the composer of music – a creator *not* present on stage. Although it would have been impossible for him to assume this role without first having become famous not just as a dancer but as a dancing genius, Nijinsky's choreographic practice was changing how dance as an art form was defined on the fundamental levels of ontology – what was dance and who was its author – in ways that would have long-lasting repercussions for rehearsal methods and evaluation of works in the repertoire (his demands of accuracy) as well as the understanding of 'a work' as an abstraction that could be placed in an archive (his interest in notation) and resurrected at will. It is these repercussions, this coming together of the archive and the repertoire, that dance artists have struggled with far more

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<sup>118</sup> However, it is dangerous to read too much into the audience behaviour: not only were theatrical riots quite common in Paris (e.g. *La Nouvelle revue française* June 1912 review of *Faune* and Regnault's *Salomé* was titled "Deux récentes scandales"), but as Svetlov notes in *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 23.5./5.6.1913, the protests began before the audience could have acquired a clear understanding of the work.

than the reputation of one man or works that were quickly dropped from active repertory.

Of course, new epistemes do not replace old ones overnight nor can one author-figure affect an epistemic change. Currently, contemporary dance artists seem to be moving away from this kind of idealist notion of choreography and engaging with the specificity of dancers and audiences alike.<sup>119</sup> It is in this sense in particular that the reconstructors have done a disservice to *Sacre*: by fixing it in terms of (ambiguous) authorial intention and (dubious) authenticity. The subsequent canonisation of the 1913 *Sacre* lends political and ethical impetus to contesting the now-hegemonic Hodson choreography and its (limited, c. 1987) understanding of 'dance'. Since many of the innovations in Nijinsky's choreographies were simply dismantling established conventions and thus gradually expanding the possibilities of staged movement, perhaps the most important legacy of his works lies in the manner they questioned the rules that were seen as *ontological* qualities of dance. This question of what, in fact, is dancing, offers countless possibilities of re-imagining dance by re-examining, critically, that which we have been told is true, universal and self-evident on and off stage.

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<sup>119</sup> See e.g. Solomon 2011; and Launay 2012 on how Nijinsky's choreographies figure in the repertoire as memories of citations where the imagined original is transformed in performance. As with the movement qualities of *Sacre*, this is a topic that merits an article of its own.

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**WEIR**





# Primitive Rituals, Contemporary Aftershocks: Evocations of the Orientalist ‘Other’ in four productions of *Le Sacre du printemps*

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## Abstract

This paper situates the original choreography of *Sacre* as a basis for an ongoing exploration of non-Western themes in modern dance, a persistent fascination with the Orientalist ‘Other,’ before exploring the versions choreographed by Wigman, Bausch and Graham in chronological order of their first performances. In analysing different interpretations of the same score, two themes become apparent: first, that this piece heralded the birth of Modernism in classical dance performance, and second, that the driving anti-classical, anti-traditional rhythms that characterise the piece communicate an enduring interest in primitive aesthetics. Accordingly, this discussion takes Nijinsky’s *Sacre* as a starting point in re-evaluating the influence of primitivism and Otherness on contemporary dance, and represents an early indication of the significance of the Saidian, non-Western ‘Other’ in shaping the evolution of avant-garde dance.

**Keywords:** *Le Sacre du Printemps*; Nijinsky; Stravinsky; primitivism; dance.

## Introduction

On 29<sup>th</sup> May 1913, the collaborative efforts of composer Igor Stravinsky, choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky and artist Nikolai Roerich came to a head with the Paris premiere of their ballet, *Le Sacre du printemps*. This event has become an undisputedly significant moment in the history of Modernism; since Nijinsky’s ground-breaking choreography was premiered to an unsuspecting Parisian audience in 1913, *Sacre* has been staged by a wide variety of classical and contemporary choreographers across the world, including Maurice Béjart (1959), Kenneth Macmillan (1962), and Glen Tetley (1974), and continues to appeal to modern dance-makers, with new versions including Sascha Waltz’s

2013 *Sacre* celebrating the centenary of the work's premiere.<sup>120</sup> Outside of the Western dance framework, Butoh choreographer Min Tanaka devised several versions of the theme, including an abstracted meditation on the subject matter, set to a new score by Minoru Noguchi (1990), which was later reinterpreted as a collaboration with the Russian Seasons Dance Ensemble in 1998.<sup>121</sup> While the original choreography was essentially 'lost,' falling into obscurity after only seven performances, a re-imagining of Nijinsky's score is now widely available as a result of Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer's 1987 reconstruction, a laborious effort that, notwithstanding its controversial reception from some quarters of the dance community, has now become part of the Mariinsky Ballet's repertoire.<sup>122</sup>

Three of the most influential choreographers of the twentieth-century – Mary Wigman, Martha Graham and Pina Bausch – each devised their own versions of Stravinsky's canonical score, and this article seeks to explore stylistic and thematic parallels in responses to this work after Nijinsky. Wigman and Graham both choreographed *Sacre* late in their respective careers; Wigman's was to be one of her last large-scale works (staged in 1957), while Graham's adaptation was first shown in 1984, when she was almost ninety years old. Bausch's renowned version of 1975 is now viewed as emblematic of her aesthetic as a choreographer in postwar Germany, shattering theatrical boundaries and pushing her dancers to the limits of their physical capabilities. Nijinsky, Wigman, Graham and Bausch all shared a common desire to find new ways to bring to life an ancient, primitive ritual through the medium of dance on stage. The ritualistic elements of primitivism inherent in Stravinsky's score have a timeless quality, an enduring appeal for dance makers seeking to challenge existing boundaries of form and structure.

This paper situates the original choreography of *Sacre* as a basis for an ongoing exploration of non-Western themes in modern dance, a persistent fascination with the Orientalist 'Other,' before exploring the versions choreographed by Wigman, Bausch and Graham in chronological order of their first performances. In analysing different interpretations of the same score, two themes become apparent: first, that this piece heralded the birth of Modernism in

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<sup>120</sup> A further list of choreographers is also given in S. Jordan. 2014. The Demons in a Database: Interrogating "Stravinsky the Global Dancer." *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, vol. 22, no. 1 (Summer, 2004): 57-83.

<sup>121</sup> For an in-depth analysis of Tanaka's 1990 *Rite of Spring*, see my forthcoming article: Mapping Nijinsky's Cross-Cultural Legacy: Min Tanaka's *Rite of Spring* (1990), in C. & M. O'Mahony & O'Mahony, eds. *Revisiting the Rite*. High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, publication scheduled for January 2015.

<sup>122</sup> A detailed description of the reconstruction can be found in M. Hodson. 1996. *Nijinsky's Crime Against Grace: Reconstruction Score of the Original Choreography for Le Sacre du Printemps*. Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1996.

classical dance performance, and second, that the driving anti-classical, anti-traditional rhythms that characterise the piece communicate an enduring interest in primitive aesthetics. Accordingly, this discussion takes Nijinsky's *Sacre* as a starting point in re-evaluating the influence of primitivism and Otherness on contemporary dance, and represents an early indication of the significance of the Saidian, non-Western 'Other' in shaping the evolution of avant-garde dance.

Predominantly a work of literary scope, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) has become the cornerstone of much academic research into the non-Western world. His work underscores the ways in which Western imperial powers cemented their place on the world stage through subjugation of the East; in this respect, the Middle Eastern states represent his conception of 'East,' and Britain, France and the United States as 'West.' Said's interpretation of what the Orient has come to represent in the Western imagination also indicates its inherent potential of menace, a factor that comes to encompass a broad sweep of the non-Western world, including the former Soviet Union. Said asks:

*How does one represent other cultures? What is another culture? Is the notion of a distinct culture (or race, or religion, or civilization) a useful one, or does it always get involved either in self-congratulation (when one discusses one's own) or hostility and aggression (when one discusses the 'other')?*<sup>123</sup>

In this paper, I will argue however that Nijinsky's use of the 'primitive' runs counter to Said's argument, demonstrating that his choreography, and by extension, the canon of works created in the wake of *Sacre*, integrate the concepts of the primitive and the rational through the aesthetic experience, an action that is in itself wholly transgressive. Nijinsky's work is posited as 'anti-classical' ballet, and *Sacre* in particular is presented as a precursor to the development of contemporary dance technique in both Europe and America. His groundbreaking choreography set in motion an ongoing trend in modern dance for exploring ritualised primitivism in performance. Accordingly, Nijinsky's work not only represents a forerunner to Wigman, Graham and Bausch's versions, but also to the subsequent stages of dance history these women represent. Underlying and driving this conception is the interest in the elemental, primordial 'Other.' Thus, Nijinsky's *Sacre* becomes a precursor not just to Wigman, Graham and Bausch's adoption of the same theme, but also to what they represent in the history of modern dance more generally.

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<sup>123</sup> E. Said. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books: 325.

### **Nijinsky's *Sacre du printemps* (1913)**

As Eksteins has noted, there are varying and occasionally contradictory accounts of the first performance of *Sacre*, some of which confuse happenings from subsequent showings; yet it must be acknowledged that even these assorted variations of events present similar descriptions of the audience's collective shock and unrest.<sup>124</sup> Numerous witnesses maintained, for instance, that the audience began reacting against Stravinsky's music even before the curtain was raised.<sup>125</sup> Split into two acts ("The Kiss of the Earth," which takes place in the day time, and "The Great Sacrifice," at nightfall<sup>126</sup>), the ballet tells a simple narrative: that of a pagan sacrificial rite, in which a virgin is martyred to Yarilo – a god of fertility – to guarantee a good harvest, thus ensuring a secure future for her tribe. Roerich's long-held interest in the rituals of Russian pre-Christian culture underscored his designs for the ballet,<sup>127</sup> the plot of which he put together with Stravinsky at Talashkino, a progressive art and design studio at the estate of Princess Maria Tenisheva.<sup>128</sup> The melodic lines of the score were drawn from rearrangements of traditional Russian folk music.<sup>129</sup> Nijinsky's contribution to the dramatic Modernism of the piece came in the form of a new vision of ballet choreography, inverting the beauty and illusionism of classical dance in favour of turned-in feet, bent legs, and caricature-like grotesquery. His movement vocabulary was erratic and sharp, mirroring its musical accompaniment.

Stravinsky's score was written for a larger orchestra, requiring an expanded percussion section, and featured long passages played at loud volume as well as heavy use of syncopation. The off-beat rhythms and atonal elements of the music generated difficulties in rehearsal with the dancers – Jennifer Homans recounts an anecdote featuring a furious Stravinsky barking orders at the rehearsal pianist, who simply could not keep up with the music's demanding

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<sup>124</sup> M. Eksteins. 1989. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*. London: Black Swan: 32 – it should be noted that while the premiere was indeed controversial, the ballet received a number of curtain calls and was performed seven times subsequently, both in Paris and London.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* 34.

<sup>126</sup> Berg, S.C. 1985. *Le Sacre du Printemps: A Comparative Study of Seven Versions of the Ballet* [PhD thesis]. New York University: 2.

<sup>127</sup> Jane Pritchard states that Roerich was "an active archaeologist," with a particular interest in shamanism and Slavic fertility rituals. Pritchard. 2010. *Creating Productions*. In J. Pritchard, ed. *Diaghilev and the Golden Era of the Ballets Russes 1909-1929* [exh. cat. Victoria & Albert Museum]. London: V & A Publications: 77.

<sup>128</sup> J. Homans. 2010. *Apollo's Angels: A History of Ballet*. London: Granta: 309.

<sup>129</sup> Gardner, H. 1993. *Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen Through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*. New York: BasicBooks: 206.

tempi and constantly changing time signatures.<sup>130</sup> It is claimed that, during the first performance, the audience reaction drowned out the orchestra, adding further pressure to dancers already struggling with an awkward score and unfamiliar movement style, and leading to Nijinsky being forced to stand on a chair in the wings, calling out instructions and musical counts to the dancers.<sup>131</sup> Eksteins is, however, rightly tentative in his discussion of this scenario, pointing out that it could equally have been a result of the difficulty of keeping time to Stravinsky's odd rhythms, taking into account the nature of this new and disjointed choreography.<sup>132</sup> Yet, as Berg comments:

*Even the conductor of Le Sacre du printemps was bemused by the complex nature of the score's rhythmic structure. Realizing the music would present hitherto unprecedented problems for both the choreographer and the dancers (to say nothing of the musicians), Diaghilev and Nijinsky decided to employ someone from Emile-Jacques Dalcroze's school in Hellerau, near Dresden, to help both the dancers and the choreographer cope with the difficulties of Stravinsky's score.*<sup>133</sup>

This "someone" was in fact Marie Rambert, the Polish-born dancer who was to establish Britain's first ballet company. Rambert came to dance through exposure to Isadora Duncan, and both studied and taught at Dalcroze's school of Eurhythmics.<sup>134</sup> In an attempt to make the musical score more manageable for this classically trained collective, Rambert was employed to teach the Ballets Russes dancers the Eurhythmics method.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, Diaghilev, along with Nijinsky and Roerich, even went as far as to visit Dalcroze's Eurhythmics school at Hellerau in 1912<sup>136</sup> – a point when the young Mary Wigman was training to become a certified Eurhythmics instructor at the same institution.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Homans 2010: 310.

<sup>131</sup> Rambert, M. 1972. *Quicksilver: The Autobiography of Marie Rambert*. London: Macmillan: 64. Sokolova also recalls that in addition to Nijinsky instructing from the wings, "we could see Diaghilev too, walking up and down, holding his head. We must have been a lovely picture for the audience, racing around, jumping, turning, and wondering when the whole thing was going to collapse." L. Sokolova [ed. Buckle]. 1969. *Dancing for Diaghilev: The Memoirs of Lydia Sokolova*. London: Murray: 44.

<sup>132</sup> Eksteins 1989: 35.

<sup>133</sup> Berg 1985: 77.

<sup>134</sup> Homans notes that, while Rambert and Nijinsky spoke Polish to one another, and despite her best efforts to make the score more comprehensible, rehearsals for *Sacre* were largely disastrous. Homans 2010: 310-311.

<sup>135</sup> B. Nijinska, I. Nijinska & J. Rawlinson, eds. 1981. *Bronislava Nijinska: Early Memoirs*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston: 452, 454-455.

<sup>136</sup> T. Levitz. 2004. The Chosen One's Choice. A. Dell'Antonio, ed. *Beyond Structural Listening: Postmodern Modes of Hearing*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 84.

<sup>137</sup> Müller, H. 1986. *Mary Wigman: Leben und Werk der großen Tänzerin*. Weinheim: Quadriga Verlag: 23-25.

Nijinsky's outright and aggressive negation of the elements of classical ballet heralded the beginnings of Modernism in European dance; he stripped away the ethereal artifice of ballet and turned the dancers' legs inwards, their stomping feet a notable precursor to Wigman's percussive early solo dances, even anticipating Graham's use of parallel feet, and piercing, violent jumps. Nijinsky's *Sacre* represents not only the first choreographed version of Stravinsky's score set, but also a key moment in Modernist dance history. Its anti-ballet elements were not popular among company members who were the first to dance Nijinsky's work; Rambert recalled in her memoirs that the dancers were deeply uncomfortable with the "very stylised movements" they had first experienced in his *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (1912); nonetheless, the choreographer required classically trained dancers to embody his new dance vocabulary.<sup>138</sup> When observing the reconstruction of his original choreography, it is clear that in devising this new technique, Nijinsky broke absolutely with traditional ballet form. Throughout, the dancers' legs are never turned out, but always held in parallel or twisted awkwardly inward – a decidedly more difficult position to maintain when landing jumps or moving across the stage.

In terms of costume, Roerich's interest in Central Asian and Caucasian design was clear to see. The dancers of Nijinsky's *Sacre* were costumed in brightly coloured, patterned fabric, a heavy material that hung loosely over the body, quite distinct from traditional ballet dress. The women sported long, thick braids of hair, and all dancers wore tall hats. On closer inspection, this vision of an ancient Russian tribe bore striking resemblance to elements of folk dance and traditional dress of Central Asia: the headwear was strikingly reminiscent of traditional Kyrgyz hats (known as *kalpak*); the fabric of the clothing similar in colour and pattern to Uzbek dress; and braided hair was also a feature of classical Uzbek dance (Ferghana dance in particular tends to feature a special cap or 'crown' and long braids of hair). This curiosity with 'Russia's Orient' had previously been explored in other ballets; for instance, it has been recorded that Roerich bought Uzbek fabric in St. Petersburg markets for the Ballets Russes production of *Prince Igor* (1909),<sup>139</sup> but Roerich was not alone in his interest in Caucasian design. Leon Bakst, a designer and long-time collaborator with the Ballets Russes used traditional Georgian design in some of his costumes, Central Asian and Caucasian dress and ornamentation thus augmenting the 'Oriental' appearance of the Modernist choreographies.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Rambert 1972: 55.

<sup>139</sup> S. Woodcock. 2010. Wardrobe. In Pritchard 2010: 143.

<sup>140</sup> C. Jeschke, U. Berger & B. Zeidler, eds. 1997. *Spiegelungen: die Ballets Russes und die Künste*. Berlin: Vorwerk 8: 122.

Ramsay Burt makes the valid point that, “what was important for Nijinsky and Stravinsky was not the authenticity of the source material but the meanings it evoked in a dislocated modern context, and the expressive impact they could achieve through its use.”<sup>141</sup> He also underlines the fact that Stravinsky himself was an immigrant, having left Russia after 1909, and that Nijinsky had been living in exile in Western Europe also; thus the concept of *Sacre* representing the ‘Russian soul’ both in terms of its score and its movement is perhaps slightly naively nostalgic. In the Saidian sense, where Russia is arguably part of the European concept of the Orient, ‘Orientalised’ Russia nonetheless has its own Orient. After all, “the physical expression of the Orient manifests itself in Bakst’s costumes, Fokine’s choreography and the particular presence of leading dancers like Nijinsky and Ida Rubenstein.”<sup>142</sup>

The Orientalised ‘Other’ can be seen an exotic, inscrutable, potentially dangerous, yet sensual and fundamentally unrecognisable concept to the Western mentality. Said posits the idea that the Oriental world is inevitably read as inferior to the West, in need of education and general ‘improvement’ by the superior worldview.<sup>143</sup> Maintaining a distinction between the Western and Eastern worlds has been an important facet in upholding this illusion of superiority; that is, underlining the otherness of the Other indicates a necessity for translation, for ‘bettering’ the unrecognised. For Said, this distinction is what generates the “inhuman” aspect of Orientalism:

*For that is the main intellectual issue raised by Orientalism. Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?*<sup>144</sup>

He asserts that by “polarising” West and East even further through the terminology of “us and them,” we reduce the humanity of both sides of the Orientalist coin. One particular key term of distinction between the Western and Orientalised worlds is “rationalism” – this extends into the realm of ‘primitivism,’ an assumption that Western, educated, or ‘First World’ philosophy is dominated by rational thought, whereas the Oriental world is inherently irrational, by implication backwards, primitive in nature as well as in attitude. Yet, Nijinsky’s ‘primitive’ on-stage domain generated a completely new way of composing dance, a transgressive and completely modern interpretation of a primeval world.

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<sup>141</sup> R. Burt. 1995. *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities*. London: Routledge: 89.

<sup>142</sup> Jeschke, Berger & Zeidler 1997: 124.

<sup>143</sup> Said 1978: 40-41.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* 45.

With his *Sacre*, Nijinsky took primitivism in dance performance to a new extreme by forcing a company of classically trained dancers to revert completely from ballet to a primordial form of movement. His dancers were enacting a ritual not through ballet mime, but using a new movement vocabulary based on ancient principles rather than academic Western dance forms, albeit within a Western setting.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, by choosing ritual movement as his subject matter, Nijinsky was capable of exploring a new movement style that would not have been possible through the lens of narrative ballet. This work serves as a precursor to Modernism on the ballet stage, but also as an ongoing source of inspiration for choreographers exploring non-Western rituals.

### **Mary Wigman's *Sacre du printemps* (1957)**

The effects of Nijinsky's brutal revision of classical technique were far-reaching and, despite the onset of the First World War, discussion of the controversy continued long after the curtain had fallen on *Sacre's* premiere. Not all responses were positive, however; in an editorial for the short-lived journal *Schrifttanz*, Ernst Kállai wrote about the over-dependence on non-classical movement or technique in the early days of modern dance, stating: "There is far too much symbolism overloaded with ideas and not enough direct, lyrical or dramatic musicality in dance. Maybe there is a fear of falling back into the pure enjoyment of music as is the case in classical ballet."<sup>146</sup> There was an ideological split between proponents of classical ballet and those of the emerging modern dance, something that the ongoing experimentation of the Ballets Russes sought to bridge; yet, in discussing the training regime of the Ballets Russes – deeply rooted in formal, classical dance – Joseph Lewitan claims:

*When forward looking directors, painters, composers, conductors, ballet masters and dancers work together, and they all master their traditional skills, the result is bound to be modern. And, if necessary, movement sequences in the manner of Mary Wigman (*Sacre du Printemps*) emerge easily without the need for specialised training<sup>147</sup>*

Mary Wigman (born Carolyne Sofie Marie Wiegmann in 1886), the eldest child of a solidly middle-class Hanover family, came to dance in her early twenties – a relatively advanced age at which to begin intensive training. In her late teens, Wigman was profoundly influenced by a performance of the Wiesen-

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<sup>145</sup> Berg 1985: 177.

<sup>146</sup> V. Preston-Dunlop & S. Lahusen, eds. 1990. *Schrifttanz: A View of German Dance in the Weimar Republic*. London: Dance Books: 16-17. – original text taken from Kállai, 1931. *Zwischen Kulttanz und Varieté. Schrifttanz*, vol. 4, no. 1 (June, 1931): 2.

<sup>147</sup> Preston-Dunlop & Lahusen 1990: 92-94 – original text taken from Lewitan. 1929. *Das Diaghileff-Ballett*, *Schrifttanz*, vol. 2, no. 3 (August, 1929):2 59.

thal sisters in Berlin.<sup>10</sup> In 1908, she observed a demonstration of Emile-Jaques Dalcroze's Eurhythmics method, and two years later enrolled at his school at Hellerau in order to study rhythmic gymnastics. Here, Wigman was introduced to the music of Stravinsky and Arnold Schönberg, as well as the work of Expressionist artists such as Oskar Kokoschka.<sup>11</sup> However, Dalcroze's technique clearly did not represent the freedom of movement Wigman had hoped for, and, in the summer of 1913, she took her friend Emil Nolde's advice and sought out Rudolf Laban at Monte Verità. In her own writings, she refers to this event as, "the first pilgrimage," an indication of the quasi-religious atmosphere Laban was already cultivating at his remote school.<sup>13</sup> From this point onward, Wigman was to develop a dance technique of her own which was, like Laban's, a distinctly anti-ballet tradition; in addition to performing bare-foot and placing a particular emphasis on improvised movement, she experimented with dances performed to spoken word accompaniment, percussion, or even in silence.

Throughout the Fascist period, no choreographer in Germany approached the theme of Stravinsky's libretto; indeed, by the advent of the Second World War, much music of the various enemies of the state was banned outright, more specifically, that which was deemed Modernist or primitivist.<sup>148</sup> Theodor Adorno wrote: "In the Third Reich of countless human sacrifice, *The Rite of Spring* would not have been performable, and whoever dared directly to acknowledge the barbarism of the ideology's modus operandi was dropped and disgraced."<sup>149</sup> Thus, it is hardly surprising that Wigman's treatment of the work came well after the close of the War. Her *Sacre du printemps* (sometimes styled in German as *Frühlingsweihe*) opened on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1957, at the Städtische Oper in West Berlin, featuring a combination of her own, *Ausdruckstanz*-trained dancers – Dore Hoyer danced the principal role of the Chosen One – and classical dancers of the Oper.<sup>150</sup> The festival also marked the first meeting between Wigman and Martha Graham, the latter performing her solo work *Judith* (1951) at the same festival.<sup>151</sup> While Wigman would not

<sup>10</sup> D. Howe. 1985. *Manifestations of the German Expressionist Aesthetic as Presented in Drama and Art in the Dance and Writings of Mary Wigman* [PhD thesis]. University of Wisconsin-Madison: 44.

<sup>11</sup> Müller 1986: 22-27.

<sup>13</sup> M. Wigman. *Aus Hellerau* AdK. Berlin, Mary Wigman-Archiv, no. 529.

<sup>148</sup> Jordan 2004: 64.

<sup>149</sup> Adorno, T. [ed. & trans. Hullot-Kentor]. 2006. *Philosophy of New Music*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 112.

<sup>150</sup> S. Manning. 1991. German Rites: A History of Le Sacre du Printemps on the German Stage. *Dance Chronicle*, vol. 14, no. 2/3 (1991): 141.

<sup>151</sup> I. Partsch-Bergsohn. 1994. *Modern Dance in Germany and the United States: Cross Currents and Influences*. Chur: Harwood Academic Press: 129.

have seen Nijinsky's original work, as a young student at the Dalcroze school, she would almost certainly have read critical reviews of and responses to the controversial 1913 work, and, by the mid-1950s, its reputation as a seminal moment in the development of modern dance was assured; Béjart's infamous interpretation of the score came only two years after Wigman's premiere in Berlin.

As Partsch-Bergsohn has noted, Wigman's early work was "deeply rooted in ritual,"<sup>152</sup> but this tendency remained with the choreographer and is evident in her later pieces. Partsch-Bergsohn further points out that Wigman's approach to the *Rite of Spring* was that of "a mature artist," coming to the end of her career and taking on a large and immensely challenging project, producing "a very abstract" choreography for Stravinsky's score.<sup>153</sup> It is unfortunate that Wigman's *Sacre* was never recorded on film; however, the piece exists in a series of choreographic notes and photographs documenting the rehearsal process and final production. Based on close examination of the surviving documentation, this section will explore the themes of Wigman's *Sacre* as far as can be determined without the benefit of recorded moving footage.<sup>154</sup>

One striking feature of Wigman's *Sacre* was its strong resemblance to Martha Graham's eponymous dance technique. Deep backbends and 'flocking' ensemble images represented the ecstatic element of Wigman's ritual. Hers was a sharp, angular piece, with frequent use of flexed hands and feet. As is perhaps almost a tradition of postwar choreographies of *Sacre*, Wigman's version alluded to no particular culture or point in time.<sup>155</sup> Throughout her notes, particularly in the first collection of choreographic manuscripts, Wigman referred frequently to turning motions (*drehen*), and circular movements and formations (*Kreis*). Diagrams generally indicated clockwise movement, or movement into the centre of the circular formation. The choreography itself also revolved around circular patterns of movement, reflecting the oval platform of the stage.<sup>156</sup> Wigman's choreographic manuscripts for this piece number a total of eight volumes of sketches and notes; the drawings in particular are primarily composed of twirling dots and circles, but also depict a circular stage, circular notation of the individuals on the stage, and colourful

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<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

<sup>154</sup> Descriptions and analyses are derived from the Mary Wigman archive at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, including photographs, personal essays, letters and diary entries, and Wigman's extensive choreographic notes for the composition of *Sacre*. Unless otherwise indicated, please note that all translations are my own.

<sup>155</sup> Manning 1991: 141.

<sup>156</sup> S. Manning. 1993. *Ecstasy and the Demon: Feminism and Nationalism in the Dances of Mary Wigman*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 236.

sweeps of pencil to denote clockwise or anticlockwise choric movements around the stage. The constant reiteration of circular, rotating motion gives an impression of hypnotic, mesmeric dance. Thus, the choreographic spectacle became a kind of rhythmic, ritualised performance, the dancers working themselves into a trance-like state through these endlessly repeating circular movements.

Wigman's Chosen One wore a red dress, while the rest of the cast's costumes were rather sober and minimalist in design, with the women in simple long dresses, and the men clad in tights with a band of fabric worn across the chest. Following her selection as sacrificial candidate, Wigman's Chosen One was crowned by the community elders; similarities can be drawn between Wigman's piece and Bausch's version, in which the sacrificial victim was effectively 'crowned' with the red dress after being selected. Further aesthetic parallels can be drawn between Wigman and Martha Graham's work; several photographs that show Dore Hoyer being bound with a rope are eerily similar to Graham's Chosen One. Even Wigman's choice of costume for her male dancer – a simple loincloth – bore similarities to the dress of Graham's male chorus.

Hoyer's ecstatic backbends were equally Graham-like in appearance, contradicting the impression that the ritual's victim was entirely unwilling in her role. The elder, named in Wigman's manuscripts as *der Weise* ("the Sage"), was, in this production, a woman. In assorted archival images, she stands behind the victim holding a crown; these photographs give the impression of a kind of Pentecostal rite, with the chorus holding the Chosen One aloft, an image that reflects the very last bars of Nijinsky's original choreography. These photographs are highly reminiscent of Graham's 1940s 'Americana' works such as *American Document* (1938) and *Appalachian Spring* (1944), but also her so-called 'Greek' pieces, in particular *Cave of the Heart* (1946) and *Night Journey* (1947). The body shapes – backbends, spiralling of the back, and flexed hands – were strikingly similar to Graham's style, and the costumes and stage design – simple loincloths for men, flowing robes for the women, austere settings and props – equally so.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of costume, however, were the skullcaps Wigman used to crown her female dancers, from which trailed long strips of fabric strongly reminiscent of braided hair. Archive photographs show the women in headdresses, complete with flowing straps of material that closely resembled thick braids of hair. The similarity with Nijinsky's dancers is striking. Wigman's own interest in Sufi or 'dervish' dance was likely piqued by her teacher, Laban, and there is perhaps a reflection here of this early interest in

Middle Eastern mystic culture.<sup>157</sup> Even more interesting, however, is the parallel with Uzbek Islamic dance elements in Nijinsky's choreography. In constructing a primitive, unspecified fertility ritual in dance, both Wigman and Nijinsky appear to have looked towards similarly non-Western cultures. A basic understanding of pan-Islamic visual culture would not have been unusual in Wigman's case, considering the European enthusiasm for exotic treasures of the Middle and Far East throughout the first half of the twentieth-century. However, it is undeniably curious that, more than forty years after Nijinsky's infamous unveiling, Wigman sought to plough the same aesthetics, and produce a version of *Sacre* that appeared to borrow from the technique of her contemporary Martha Graham, while styled in the same Central Asian-inspired costume of her predecessor Vaslav Nijinsky.

Working with a score as challenging and monumental as Stravinsky's was certainly no easy task, something that was evident in Wigman's correspondence around the time of taking on the commission. In a letter to Margaret Erlanger dated 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1957, Wigman described rejecting the request to choreograph *The Rite of Spring*, claiming:

*This Sacre is a somewhat murderous task! ... I have been listening to the recorded music so often already, but have not yet found my way through it – how am I ever to get the dancers to know it? So here I am, nervous, frightened, and excited, as always before the real jump into the whirlpool!*<sup>158</sup>

In a subsequent letter, dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 1957, Wigman referred to *The Rite of Spring* as, “my hell and heaven, my adoration and exasperation – I can't tell you how next to impossible it is to shape, to form it from the point of a dancer's vision.”<sup>159</sup> Interestingly, she cited her main problem as working with classically-trained dancers, rather than any specific issue with the score itself. Wigman claimed her appointed dancers “have hardly any feeling or predilection for character, style, rhythm, and form I have to impose on them.”<sup>160</sup> The choreographer's own copy of the score (a 1926 orchestral reduction for two pianos) is marked throughout with her own notes and sketches, most of which rather tellingly focus on tempo (*Takt*) and rhythm; curiously, however, the *Danse Sacrale* section has comparatively few notes from Wigman herself, fur-

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<sup>157</sup> Laban alleged that his interest in dance was first aroused by observing Sufi Muslim ‘dervish’ performances – for more information on this, see J. Hodgson. 1988. *Mastering Movement: The Life and Work of Rudolf Laban*. New York: Routledge: 52-53.

<sup>158</sup> W. Sorell, ed. & trans. 1973. *The Mary Wigman Book: Her Writings*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press: 182.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* 182.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* 182-183.

ther evidence that so little is known for certain about this crucial aspect of the piece.<sup>161</sup>

Following the premiere, Wigman wrote to Pola Nirenska to describe her struggles and eventual success over the piece:

*In my whole life, I had never fought and struggled as I did with *Le Sacre*. And then suddenly, during the last rehearsals I saw that something good would come out. The immense and unbelievable success was a miraculous answer to my many doubts and bitter depression during the time I worked with the ballet company of the Städtischen Oper here. Dore Hoyer was wonderful as the Chosen One!*<sup>162</sup>

The work was well received, and both Walter Sorell and Hedwig Müller have referred to Wigman's *Sacre* as the last great success of her career.<sup>163</sup> Gabriele Fritsch-Vivié cites one contemporary reviewer who commented that Wigman had proven *Sacre* was "not a ballet, but a cultish dance-act that is not about pirouettes and gestures, but line and rhythm."<sup>164</sup> Wigman's ritual sacrifice was more calm than Nijinsky's, less of a violent assault on the victim, and ending on an almost celebratory note; that the female victim was selected by a group of elder priestesses and crowned as part of her sacrifice suggests a positive retelling of the reality of human sacrifice. While the victim was hardly a willing participant in the rite (she was forcibly separated from the male partner she had chosen, before being bound with rope), she went to her death with less evident fear than Nijinsky's knock-kneed, trembling heroine.

The narrative of *Le Sacre du printemps* tells the story of a human sacrifice for the greater good of the community; in the original version, to guarantee a good harvest, but Wigman's ambiguous setting highlighted the purifying nature of the ritual. Manning has drawn a link between Wigman's victim and Wigman herself, who allegedly felt a victim of circumstance in the turbulent National Socialist era. Perhaps, then, Wigman's spring sacrifice stands for a purification ritual in the reflective years following the Second World War, the *Stunde Null* period. Yet, in many ways, this piece also reflects the decline of *Ausdruckstanz* (expressive dance) in Germany. Wigman had increasingly fallen out of favour in the postwar years (likely an uncomfortable legacy of her

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<sup>161</sup> According to Tamara Levitz, Wigman and Hoyer had argued over this final dance and no lasting description, in words or images, has survived to indicate how it would have appeared – Levitz in Dell'Antonio 2004: 106 (footnote 81).

<sup>162</sup> Reproduced in W. Sorell. 1986. *Mary Wigman: Ein Vermächtnis*. Wilhelmshaven: F. Noetzel: 241.

<sup>163</sup> Sorell called Wigman's *Sacre*, "einer der großen und letzten Triumphe, die der Mary Wigman in der letzten Phase ihrer Schaffenszeit große Genugtuung brachte." Ibid. 241.

<sup>164</sup> Anonymous critic, cited by G. Fritsch-Vivié. 1999. *Mary Wigman*. Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag: 126.

years spent continuing to work under National Socialism), and accordingly, *Ausdruckstanz* was less visible in German theatres, replaced by a dominance of classical dance throughout the 1960s.<sup>165</sup> In a 1987 conference on dance, theatre and the *Stunde Null*, former director of the Cologne Dance Archive Kurt Peters argued that *Ausdruckstanz* had been “cut short” not just by the resurgence of ballet in Germany, but also by the introduction of Graham technique, which he saw as reflective of a burgeoning youth interest in American culture.<sup>166</sup>

In this context, Wigman’s *Sacre* takes on the characteristics of both a healing ritual in the immediate postwar years, but also serves in a historical sense as a paean to the *Ausdruckstanz* movement with which she had been so closely identified in the earlier part of the century. Even the German language title of Wigman’s *Sacre*, “*Frühlingsweihe*,” differs in definition from the standard German translation (particularly used in referring to Bausch’s piece), “*Frühlingsopfer*.” The use of the term “*die Weihe*,” according to Duden, indicates a “(religious) ritual act by which someone or something is sanctified in a particular way or at the service of a god; consecration.”<sup>167</sup> Thus, the emphasis is on religious or spiritual ritual, as opposed to the more visceral implication of sacrifice inherent in “*das Opfer*:” “In a ritual act, the sacrifice or surrender of something or someone to a divinity.”<sup>168</sup> The ritualistic or even sublime experience was deeply ingrained in Wigman, who recognised its rich potential for artistic inspiration. The creative process threatened to overpower the artist, who was the receptacle of inspiration and compelled by this unseen force to construct. Having explored the concept of *Sacre* as an early purification ritual by a German postwar choreographer, this chapter now turns to another German’s vision of the same score. As shall become clear, however, where Wigman’s ritual was subtle and ultimately celebratory in nature, Pina Bausch was to take a completely different approach.

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<sup>165</sup> S. Manning. 1987-88. Wigman, Balanchine, and Rock ‘n Roll Conference. *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2 (Winter, 1987-88): 54.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* 54. In a separate discussion, Manning has also argued that, ‘Staging *Le Sacre du printemps*, Wigman had come to terms with the ballet boom that otherwise rendered her choreography marginal.’ Manning 1993: 241.

<sup>167</sup> “(Religion) rituelle Handlung, durch die jemand oder etwas in besonderer Weise geheiligt oder in den Dienst Gottes gestellt wird; Konsekration” definition taken from Duden Online.

<sup>168</sup> “In einer kultischen Handlung vollzogene Hingabe von jemandem, etwas an eine Gottheit” definition taken from Duden Online.

### Pina Bausch's *Le Sacre du printemps* (1975)

Philippine 'Pina' Bausch was born in 1940 in Solingen, West Germany. The youngest child of her family, Bausch effectively grew up in her parents' café, quietly observing patterns of human behaviour from an early age.<sup>169</sup> After her childhood ballet training, Bausch studied dance at the Folkwang School in Essen, the centre of progressive arts training in the country. Her primary teacher was Kurt Jooss, thus demonstrating the direct lineage of Wigman and Laban's *Ausdruckstanz* to Jooss' *Tanztheater* in the development of Bausch's own brand of dance theatre. Here, students learned ballet alongside other artistic pursuits; ballet was preferred over *Ausdruckstanz* at this institution, as it was in Germany more broadly following the end of the war.<sup>170</sup> Following the completion of her studies at Essen in 1959, Bausch was awarded a DAAD fellowship to study at the Julliard School in New York City for a year, where she was exposed to Graham and Limón techniques, studying under Anthony Tudor.<sup>171</sup> She performed with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet Company as well as Paul Taylor's New American Ballet. Thus, Bausch's professional training spanned the Atlantic gap in contemporary dance styles, and, unlike Wigman and Graham, Bausch never sought to erase classical ballet from her own dance format. It was an enormously significant period of upheaval in artistic development; Bausch's time in New York coincided with the eruption of post-modernism in dance, theatre, performance and visual art.

Bausch's *Le Sacre du printemps* has become part of the canon of twentieth-century dance.<sup>172</sup> The piece was conceived as the third part of a trilogy of dances, an evening headed *Frühlingsopfer*, following two other works – *Wind von West* ('Wind from the West') set to Stravinsky's 'Cantata' of 1952, and *Der zweite Frühling* ('The Second Spring').<sup>173</sup> Bausch's version of *Sacre* was most readily noted for its dramatic stage setting, in which the choreographer cov-

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<sup>169</sup> S. Murray & J. Keefe, eds. 2007. *Physical Theatres: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge: 78.

<sup>170</sup> Manning 1993: 228. Royd Climenhaga also notes that, while the postwar government made significant handouts in funding the arts, favour fell largely with classical or more traditional forms of expression, and that "modern dance was often overlooked in favour of ballet." R. Climenhaga. 2009. *Pina Bausch*. London: Routledge: 8.

<sup>171</sup> In an interview with Glenn Loney, Bausch stated that while she, "never saw Mary Wigman nor Harald Kreutzberg [perform, I] certainly saw Martha Graham, and I studied Graham technique." G. Loney. 1985. I Pick My Dancers As People. *On The Next Wave*, vol. 3, no. 1-2 (October, 1985): 17.

<sup>172</sup> Choreographic excerpts from Bausch's *Sacre* are regularly taught as part of the curriculum in European dance schools and conservatoires. In an interview with Royd Climenhaga, Bausch stated that auditions for the company featured both classical repertoire and prospective dancers learning a phrase from *Sacre* – Climenhaga 2009: 49.

<sup>173</sup> R. Schulze-Reuber. 2005. *Das Tanztheater Pina Bausch: Spiegel der Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer: 103.

ered the sprung dance floor with earth, soon turned into mud by the perspiration of her exhausted dancers. By the end of each performance, the dancers were covered in filth and their laboured breathing was strikingly audible; despite the performers' and choreographer's collective background in classical training, Bausch's *Sacre* was perhaps the furthest contemporary dance technique departed from a balletic rendering of the subject matter. Gone was the illusionism associated with classical dance, and instead the audience was confronted with a cast of highly skilled dancers pushed to the absolute limits of their physical capabilities – they broke the final ballet 'taboo' in confronting the audience with their total exhaustion. Working in this way, Bausch carried on a tradition established with Nijinsky's choreography of the *Danse Sacrale*, the final section of Stravinsky's score; in the 1913 version of the ballet, this closing dance of death was held to be one of the most physically demanding sections of the ballet repertoire.<sup>174</sup> Even Massine adopted this tendency towards excess; dancing in the premiere of his first version of the ballet, Sokolova recalled that she "collapsed" at the last note of the music behind the stage curtain.<sup>175</sup>

Bausch's *Sacre* opened with a woman lying facedown on a red dress, caressing the material in a trance-like state.<sup>176</sup> The red fabric stood in stark aesthetic contrast to the female dancers in their nude shift dresses, flitting around the stage with an avian quality to their movements. As one dancer held the dress at arms length, there was a dawning group realisation that the dress represented something threatening. The dancer dropped it to the floor, the women gathered together in a tight formation, and as the music erupted into a heavy, percussive rhythm, the ensemble moved in repetitive cycles, throwing their heads back, beating their clasped arms against themselves, and bending their knees in deep, heavy pliés.<sup>177</sup> This was the first movement sequence to underline the primitive, ritualistic elements of the score in Bausch's choreography, and after a number of repetitions, the dancers' heavy breathing was already audible. It was compulsive movement, creating the impression that some external force was driving the group, almost akin to mass possession, and initiated by gradual recognition of the sacrificial nature of the red dress.

With this *Sacre*, Bausch took the limits of physical performance to a new level. The audience could only sit and observe as the dancers worked themselves into a hysterical, muddy frenzy; helpless to intervene, the effect on the specta-

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<sup>174</sup> Berg 1985: 181-182.

<sup>175</sup> Sokolova 1960: 164.

<sup>176</sup> Descriptions of Bausch's choreography for *Sacre* here refer to a recording originally produced for German television channel ZDF (directed by Pit Weyrich, 1978), as well as excerpts observed during a company rehearsal in Wuppertal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

<sup>177</sup> In ballet terminology, 'plié' refers to a bending of the knees.

tor is uncomfortable and intense, coming to an end with the collapse of the Chosen One once she had danced herself, effectively, to death. Norbert Servos has alluded to the peat-covered stage floor as a “battlefield,”<sup>178</sup> a point made all the more interesting when taken in context alongside Eksteins’ analysis of Nijinsky’s choreography as portent of Modernism in the shadow of the First World War. Similarly, Gabrielle Cody writes, “by all accounts, *The Rites* became a frightening ritual of male dominance which turned the culminating fertility dance into a predatory and terrifying form of erotic warfare.”<sup>179</sup> Servos discusses the manner in which the heavy soil worked against the dancers, making their movements increasingly laboured, creating not just an impression of exhaustion through their mud and sweat covered bodies, but an audible exhaustion the audience was able to hear in their increasingly ragged breathing. As Servos points out, this was not an impression of physical tiredness, but a very real, visceral exhaustion.<sup>180</sup> Costume played a major role in this effect – the women clad only in thin, flesh-coloured dresses, almost like nightgowns, and the men bare-chested. Their bodies were clearly on display, though the effect was not of sexual titillation, but quite the opposite; the proximity to the dancers’ raw flesh added to an overall sense of overexposure and exhaustion. Like racehorses, every twitch of their lean muscles was visible to the audience – again unlike ballet, the dancers are completely exposed, and the physical and emotional toll exerted by Bausch’s choreography is uncomfortably plain to see. As Birringer has observed, one of Bausch’s unique choreographic skills was the very simple notion of putting everyday “rituals” on-stage, and in doing so, leading the audience to become acutely aware of their role as spectators, even voyeurs.<sup>181</sup>

Sexuality was, however, quite clearly present in Bausch’s *Sacre*. In one section of ensemble dancing immediately following the selection of the sacrificial victim, the female dancers leapt into the arms or onto the shoulders of their male partners (who are seemingly chosen at random, this time by the women). In this repeated sequence, the men held the women around their waists, while the female dancers contorted themselves in the manner of frantic, ecstatic sexual coupling. It was short, wild and uninhibited, also rather soulless, cold, and even violent with regard to the treatment of the women. This duality of representing male/female relationships was without doubt one of Bausch’s most recognisable reference points, yet in this piece this section was only one small example – indeed, the spectator could well read the entire performance

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<sup>178</sup> N. Servos [trans. Morris]. 2008. *Pina Bausch: Dance Theatre*. Munich: K. Kieser: 37.

<sup>179</sup> G. Cody. 1998. Woman, Man, Dog, Tree: Two Decades of Intimate and Monumental Bodies in Pina Bausch’s Tanztheater. *TDR: The Drama Review*, vol. 42, no. 2 (Summer, 1998): 120.

<sup>180</sup> Servos 2008: 37.

<sup>181</sup> J. Birringer. 1991. *Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 136.

as an exploration of the connection between sex and death. Here again was a connection to Martha Graham; the twisting, pulsating bodies were not dissimilar in appearance to the contraction and release of Graham's technique. In a 1999 review of *Sacre*, Michaela Schlagenwerth called Bausch's impression of gender roles "slightly anachronistic," drawing a link between the frenetic impulses of the cast and elements of German *Ausdruckstanz* of the 1920s, linking to Bausch's predecessor Mary Wigman.<sup>182</sup>

There was little joy in Bausch's ritual; instead, the audience observed the stark, animalistic response of her 'tribe' to their duty in sacrificing a member for the good of the community. Yet this ferocious episode of sexual congress was not the "mass rape" Banes has identified in Nijinsky's choreography.<sup>183</sup> Rather, the image of sex Bausch presented was one of aggressive necessity; ecstatic movements were contradicted by the evident exhaustion in the facial expressions and bodies of the nameless mass of dancers. Schlagenwerth asks, "What other piece has this dichotomy of strength, brutality, power and gentleness, calm and devotion, as irrevocably linked as that of Pina Bausch, in this, her thirteenth work for an ensemble?"<sup>184</sup> Like many critics observing Bausch's work, Birringer has read this piece as a play of gender roles – it should be noted that this is not uncommon in exploring *Sacre* generally, after all, the selection of a female virgin for the purpose of a fertility ritual is hardly gender-neutral subject matter. However, while Birringer claims that, "the ritual dance was constantly repeated-to the point of total exhaustion-as a central metaphor for the well-rehearsed behavior of men following the rules of society and selecting women as sacrificial victims, even as the women themselves envision and anticipate the selection,"<sup>185</sup> narrowing the focus of analysis to purely gendered lines in fact misses a great deal of the surrounding influences on Bausch's early work, and it seems misguided to analyse this piece without taking into account the postwar German perspective.

According to Manning, the programme notes accompanying the premiere of Bausch's work reflected a desire on the part of the choreographer to "return to the motifs of the original libretto."<sup>186</sup> As has already been indicated, by 1975 the score had been adopted by a great number of choreographers worldwide. In Germany, Wigman's elaborate staging had received positive reviews, and thus a tradition had been well established in revising Stravin-

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<sup>182</sup> M. Schlagenwerth. 1999. Nicht eins, nicht zwei sein können: Pina Bausch gastiert mit *Frühlingsopfer* und *Café Müller* in Berlin. *Berliner Zeitung* (25<sup>th</sup> September 1999): no pg.

<sup>183</sup> S. Banes. 1998. *Dancing Women: Female Bodies on Stage*. London: Routledge:102.

<sup>184</sup> Schlagenwerth 1999.

<sup>185</sup> J. Birringer. 1986. Pina Bausch: Dancing Across Borders. *The Drama Review: TDR*, vol. 30, no. 2 (Summer, 1986): 92.

<sup>186</sup> Manning 1991: 145.

sky's work. Bausch, however, made her mark not through a traditional rendering of the score – though it ought to be noted that, aside from her operatic works such as *Orpheus und Euridike* (1975), *Sacre* stands alone in her repertoire as a notated, choreographed piece. In terms of its depiction of the subject matter, Bausch's choreography shifted from a pre-established narrative, as Manning has pointed out:

*Bausch departed from the elevated tone of Wigman's Sacre and rejected her predecessor's interpretation of the final sacrificial dance as an heroic act. Wigman's staging never questioned that Dore Hoyer represented Woman and that Woman represented endurance and self-sacrifice. In contrast, Bausch's Sacre questioned why a woman invariably serves as the victim of social violence – "The original libretto as if viewed from afar" – and when so viewed, the social ritual that frames the woman as victim became shockingly clear.*<sup>187</sup>

Bausch claimed that her original intention was to maintain the possibility that any of the dancers could have been selected as victim, but the complexity of the final solo meant that in practice this would have to be predetermined. This concept is reflective of Graham's later choreography, wherein the victim appears to be picked quite at random. In her own words:

*The starting point is the music. There are so many feelings in it; it changes constantly. There is also much fear in it. I thought, how would it be to dance knowing you have to die? How would you feel, how would I feel? The Chosen One is special, but she dances knowing the end is death.*<sup>188</sup>

In a 1994 interview with Fernandes, dancer Ruth Amaranthe described the sacrificial solo as follows:

*The whole solo is a progression. In that moment it is more startling – "what is happening?" – a mortal fear of death. It is as if no more blood were left in your brain... Her interpretation is strange. The sacrificed could even feel honored and have some calmness. But in Pina's version, she wanted to show this instinctive fear of death.*<sup>189</sup>

Where Wigman's ritual was relatively subdued, and ultimately almost celebratory, Bausch's was brutal and relentless, leaving the audience emotionally drained and the dancers physically exhausted. There was an impulse in

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid. 146.

<sup>188</sup> A. Riding. 1997. Using Muscles Classical Ballet Has No Need For. *The New York Times* (15<sup>th</sup> June 1997): no pg.

<sup>189</sup> C. Fernandes. 2001. *Pina Bausch and the Wuppertal Dance Theater: The Aesthetics of Repetition and Transformation*. New York: Peter Lang: 117.

Bausch's movement that was almost inhuman, animalistic in its unremitting repetitions. I observed a company rehearsal in Wuppertal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, and throughout, the utter exhaustion of the two dancers alternating the role of the Chosen One was plain to see; in a setting devoid of an audience, there was no acting, or playing to the camera, rather the extreme strain on the body of these experienced company members was clear. Removed from the theatre context and without an audience, it could clearly be seen that even the dancers "marking"<sup>190</sup> movements were physically drained by the unrelenting changes of direction and speed of movement.

Like Wigman, Bausch was a German choreographer working in the postwar artistic landscape, one fraught with difficulty in accurately and sensitively expressing responses to the horror of recent history. In her *Sacre*, however, Bausch opted to explore the sacrificial ritual in an empty, almost apocalyptic landscape. Her dancers emoted true terror once the confusion around the mysterious red dress had lifted, huddling together for security before joining together en masse to perform a celebratory yet joyless choral dance. As the score progressed and the dancers' thin costumes became ever more soiled, the overall appearance of the massed performers began to resemble a group of concentration camp inmates. They were a nameless assembly – slender, weary bodies and fearful expressions – clad in identical yet stained, ragged clothing. They performed the movements as though compelled by some dreadful unseen force, exhibiting palpable relief when a sacrificial victim was chosen. The bare stage setting contributed to this, the blankness of the space beyond the earth-covered floor implying a form of primordial emptiness, as well as resembling some kind of muddied prison yard. The starkness of the stage, with its lack of decoration beyond the muddy floor, added to the primitive, elemental setting; a 'zero hour' of sorts, where the dancers act out what Rika Schulze-Reuber has called "a ritual of earth-worship."<sup>191</sup> It is not surprising that one German critic called this piece, "a death dance."<sup>192</sup>

The legacy of the Second World War was evident throughout Bausch's early choreography, demonstrated by themes of violence that have come to characterise much of her oeuvre. More recent critical responses perhaps better comprehend the complexity of Bausch's work, delving beyond the surface shock value of her early reviews; for instance, Simon Murray and John Keefe observe that, "for Bausch pain is the corollary of living, loving and desire. It is also an existential condition born out of the monstrosities of fascism and the

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<sup>190</sup> In dance terminology, "marking" choreography refers to the act of rehearsing movement with an emphasis on keeping to appropriate time or spatial limits, without giving a full performance of the movement.

<sup>191</sup> Schulze-Reuber 2005: 105.

<sup>192</sup> R. Michaelis. 1997. Tanzangst. *Angstanz. Die Zeit* (6<sup>th</sup> June 1997): no pg.

Holocaust.”<sup>193</sup> For many young Germans of Bausch’s age group, collective anger was directed at the so-called “generation of perpetrators,” and much visual and performance art that emerged from this conflict was designed to be a complete break from the pre-war lineage. As Moishe Postone puts it so succinctly, “people can acquire mastery of the present only when they are able to master their past, rather than being mastered by it.”<sup>194</sup> He expands on this, arguing that the weight of the Nazi past meant that traditional methods of ‘coming to terms’ were rendered effectively useless.

*Although the German student movement shared many features with its counterparts in other Western countries, it also, very self-consciously, involved a repudiation of the Nazi past and of the degree to which elements of that past continued to inform the present. The conflict engaged in by the students and other young people was, of course, also generational – but the generation of parents was one that largely had supported the Nazi regime.*<sup>195</sup>

Bausch’s desire to demonstrate a palpable fear of death, of consequence, was a distinct shift from the almost celebratory ritual of her predecessor, Wigman. The two women belonged to separate generations that, in postwar Germany, shared an uneasy relationship: Bausch was a part of the same generation of young people seeking answers to difficult questions about the recent past, some of whom went as far as to ask their parents to admit responsibility for what had been allowed to happen under Nazism; Wigman, on the other hand, was a member of this parental generation, accused (whether explicitly or implicitly) of collusion and sympathy with Fascism. This split can be illustrated by comparing the two very distinct versions of *Sacre* choreographed by these women; where Wigman’s piece formed an attempt at atonement, Bausch’s was angrier, more urgent, and in this sense, characteristic of her generation’s questioning worldview.

### **Martha Graham’s *Rite of Spring* (1984/1985)**

One of the most influential and prolific American choreographers of modern dance, Martha Graham was born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania in 1894, and raised in a strictly Presbyterian household. Her father was a staunch believer in the importance of education for his children, regardless of gender; thus, it was only in her late teens that, instead of pursuing academic study, Graham

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<sup>193</sup> Murray & Keefe 2007: 70.

<sup>194</sup> M. Postone. 1990. After the Holocaust: History and Identity in West Germany. In K. Härms, L.R. Reuter & V. Dürr, eds. *Coping With The Past” Germany and Austria After 1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press: 233.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.* 236.

resolved to become a dancer. In April 1911, she attended a performance by the Denishawn Company on their tour of the west coast of the United States, and was struck by the Orientalist sensuality of the multi-part dance, *Egypta*.<sup>53</sup> The next summer, Graham appeared in an amateur dance recital in Santa Barbara, playing the role of a “geisha girl” in a piece entitled *A Night in Japan*.<sup>54</sup> She enrolled at the Denishawn School of Dancing and Related Arts in 1916, several years after first seeing Ruth St. Denis perform in Los Angeles.<sup>55</sup> Following her graduation from the school, Graham remained with the Denishawn Company, under the joint leadership of Ruth St. Denis and husband Ted Shawn, until 1923. On departing from the company, she joined the Greenwich Village Follies, where she danced for a further two years. Having established a reputation for herself in New York’s Lower East Side avant-garde art scene, in 1925 Graham established her own school, teaching a new vocabulary of movement that laid the foundations for her own codified dance technique. Taking the principles and basic structure of classical ballet, Graham devised a modern dance method that began with exercises seated on the floor, and improved the dancer’s flexibility through the contraction and release of the spine and spiralling movements of the back. Graham technique, as it is now commonly known, departed from ballet convention in the dancer’s acknowledgment of the power of gravity; that is, this new technique allowed the Graham dancer to fall and rebound off the floor, in direct opposition to the upright, illusionistic nature of classical dance.

The ritualistic qualities of Graham’s choreographies derive from her desire to explore psychology through movement, and a deep belief in the innate honesty of movement as opposed to the vagaries of language. Hers was a very theatrical dance form, however the instruction of Graham technique is incredibly detailed, carefully considered, and is in fact quite dry in comparison to the high theatre of her stage work. Graham’s *Rite of Spring* was one of her last complete choreographies. However, while she was approaching ninety years of age when taking on the project, this was not her first experience with dancing Stravinsky’s score; she had turned down the opportunity to devise a version for American audiences in Leopold Stokowski’s 1930 production. Graham explained her decision, rather bluntly, as follows:

*Stokowski had come with his wife, Evangeline, to see some things that I did at the Roerich museum, and they were very stark, naturally, because I was in what I call my ‘long-winter-underwear period,’ very lacking in seduction – you know, charm... It was at a time when he was completing*

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<sup>53</sup> E. Stodelle. 1984. *Deep Song: The Dance Story of Martha Graham*. London: Collier Macmillan: 10-11.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* 12.

<sup>55</sup> A. Helpen. 1994. *The Technique of Martha Graham*. Dobbs Ferry: Morgan Press: 7.

*Sacre, but he said, 'I don't think you have the experience to do the choreography.' I said, 'No, I haven't. I have absolutely no experience to handle groups of people. I'm still searching, still finding things.'*<sup>196</sup>

Following this exchange, Leonide Massine was instead appointed as choreographer, and Graham danced the role of the Chosen One. Massine had already choreographed a new version of the score ten years earlier, almost acting as a surrogate for Nijinsky, and would have provided Graham with a more detailed understanding of the 1913 work than either Wigman or Bausch could ever have experienced.<sup>197</sup> However, Massine and Graham were rumoured to clash throughout the production stages, but Graham's Modernist technique was seemingly the factor that singled out her performance from the other (classically trained) dancers.<sup>198</sup>

While Massine's impression of the piece was quite distinct from that of his predecessor – he sought an alternative synthesis between music and movement, rather than adhering rigorously to the score's time signatures in the style of Nijinsky<sup>199</sup> – the young choreographer was similarly influenced by elements of Russian folk art, something he had been exposed to through working with the Russian Neo-Primitivist artists Natalia Goncharova and Mikhail Larionov. This collective espoused a fusion of folk and abstract art, acting as a link in the gap of the Russian avant-garde between the Cubo-Futurists and Constructivists. Prior to starting work on *Sacre*, Massine had been engaged with choreographing the ballet *Liturgie* (1915) with Lydia Sokolova as principal dancer, and set and costume design by Goncharova. Massine had never seen Nijinsky's *Sacre*,<sup>200</sup> and developed his first version on Sokolova.<sup>201</sup> A decade later, it was Martha Graham who was to be his admittedly more troublesome choreographic muse.

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<sup>196</sup> Extract from Daniel Oliver's conversation with Graham, 19<sup>th</sup> April 1977, reproduced in D. Oliver. 1982. *Rite of Spring, First Staging in America: Stokowski-Massine-Graham. Ballet Review*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Summer, 1982): 68.

<sup>197</sup> In his memoirs, Massine notes that, following Diaghilev's suggestion he take on *Sacre*, he spoke with Stravinsky who, "had not been entirely satisfied with the choreography." Similarly, Diaghilev is recorded as claiming, "Nijinsky had failed because he had attempted too much at once." L. Massine. 1968. *My Life in Ballet*. London: Macmillan: 151, 152. However, according to Rambert, by 1969, "though Stravinsky had bitterly disapproved of Nijinsky's version in 1913, he had since admitted that it was by far the best rendering of his *Sacre*." Rambert 1972: 59.

<sup>198</sup> Oliver 1982: 69.

<sup>199</sup> Again Massine recalls the composer stating Nijinsky's rigid adherence to the score was "a mistake" – Massine 1968: 151-152.

<sup>200</sup> Massine 1968: 151.

<sup>201</sup> Sokolova 1960: 159-164.

More than fifty years later, Graham created a new choreography for Stravinsky's score, one based on her own technique. Her *Rite of Spring* was first performed at the New York State Theater on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1984. Anna Kisselgoff's review of the premiere for the New York Times describes rapturous applause and "a treatment of Stravinsky's score unlike any other."<sup>202</sup> Kisselgoff went further in her praise to state: "It is a Rite that is totally elemental, as primal in expression of basic emotion as any tribal ceremony, as hauntingly staged in its deliberate bleakness as it is rich in implication."<sup>203</sup> In 1985, Graham reworked the piece, creating a bigger role for the character of the Shaman, and altering the ending to make use of a larger ensemble of dancers. In Kisselgoff's review of this revised choreography, she observes that, "more than any other version, this 'Rite' captures the barbarism of ancient fertility rituals."<sup>204</sup>

Graham's *Rite of Spring* was set in an ancient impression of the American Southwest, a factor Howard Moss compared to the depiction of the Southwestern states as seen in *El Penitente* (1940);<sup>205</sup> however, Kisselgoff interpreted the piece as being "a work of disturbing and modern urban tension."<sup>206</sup> Robert Johnson has hinted that Massine's choreography could possibly have presupposed Graham's invocation of Native American culture, a setting that was common also to Lester Horton's 1937 version of *Sacre*. He also posits that "both Horton and Wigman, according to Berg, anticipated Béjart by emphasizing the eroticism implicit in a virgin sacrifice."<sup>207</sup> Partsch-Bergsohn viewed Graham's version somewhat differently, claiming hers "celebrated the beauty of youth, particularly of her male dancers, who seemed to be the dominant element, while the sacrifice of the female, although beautifully danced, was a very free treatment of Stravinsky's theme."<sup>208</sup>

The Shaman character in Graham's choreography replaced the role of the wise elder in Nijinsky's original production. The figure who selected the sacrificial victim in this work was a much younger man – while this markedly dif-

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<sup>202</sup> A. Kisselgoff. 1984. The Dance – "Rite," by Martha Graham. *The New York Times* (29<sup>th</sup> February 1984): no pg.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> A. Kisselgoff. 1985. The Dance – Graham's "Rite of Spring." *The New York Times* (7<sup>th</sup> April 1985): no pg.

<sup>205</sup> H. Moss. 1984. The Rites of Martha Graham. *The New York Review of Books*, vol. 31, no. 7 (26<sup>th</sup> April, 1984): no pg.

<sup>206</sup> Kisselgoff 1984: no pg.

<sup>207</sup> R. Johnson. 1992. Review: Sacred Scandals – *Le Sacre du Printemps: Seven Productions from Nijinsky to Martha Graham* by Shelley C. Berg. *Dance Chronicle*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1992): 233. Horton was exposed early in his career, and profoundly influenced in his choreographic style, by both Native American ritual and the Japanese dance theatre of Michio Ito.

<sup>208</sup> Partsch-Bergsohn 1994: 11.

fers from Nijinsky and Wigman's casting, it bears similarities to Bausch's conception, where the figure who indicates the Chosen One is a younger man. The stage design of Graham's version was notably basic – merely a raised platform with a single tree, a minimalist conception of landscape. Indeed, it was akin to Wigman's *Sacre* in the pared-down simplicity of the setting, and also to Bausch's largely empty stage. As in Wigman's interpretation, the male dancers were costumed in loincloths and bare-chested, while the Shaman was dressed in coloured robes. The men played a central role in Graham's piece; they drove the majority of the action throughout, and their choreography featured far greater displays of strength and virtuosity than that of the female dancers. For the most part, the Shaman simply presided over the action, observing from his position on the platform, but broke this almost sculptural appearance in his energetic *pas de deux* with the sacrificial victim. The key element in this work overall was its minimalism – indeed, the exposed, bare nature of this piece, in terms of both set design and choreography, was quite a departure from Graham's more traditional, highly theatrical work, epitomised by pieces such as *Night Journey*.

The dancer Bessie Schönberg claimed that Graham used Massine's choreography as a basis for her 1984 work – “the resulting Danse Sacrale was ‘pure Martha’”<sup>209</sup> – while Anna Sokolow drew parallels between *The Rite of Spring* and *Primitive Mysteries*, as well as claiming to find, “a strong and natural connection between Graham's and Massine's movements... this ‘appropriation’ of the modern vocabulary by ballet represented a very important step for modern dance.”<sup>210</sup> Kisselgoff alleged in her review of the first performance that Graham's technique was modified for this piece; she referred to a raised knee with foot flexed as a motif, and remarked that, “the bodies are more twisted, more negative in resonance.”<sup>211</sup> Graham's *Rite of Spring* was, for the most part, a quiet, meditative performance characterised by unsettling, unexpected moments – the Chosen One was picked seemingly at random off her partner's back, implying that any of the dancers could be drawn into the sacrifice. The effect was surprisingly dramatic in the context of an otherwise minimalist production. There were numerous jumps with flexed feet, but otherwise there were comparatively few visible Graham technique ‘trademarks’ in this *Rite*, with the exception of elements such as the jumps from fourth position in the last section.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> S. Levy. 1987-88. The Rite of Spring at Seventy Five. *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2 (Winter, 1987-88): 53.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.* 53.

<sup>211</sup> Kisselgoff 1985: no pg.

<sup>212</sup> In ballet, fourth position refers to a stance where the dancer has one foot in front of the other, with the length of roughly one foot between the legs. As the dancer's legs are in turn out, it is an especially difficult position to maintain in landing jumps. It is very rare to see jumps from this

Graham's *Rite of Spring* also represented a departure from Nijinsky's choreography; as Kisselgoff has pointed out, Graham's dancers remained quite still when the music built to a major "frenzy."<sup>213</sup> At one point, the Shaman stationed his sacrificial victim in the middle of the stage and slowly circled her, tying a rope around her body that wound upwards from her feet until she was completely bound – this sequence was almost identical to the treatment of Wigman's sacrificial victim, also bound in spiralling ropes. When Graham's victim was completely bound, the Shaman enveloped her in his multicoloured cloak, before the fabric was spread on the stage before the victim; eventually, she sank to her knees and lay upon it. Polcari notes that the significance of colour in this piece indicates a shift in the "rite of passage," a theme he identifies as common to a number of Graham's works, such as *Voyage* (1953). In the case of *The Rite of Spring*, the transition of the Shaman's clothing colouring from black to green is representative of the fertility of the central ritual.<sup>214</sup> Similarities are evident here with the opening of Bausch's version; the fabric that holds some fateful power over the dancers, the contrast between its almost ecstasy-inducing tangible qualities and the dread it evokes.

In the Chosen One's *pas de deux* with the Shaman, the movement quality of their dance was quite sexual, reflecting once again the link between sexual pleasure and death or destruction. The role of the Chosen One in this *pas de deux* was a very passive one – she gripped onto her male partner, at one point hanging off his shoulders, reflecting the moment she was 'chosen.' This sequence leads to the final sacrificial solo; the Chosen One was held aloft centre stage, while the male dancers performed a very percussive, energetic group movement around her. The final stages of her solo involved whirling, circular movements, and she appeared fragile and terrified. This piece demonstrated some key distinctions from Wigman version, especially in terms of its overall mood; instead of dancing herself to death, Graham's sacrificial victim appeared to "seemingly [die] of terror."<sup>215</sup>

Many of the thematic and choreographic elements of this piece represented something of a departure for Graham's signature style, if she could in fact be said to have had such a thing. As Howard Moss rather scathingly notes:

*The Rite of Spring provides no opportunity for the dramatization of triumph; a human sacrifice and a primitive ordeal of renewal, it is communal, not heroic, and though it has a central figure, the Chosen One, her*

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position in classical dance, thus it is rather more a tendency of Graham technique.

<sup>213</sup> Kisselgoff 1985: no pg.

<sup>214</sup> Polcari 1990: 27 (footnote 35).

<sup>215</sup> Kisselgoff 1985: no pg.

*choice is random and she is not of the slightest psychological interest. The only questions are: how is she going to be killed, and how quickly.*<sup>216</sup>

Indeed, the technical elements of Graham's *Rite* were rather different to previous works, playing down the passion and vibrancy of her early career. Berg claims that, by the time Graham choreographed *The Rite of Spring*, her aesthetic had become "more balletic."<sup>217</sup> Choreographing Stravinsky's score so late in her career meant Graham had, to some extent, lost the sharpness and starkness of her early work. Yet, similarities also exist between Graham's vision and Bausch's *Sacre*, particularly, as critics have indicated, in the relationships played out between men and women. Marianne Goldberg takes a strongly gendered response to Graham's *Rite*, arguing that it was an "ongoing rape," as well as a dislocation from Graham's 1930s "feminist" works. She claims that, "Graham... has in *Rite of Spring* trapped women within a male-dominated world that destroys every possibility of their own assertion."<sup>218</sup> Goldberg interprets this work as promulgating the idea of male as violator and woman as violated and, accordingly, "Graham's universe divides into male power and female vulnerability."<sup>219</sup> Accordingly, there is a split between Graham's depiction of the virginal Chosen One as a partially willing martyr and also as helpless victim. Additionally, Goldberg has identified that the 'primitive' ritual enacted in *Sacre* is common in a more general sense to a great number of cultures, something that is underlined by its ambiguous setting.<sup>220</sup> Although passionately argued, Goldberg's analysis focuses so heavily on gender analysis one cannot help but feel she has missed broader points raised within the choreography.

Crucially, when discussing this work in an interview, Graham related the sacrifice of the Chosen One to her own experience of making sacrifices as an artist.<sup>221</sup> In personally identifying with the Chosen One, Graham underlined the ritualistic qualities of the creative, choreographic process, implying an element of possession by external forces that compelled the chosen artist to create. Graham stated that the selection of the victim in this piece was entirely at random, and indeed could well have been danced by a male performer.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Moss 1984: no pg.

<sup>217</sup> Berg 1985: 392.

<sup>218</sup> M. Goldberg. 1986. She Who Is Possessed No Longer Exists Outside: Martha Graham's *Rite of Spring*. *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1986): 17.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.* 20.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* 21.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.* 25.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* 26.

Johnson perhaps goes some way to restore Graham's *Rite*, detracting from her critics in his observation that:

*Graham, almost alone among modern dance choreographers, developed a style perfectly suited to convey the message of Le Sacre du Printemps. Rigid, angular, and violent, with a barely concealed sadomasochistic edge, Graham's style forges the molten passions of the unconscious into steel-hard shapes. Her movements, which expand and contract from an individual's pelvic center, spring from and are directed toward the earth. The Graham repertoire abounds in sexual themes and conflicts, often centered on the dilemma or struggle of a female protagonist. Although unable to – or perhaps simply not wishing to – engage the complexities of Stravinsky's score, Graham's choreography goes straight to the heart of Sacre's subject matter. Her only true misfortune was that by 1983 her style offered no further surprises, depriving Sacre of one of its most precious characteristics as a cultural phenomenon – the ability to shock an audience with its originality, perhaps even to start a riot.*<sup>223</sup>

Graham's *Rite of Spring* was in many respects an unusual work, a significant departure from her standard method of practice, with long passages of minimal movement and stark bare stage setting, in contrast to the frantic rhythms of Stravinsky's music. Considering the fact that Wigman's *Sacre* was a visual spectacular, with a circular, raked stage (one that is built on a diagonal slope, rather than completely flat) filled with whirling and constant movement, and Bausch's dancers filthy and caked in mud, exhausted and struggling, the austerity of Graham's version becomes all the more apparent. Like Wigman, Graham was intimidated by the very prospect of choreographing this score, and, like Bausch, she embraced the implicit terror of the sacrificial rite. In an interview with Daniel Oliver, Graham described the primordial power of the music and the effect it had on her as an artist having to set it to movement. Her account implies a willingness on the part of the artist to submit to a higher, unseen power, and an empathy with the Chosen One at the centre of the performed ritual. For Graham, as for her choreographic forerunners, it is evident that the primitive ritualism of *Le Sacre du printemps* exerted a considerable influence:

*The passionate Russian thing – whether it's Russian or whether it's primal doesn't matter, but the rite was a sacrificial one and it had nothing to do with the idiosyncrasies of ballet style or modern dance. You had to accommodate yourself to it, and the music is very, very powerful, as we all know... But Sacre meant spiritually a great deal to me and still does, and people have hounded me to choreograph it, but I've said I*

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<sup>223</sup> Johnson 1992: 234-5.

*couldn't. It's close to me emotionally and it was a turning point in my life... Somehow one identified oneself with a central figure; you perform a sacrifice, whatever it is, and whether it's your life or whether it's giving up the extraneous things of your life for a purpose – for the necessity – it's a sacrificial act.*<sup>224</sup>

Thus, for Graham, the sacrifice in her *Rite of Spring* was even more personalised than her German counterparts; while Bausch and Wigman explored ritual barbarity and healing in their postwar German imaginings of Stravinsky's music, Graham looked closer to home in appropriating symbols of Native American culture into a sparse and rather abstract setting. Her sacrificial act related both to the primitive rituals of her colonised homeland, but also to the sacrifices inherent in choosing the life of an artist. It is all the more fitting, then, that *The Rite of Spring* was to be Graham's final contribution to an extraordinary lengthy artistic career.

### Concluding Remarks

Without painstaking notation and the benefit of recording technology, the process of dance creation becomes as ephemeral in nature as religious or spiritual ritual; after all, the original choreography of Nijinsky's *Rite of Spring* was essentially lost only seven years after the first performance. Diaghilev attempted to restage the piece some years after its eight performances, a gesture that failed once it became clear that no member of the original cast was able to remember the full choreography (while some notes had been made throughout its creation, there was no full notation of the ballet on paper).<sup>225</sup> Indeed, the fact the work did not survive in its entirety in part contributes to its timeless appeal. This infamous, inflammatory work of early Modernism in performance remains in its original state only in the words and reminiscences of audience members and dancers. Such a situation generates significant research challenges, not least the attempt to reinterpret a work that has been simultaneously so thoroughly dissected and exaggerated. Accordingly, the scope of methodological examination in this paper has focused on the primitive, ritualistic qualities of *Sacre*, in an attempt both to view the ballet from a fresh perspective, but also to draw attention to an overlooked strand of critical thinking.

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<sup>224</sup> Oliver's interview with Graham, in Oliver 1982: 70

<sup>225</sup> Berg 1985: 199-200.

Tim Scholl has observed that Nijinsky's anti-ballet tendencies, already visible in *L'Après midi*, exemplified a kind of artistic "protest" against the traditionalism and establishment of classical dance, and that this very refutation of classicism lives on in the spirit of modern dance.<sup>226</sup> Decades after the 1913 premiere, Wigman, Bausch and Graham each choreographed their own distinct visions of Stravinsky's score, serving equally disparate purposes. Their common interest in ritual performance and primitivism serves as a powerful connection across geographical and temporal boundaries. Where Wigman's imagining of a matriarchal tribe is abstract in its conception, parallels exist with Bausch's visceral ritual – as German choreographers in the postwar landscape, both women seem to be enacting rituals of purgation, of stripping bare and starting anew, albeit in the context of human sacrifice. Viewed in their socio-political setting, it is impossible to divorce the choice of material from their immediate and shared historical background. Graham's version took the form of a spare and stark execution of movement, recalling 'primitive' Native American rituals in order to create a new, contemporary sense of dread. She removed the excess and much of the high drama generated by the score, in favour of a slow and unsettling winding-down of the action.

The four versions of *Sacre* explored here all took place within rather otherworldly settings. Nijinsky's ballet evokes the idea of 'pagan' Russia, specifically a pre-Christian society, an almost intangible revitalising of the past. His was 'Orientalised' in the Saidian sense through its mysterious and dangerous qualities, and designed to evoke a sense of anxiety of foreboding in the reaction of the spectator. Wigman's *Sacre* inhabited an unknown, non-specific setting, providing a glimpse of an anonymous matriarchal society selecting its sacrificial victim. Graham's vision took place in a pared-down representation of the American Southwest, dreamlike in its starkness, and increasingly nightmarish as the action leads to the sacrificial rite. Finally, Bausch's version lay in no man's land, a (literally) earthy production, playing out timelessly ritualistic and tribal behaviours in its supposedly unspecified context.

The theme of ritualistic performance is significant for a number of reasons, not least because, as a commonality linking avant-garde dance movements, it espouses a desire to explore non-Western source material in increasingly radical performance practice. The reaction to Nijinsky's work mellowed over time – dance and art historians alike now recognise the first performance as one of the seminal moments in Modernist history. Similarly, the musical score is acknowledged as one of the masterpieces of twentieth-century composition, yet West German audiences were visceral in their responses to Bausch's peat-

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<sup>226</sup> T. Scholl. 1994. *From Petipa to Balanchine: Classical Revival and the Modernization of Ballet*. London: Routledge: 78.

covered stage setting in the early 1970s, and dance critics were horrified by perceived misogynistic undertones in Graham's late choreography. Such instances indicate that the different incarnations of primitivism in *Sacre*, even decades after the 1913 Paris premiere, still maintain the ability to challenge and shock their audiences.

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**SILLS**





## Stravinsky and Time

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### Abstract

Stravinsky's aim of coordinating man and time through music is explored in the context of changes in our understanding of time at the turn of the twentieth century. His growing expertise in the construction of temporalities of differing quality and depth to create a vehicle for greater temporal and spiritual awareness is traced through the early works from *Petrushka* to *Le Sacre du Printemps*, and the background to their time qualities explored. At a distance of 100 years some thoughts are offered on the effect that the première of *Le Sacre du Printemps* had upon the audience with respect to a more particular awareness of time.

**Keywords:** Spirituality; temporality; movement; musical construction; communion.

Among the many explosive riots and verbal battles that have greeted premières of new and ground-breaking works, the uproar provoked by the first performance of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* must surely rank amongst the most famous. One hundred years after the protests that greeted its first performance, the music (and the choreography) still has the power to command a high degree of attention from an audience, and to surprise and even to shock. The centenary of that event on the 29th May 2013 provides a good opportunity to reflect again on the public's reaction on that occasion, in the light of some of the deeper changes in society which propelled this event into the spotlight.

Stravinsky's startling new vision of sound and movement sits well in its historical context. At this time, revolutions in thought around *movement and change* were very much "in the air": Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859) and *The Power of Movement in Plants* (1880) had raised fundamental questions about creation and evolution, and

Sigmund Freud's *On the Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), new questions about Man's free will and subconscious motivations. Perhaps most unsettling of all, Albert Einstein's very recent paper *On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies* (1905), was to be the first stage of a fundamental revolution in understanding our spatial-temporal environment. Until now, time had gained an independent existence as a fixed and unchanging medium for tracking motion mathematically and was not thought to be created, affected or modified by movement. Einstein's paper proposed a new relationship between time and movement, demonstrating that measurements of time in the physical world are *malleable*, able to both stretch and shrink according to the motion of the observer. The concept of Man as a highly rational being in a clockwork universe, which had come to dominate intellectual life since the 17th century, was being radically challenged by these new ideas, and both the origin of physical reality and the nature of the human psyche were undergoing vigorous questioning and experiment.

At the beginning of the 20th century the "time" for a greater awareness of the temporal aspect of our human life had come, and "Time" was ripe for both phenomenological and scientific investigation. The latter years of the 19th century had seen a breakdown in the concept of the mechanical universe, particularly after Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* had demonstrated that the different species are not individual "kinds" but the result of processes of *change* over time. Also, the tyranny of the clock had been gradually undermined by a *phenomenological* approach to the nature of time. Awareness of time's variable qualities had gathered pace with the work of Edmund Husserl (born 1859), who reflected particularly on first-person experiences of time, in contrast to "clock-time" defined by its relation to matter and motion. He developed a theory about the movement and retention of our mental thoughts and made, perhaps, one of the first experiential links between music and time by relating it to our memory for music and for successive melodic phrases. He also spoke of another level of mental life as "absolute flux" and considered it to be non-temporal or quasi-temporal (an interesting observation in the light of what we now know of the right hemisphere's preference for spatial rather than temporal processing). William James' *Principles of Psychology*, published in 1890, distinguished between experiences of duration in passing and in retrospect, and speculated on the effects of information content. He observed that periods of "empty" time passing seem longer when we pay attention to the passage of time itself, whereas the length of a period of time in retrospect depends upon the amount of memories it contains. The exploration of relative temporalities, perceived both as clock-time and duration was taken up by writers too, from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, to H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* and *Tales of Space-Time* in the 1890s. The literary exploration of temporalities culminated perhaps in Thomas Mann's novel, *The Magic Mountain*, based on the experiences of his wife Katia in a tuberculosis sanatorium in

1913. This novel mirrors its historical period from a sociological point of view, explores varieties of experiential time from personal perspectives, and also manipulates the reader's experience of time in its literary structure.

The philosophy of Henri Bergson, published in 1889 and 1896 was particularly influential as the century drew to a close. Bergson perceived Time as two contrasting qualities, chronological time and duration, duration being the continuous progression of past, present and future, dissolved into an unbroken flux. Unlike chronological time, which can be subdivided into a series of consecutive moments and measured, he saw duration as a dynamic process of sustained becoming, apprehended through the intuition, which also reveals the instinctive life force (*élan vital*). For Bergson, the function of art was to express the dynamic fusion of spirit and material perceptions and endow matter with the spirit's own freedom of movement.

Stravinsky's insights into the relationship of music and time were contemporary with this explosion of enquiry into the nature of time, as it was being explored as a dimension, as a relative measurement, and as an experience that could vary from clock-time to duration.

At a distance of one hundred years, the influence of Stravinsky's personality and his early commitment to be worthy of the "musical aptitudes" he had received from God, both of which were uniquely suited to change the direction music was taking at the end of the nineteenth century, is becoming a little clearer. It is difficult, for example, to imagine any composer before Stravinsky, talking about *time* as a *principal purpose* of composition<sup>227</sup>. Yet he closely identified with Pierre Suvchinsky's definition of musical creativity as "an innate complex of intuitions and possibilities based primarily upon *an exclusively musical experiencing of time*" (Stravinsky 1947: 30). Stravinsky's famous statement, that the purpose of musical composition is "to establish an order in things, including and particularly, the co-ordination between *man* and *time*" was made in his Autobiography published in 1936, but his pioneering steps towards developing music's *temporal* aspects can already be clearly heard in the works leading up to *Le Sacre du Printemps*. (Stravinsky 1975: 54)

It is also vital to take Stravinsky's spirituality into account when discussing the works before *Le Sacre du Printemps*, for his exploration of differing kinds of temporality is closely linked with his deep faith and his desire to embody a spiritual experience in music, "as a means of communion, with our fellow man – and with the Supreme Being" (Stravinsky 1947: 142). As he himself

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<sup>227</sup> Except perhaps Charles Ives, for different reasons from Stravinsky. Some of Ives' compositions record the musical events that he could hear going on around him simultaneously, unfolding at their own pace in clock-time. *The Unanswered Question* does however, penetrate the spiritual realm by contrasts that create an extended temporal experience.

remarked, his religion makes him a dualist, for, like Bergson, in the search for the beautiful, the fusion of material and spiritual is everything. Theodore Stravinsky said that his father was of a believing nature, one for whom an independent and transcendent *Truth* exists, and that “praying and adoring are functions of his deepest self” (Stravinsky 1955: 18-19). His desire to coordinate man and time, to augment our sensitivity to a more extensive range of temporal qualities through musical construction, arises from his deeply spiritual nature. For only through being attuned to our temporal dimension can we transcend it, as T.S. Eliot wrote: “Only through time time is conquered”. (Eliot 1968: 14)

Stravinsky saw that the experience of “communion with our fellow man and with the Supreme Being” may be brought about through music, when we are “at one” with time and its many qualities. When we are brought to a point of stillness and timelessness, we can glimpse a reality beyond ourselves:

*Men’s curiosity searches past and future  
and clings to that dimension. But to apprehend  
The point of intersection of the timeless  
With time, is an occupation for the saint —  
...  
For most of us, there is only the unattended  
Moment, the moment in and out of time,  
The distraction fit ...*

(Eliot 1968: 41)

His life-long friend Pierre Suvchinsky described Stravinsky’s personality as a complex mix of the rational and the mystic, a combination of elements that is reminiscent of a certain type of Russian mentality. This type of spirituality is especially characteristic of the Old Believers in Russia who were vividly aware of both physical sense perceptions and the world of the spirit, and who constantly strove to bridge the two levels of reality, to bring them together. (Suvchinsky 1946: 20-21)

An introvert, and bookish like his father, Stravinsky spent his childhood in an atmosphere of music, literature, and philosophical and religious ideas. During his student years at St Petersburg University, Stravinsky was interested in the theoretical and abstract questions of criminal law and legal philosophy, and recalled his interest in the novelists and philosophers of “being”, particularly Dostoyevsky and Gorky, Strindberg and Ibsen (Stravinsky & Craft 1962: 162). He worked, for example, through Victor Nesselov’s *The Science of Man*, published in 1905 with its chapters on subjects such as consciousness and thought,

and the process of perception and the development of life.<sup>228</sup> Robert Craft observed that to judge from Stravinsky's extensive annotation of this book, "this philosopher exerted a major influence on the composer's thought" (Stravinsky 1982: 17). As a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky felt great affection for the man himself but disliked his mentality, which "was closed to any religious or metaphysical idea" (Stravinsky & Craft 1962: 187-188). From 1910, in Paris, working with Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, Stravinsky gained much-needed emotional and spiritual support away from the politics of the Company from the group of creative friends known as the "Apaches", with whom he discussed new aesthetic ideas and was introduced to the French avant-garde (Funayama 1986: 273; Pasler 1982: 403-7). These early circumstances of his life helped to nurture his spiritual insights and test them against the latest ideas. They prepared his creative voice to be a "turning around" point, from the works of late nineteenth century composers that arose from their emotion-laden inner worlds, to music based on a "musical experience of *time*", which appealed instead to the spirit.

Stravinsky's rise to fame with *The Firebird* was meteoric. Whilst studying with Rimsky-Korsakov, from early consultations in 1900 until the composer's death, he had observed his teacher's mastery of timbre and placing of orchestral colours and quickly produced his own masterpiece in this genre of mystery and magic. But at frequent meetings with the "Apaches", he found not only a haven of intellectual enquiry, but also generous support for new ideas and works of his own. Its members had rallied around the flag of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and it was through personal contact with Debussy and his new style that Stravinsky found affirmation for the new direction his own work was taking. He learnt not only from Debussy's musical techniques, but also from his spirituality, for he saw that Debussy's attitude to creativity and time, in contrast to his own, was largely static and contemplative in quality. Debussy regarded music as the expression of "the mysterious affinity between Nature and the Imagination" (Debussy 1902: 74). In contrast, Stravinsky's spiritual response was to embrace life robustly in all its aspects, and he believed that the true creator's ability was "to find about him, in the commonest and humblest thing, items worthy of note" (Stravinsky 1947: 54). Stravinsky felt that although Debussy had rescued music from being predominantly dependent for its forward movement on the flow of a composer's inner emotional life, music was still not wholly freed into the dimension of time: it remained imprisoned by passive movements more associated with the visual sensuality of Impressionism (Stravinsky 1947: 58, Brelet 1949: 692-5). Stravinsky experi-

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<sup>228</sup> *The Science of Man* by Victor Ivanovitch Neshmelov (1863-1920) was published in two volumes in 1897 and 1902, and centered around the correlation of positive science and revealed religion. Stravinsky's copy was the third edition of 1905, published in Moscow.

enced sound as active and participating in Divine creativity, “a matter of balance and calculation through which the breath of the speculative spirit blows” (Stravinsky 1947: 50). His works are constructed to emulate patterns of living and being and to align us with their varieties of temporal experience.

Stravinsky’s view of art as “a form of communion” was above all a practical one. He constructed each stream of sound to create a temporality by its “rhythmic manners” and by the degree of complexity of its content. His sensitivity to sounds, overtones and vibrations enabled him to select pitches, intervals, motifs, chords, and, most importantly, their position in the phrase as a whole, to embody a haunting quality and have echoic value. In the works leading up to *Le Sacre du Printemps* we can observe how he develops techniques for constructing and combining streams of sounds with regard to their resonance and their temporality. He then unfolds a succession of temporal qualities of varying depth and density, that are aligned with our experience of being and becoming. He remarked that one arranges the horizontal file as one wants, but that the *vertical* assemblages, in order to communicate with the audience, “must justify themselves before God!” (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 248). But however mystical his spirit, Stravinsky’s musical appetite was always stimulated by the actual physical process of putting materials together: asked if he agreed with W.H. Auden’s view of music as “a virtual image of our experience of living as temporal ...”, Stravinsky replied that however unverifiable, he supposed that it was, but that this kind of thinking about music was a different vocation for him: he couldn’t *do* anything with it as a truth, and his mind was a *doing* one (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 18). Stravinsky’s succession of temporalities always lead us on a journey, through a *time experience*, which for him was a *dynamic* passage through time<sup>229</sup> (Stravinsky & Craft 1982: 127). His artisan’s attitude to practical “making”, combined with his spiritual discernment in selecting haunting combinations of sounds at the piano, made him a uniquely-placed vessel for the exploration of time in musical construction.

The *subjects* that Stravinsky chose for the works from *Petrushka* to *Le Sacre du Printemps* lend themselves particularly to the embodiment of contrasting time qualities and both material and transcendent realities in music. They show him experimenting with discrete layers of sound to create dynamic journeys, not for the emotions or intellect, but for the spirit. We are transported from the everyday bustle of the Shrovetide fair to the temporal/timeless experience of *Petrushka*’s soul; we follow the path into the desert to behold the timeless glory of *Zvezdoliki*, the “King of the Stars”; we are invited to expe-

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<sup>229</sup> In the late 1950s one of Stravinsky’s criticisms of electronic music was that “the shortest pieces ... seem endless and within those pieces we feel no time control” (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 111).

rience the delicate two-dimensional time world of Japanese poetry and prints in *Three Japanese Lyrics*; and we participate in a succession of time qualities to bridge the “earthly joy” and “celestial triumph”, as experienced by the ancient Slavs, in *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

Stravinsky’s fleeting vision of the pagan rite which became *Le Sacre du Printemps* came to him in 1910 as he was finishing *The Firebird*. But the realisation of the vision was delayed, by what Stravinsky called the need to “refresh” himself with a piece for piano and orchestra (which became *Petrushka*), and after his return to Oustiloug, by the *Two Poems of Balmont* and *Zvezdoliki*. Continuing his interest in creating the contrasting temporalities that he had achieved in *The Nightingale*, Stravinsky explores a more ambitious spectrum of time qualities in *Petrushka* from “now” to “timelessness”, as the meaning of the work as a whole.

### **Time qualities in *Petrushka***

There are five qualities of time in *Petrushka*: the cyclical time of the religious festival of Shrovetide, the clock-time activity of the bustling fair, the suspended time of the magic trick, the inner psychological turmoil of *Petrushka*, the Romantic hero, and the temporal/timeless experience of *Petrushka*’s soul as he dies. “This double existence”, said Stravinsky “is the key to the enigma, a key not possessed by the one who believes he has given him life, the Magician”. (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 67)

The story of *Petrushka* is set within what Mircea Eliade has called the “Great Story”, the annual cycle of creation and man’s call for the breakthrough of the supernatural into the natural world in the regenerative process. Shrovetide is the period of preparation for Lent, during which it is customary to make confession to a priest and be absolved from past sins. It is also the time of the Spring Equinox, during which a puppet of straw or wood was carried in procession and eventually burnt or drowned, symbolising the end of winter and the coming of new life. In *Petrushka*, this period of time is recalled and celebrated by associated events, by familiar characters and activities usually found at the fair, such as the dancing of the bear, the strumming of the gusli, and the songs of the volochebniki (Easter carol singers). Just as the festival of Shrovetide throws off the old and celebrates the coming of new life, so we hear the new, vibrant life of *Petrushka*’s soul as he leaves the world in the closing scene.

Stravinsky creates the clock-time “now” of the bustling fair by superimposing or interjecting musical “events” that are distinctively different in their tonality or rhythmic pacing, on to a background of non-developing tremolo semiquaver movement. Though the background motion gives an impression of activity and “becoming” it is in fact non-directional, forward movement being

achieved more slowly as we “pan” around a series of cameo scenes, as in a film. At figures 18 and 22 in the score, our attention is directed to the Barbary organ and dancer by the abrupt contrast their diatonic harmony and regular metre makes in this context of Russian motifs and irregular rhythms: their music is highlighted against this background by being scored for the bright, contrasting timbres of solo flutes, clarinets, piccolo and trumpet, and by a sudden change of pace. The vendors and carol singers reassert the non-European style of the fair with motifs within the interval of a fourth, reminiscent of old Russian chant and folk-music: these tetrachords build a tone-semitone-tone motif above their pitch centre and as our attention moves, their transpositions build a mosaic out of the various centres of activity on stage. A drunken crowd of carol singers is portrayed by an Easter carol in canon at two pitch centres, (figs. 11, 40) aptly conveying a quality of time skewed by dense confusion of mind and a gravitational pull to the earth: it anticipates a more heavily drawn passage in *Le Sacre du Printemps* (fig. 53).

A tritone transports us from this very “here and now” world of events unfolding at a different pace and with contrasting pitch collections, to the chromatic sound world of the magic trick (*tour de passe-passe*), whose “sonorous magic” so impressed Debussy. It is but a pale contrast to the subsequent temporal experience of *Petrushka*’s soul however, for it is constructed to negate depth and forward movement. Stravinsky imitates Debussy’s brief, repeated, non-directional, non-developing motifs to evoke the Charlatan’s deceiving gestures, his magic illusion and his occult suspension of natural laws. Here the melodic shapes are fragmented and contrasts of register and timbre are minimal, with many muted glissandi and harmonics. In the 1947 version, Stravinsky refined the web of sound, making it even more homogeneous and transparent, by reducing two harps to one, omitting the rich high register of the bassoons, thinning the lower strings, removing the resonant depth of the bell notes, and replacing some scoring for harp and celeste by introducing a piano. The music is magical, but static and lacking in depth, for the Charlatan “does not hear the melodies in *Petrushka*’s heart or see the pictures in his soul”. (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 200)

The fourth quality of time, within the stage *on* the stage, is created in the scene between *Petrushka*, the Moor and Ballerina, which is directed at the audience. The forward flow of music for *Petrushka* is spasmodic and irregular, dominated by the flux of his emotions: he is not the usual comical bully, but a brooding puppet, identified with the powerful feelings of the Romantic musician or poet. He has been digging a hole to escape: the tritone now expresses the complexity of *Petrushka*’s feelings, the clarinet arpeggios juxtapose the harmonic planes of C and F sharp, ensuring the maximum possible dissonance of overtones. His angular movements are set to irregular rhythms, fluctuations in density of texture, contrasting timbres and interval dissonances that make it harder to make sense of its aural patterns, drawing us into

Petrushka's inner world and ever further from the clock-time of the fair. In contrast, the music of the brutal Moor and the heartless Ballerina proceeds with unwavering, insensitive regularity of tempo in the "here and now". The Moor's sinister self-preoccupation is communicated by his slow-forming phrases around five notes, the shallow personality of the Ballerina revealed by her simple arpeggiated patterning and Barbary-organ style accompaniment. Stravinsky *separates* their dances in the Waltz, setting 2/4 against 3/4 and sharply differentiating their style, register and timbre, emphasising their lack of meaningful contact with each other.

Just as Petrushka's two harmonic planes were conceived as an insult to the public, so the dialogue for two trumpets in two keys in the final scene shows that his ghost – the real Petrushka, with a soul – is thumbing his nose at the Magician and is still insulting the public. Here, Stravinsky contrasts two temporal realities, the worldly and the spiritual. As Petrushka lies dying, the bright timbres of piccolo, flute and clarinet separate his new and intensely vibrant temporal/timeless experience from the now far-distant activity of the fairground. The woodwind timbres project flashes of light against the tremolo figures of a three-tiered haze of harmonics in the lower strings. Four aspects of Petrushka's life are recalled by a nostalgic phrase on the clarinet, the warmth and simplicity of a solo violin and the wistfulness of the bassoon against high chromatic tremolo figures falling in the violins, followed by a glimpse of his "angst" for low piccolo: through his memory, time past is revisited.

The arrival of the policeman and Magician to repetitious and angular music at fast walking speed, brings us abruptly back to clock-time. Three more events of Petrushka's life are recalled: the magic trick motif, his first exit from his cell, and the fairground bustle, now muted and drawn out in triplet quavers. When the oboes, *cor anglais* and horns slow this figure to duplets a tone higher and the lower strings anchor it there, the sense is both of a widening musical space and of an even more intense present moment. As Petrushka is trailed towards the little theatre, the heightened temporal experience of his soul is set apart by the bright fortissimo "vivo" of the two muted trumpets (in two keys as before), against the muted quaver movement which continues to undulate far below him. The final pizzicato notes, a resonant tritone, affirm his continued existence. In 1959 Stravinsky remarked: "I was, and am, more proud of these last pages than of anything else in the score...." (Stravinsky & Craft 1981: 137)

### **Time qualities in *Zvezdoliki***

It was perhaps Stravinsky's success at these spatial-temporal experiments with movement and timbre in *Petrushka* that led him to set a poem by Bal-mont with an explicitly spiritual context of a soul's journey along a path into the desert to salvation. Stravinsky's setting creates an otherworldly experience of a place in the heavens where time and motion is slowed or even negated. Stravinsky later described *Zvezdoliki*, composed in 1911, as in one sense, his most "radical" and difficult composition (Stravinsky 1979: 51). He prepared himself perhaps, by listening to a great deal of Debussy and Scriabin at this time. Debussy, to whom the work was dedicated, was disconcerted by its musical idiom, yet clearly felt its strange power to evoke extra-terrestrial sensations. After playing the work with Stravinsky simply in piano duet form, he wrote to him, that it was "probably Plato's harmony of the eternal spheres", being "a cantata for planets" whose performance on earth "would be lost in the abyss" (Stravinsky 1979: 51). Although Stravinsky described the poem as obscure as poetry and as mysticism, he found the sound of the words "good" for creating resonant timbres on vowels, and contrasting textures. A great number of spiritual verses preserved among the Old Believers are about the end of the world and flight into the "desert". To move away thus from the world's temptations was the way to find salvation and eternal life.

The three-note motto which heads the work may well be a reference to the octatonic scale used by the Old Believers, and its function to western ears as part of the dominant seventh which moves towards resolution is always negated by Stravinsky's harmonic settings of it throughout the work. The immense distance to the "King of the Stars" is created by a dense homophonic description of his shining face and sparkling eyes by the all-male choir, moving flexibly against a high, pianissimo but reverberating tremolo in the strings at the opposite ends of the timbral and textural spectra. After the fifth bar, the pace of change begins to accelerate towards a huge expansion of register at the seventh bar. At the description of his robes, the rate of harmonic change increases from 3:2 to 4:3 with additional suspensions, rising chromatically in pitch towards a full textured account of the wild thunder and lightning flashes which surround him. At the spiritual climax (figure 7), the sculptured vowel sounds and tensioned movements are halted and stilled at a very wide pitch register of more than five octaves. He emphasises the significant nature of this arrival by setting the chorus in simple, bleak homophonic octaves. The crucial question, "Do you keep the Word?" is voiced against a penetrating chord of C in the orchestra, that has both the major and minor third, as if from outside the world of time. The harvest at the end of the age is ready, and the chilling and timeless profundity of the archaic biblical words used here are framed by densely chromatic orchestrations of the initial three-note motif, "*tranquillo e maestoso*". In the final sections, we withdraw into the desert as the density of the three-note motif settings melts away at a stately pace, in wide-pitched

tremolos. A final orchestral statement of the motif elongated at half-speed to spread across six octaves evokes the starry path stretching into the desert and Eternity.

In *Petrushka* and *Zvezdoliki* Stravinsky experiments with combining musical techniques of both East and West to create great spatial depth and distance, and extended temporalities. His belief in the power of music to express spiritual insights arose not only from his spiritual nature but also his interest in the spirituality of his native Russia as expressed in its music both sacred and secular. The Apaches quickly saw him as the natural heir to the Russian composers they admired, particularly Borodin and Musorgsky, who had captured the “natural” musical style of the Russian people. His musical depictions of spiritual experience in the liberation of *Petrushka*’s soul and the vast self-denying celestial wastes of *Zvezdoliki* draw on the very disparate creative principles of Western and Russian tonalities and melody and phrase construction, but bring them together in a collision of cultures that was quite new and very radical.

### **Time qualities in “Three Japanese Lyrics”**

Just as he was putting the finishing touches to the orchestration of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, with its accumulation of raw power, Stravinsky was attracted in quite the opposite direction, to explore the minimal, ambiguous time world of Japanese poetry and woodblock prints. “Le Japonisme”, an interest in the arts and culture of Japan, had become very fashionable in Western Europe, but Stravinsky’s interest was particularly encouraged by his friendship with Maurice Delage, a business man who had links with Japan. Delage was a fellow member of the “Apaches”, and became the dedicatee of the first of the three Lyrics.

In the summer of 1912, Stravinsky had read a little anthology of Japanese lyrics – short poems of a few lines each, selected from the old poets. The impression which they had made on him was exactly like that made by Japanese paintings and engravings. He remarked that “*the graphic solution of problems of perspective and space shown by their art incited me to find something analogous in music*”. (Stravinsky 1975: 45)

Later, during a visit to Japan in 1959, Stravinsky revealed to an interviewer that he was attracted at that time by Japanese woodblock prints, *a two dimensional art without any sense of solidity*. Having also discovered this two-dimensional nature in some Russian translations of poetry, he “*had attempted to express it*” in his music (Stravinsky 1959). The Japanese poems and prints in his possession were “two dimensional” in nature and lacking in solidity, but Stravinsky was attracted to finding the musical equivalent to the temporalities that he found there, that were delicate, ambiguous and elusive.

The art of waka poetry, the Japanese lyrics of Stravinsky's anthology, is the conscious art of "poem-making". The themes of waka poetry were varied, but their content was tightly limited and structured within 31 syllables, with an upper phrase of 5 + 7 + 5 syllables, and a lower phrase of 7 + 7 syllables. There was no strict concept of "line" and rhyme was considered to be a fault, but the recurrence of similar sounding syllables could set up memorable rhythms within its very concise structure. The words of waka poems were carefully chosen and placed with great regard to the total effect. Poems were linked across generations by reference words (*utamakura*), allusion and intertextuality, so that words can have more than one meaning, adding depth to their associations. Emotions from the past were often updated in the present: in the first part, for example, the poet may refer to a geographical place with a poetic tradition, and in the second part imbue it with a new emotion. Or the movement may be to a new symbolism, with reference to the meaningful re-appearance of a significant object. The most admired poems thus embody an implicit ambiguity, either in subject or outcome, creating a mood of refinement and elegance. (Kamens 1997: 23-62)

The two dimensional effect of this poetic form often arises in large part from the juxtaposition of two temporalities and the *movement* between them, which leaves us in a delicate, temporally ambiguous location: the effect is of non-solidity and spatial-temporal open-endedness. To construct the musical analogy of this two-dimensional effect, Stravinsky selected three poems, each with a different perspective on the subject of Spring, a favourite subject of waka poetry. Each poem juxtaposes two images to create temporal ambiguity: the first tells of snow coming to cover white spring flowers, the second, the first rushes of the thawing ice floes as an image of spring flowers, and the third, the confusion of distant white clouds with cherry blossom. There is even a *progression* in temporal ambiguity between the three songs, passing from doubt about the arrival of Spring in the first song, to vivid "here and now" confirmation of its arrival in the second, to the timeless symbolism of cherry blossom in the third.

In the first place, he begins to imitate the two-dimensionality of the text by *contrasting the movement styles of the two streams of sound, the vocal and the instrumental*. The vocal line represents the first flowers of spring in all three songs. This solo soprano line has a consistent style, always setting one syllable to one quaver and patterning pairs of pitches the interval of a third apart. In the setting of the texts, Stravinsky spoke of "succeeding by a metrical and rhythmic process" for "nothing could have lent itself better to this than the Russian version of the Japanese poems, owing to the well-known fact that Russian verse allows the tonic accent only" (Stravinsky 1975: 45). To ensure that the temporal quality of each song is created first and foremost by the rhythmic flow of the *music*, Stravinsky reduced the power of the literal meaning of the words (in their Russian translation) by eliminating all accentuation:

he shifted all the “long” syllables onto musical “short” beats, *so as to achieve the linear perspective of Japanese declamation* (Taruskin 1987: 170-171). The vocal part also evokes the syllabic proportions of waka poetry and its 5:7 rhythmic units, and their recurring resonances. Firstly, the lengths of the fragmented vocal phrases, and the number of pitches in successive phrases stand in ratios such as 5:3, 6:4, or 8:6. Secondly, Stravinsky imitates the recurring sounds of Japanese syllables by setting the text to “circular” motifs in Russian folk-song style. He captures the haunting effect of the original Japanese poem by placing resonant syllables on pitches which recur at different points of the motif. In stark contrast to the cumulative power of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, Stravinsky creates three delicate images which embody both structure and ambiguity.

Stravinsky likened the two dimensional effect of waka poetry to that of the Japanese prints which he owned. A photograph of Stravinsky in his living room at home in Oustilug in 1912 shows four Japanese prints hung vertically on the left hand side of the wall behind him (Stravinsky 1975: Plate 30). The top print is “Festival of Lanterns on Temma Bridge in Settsu Province” by Katsukisha Hokusai. The scene is composed of rhythmic lines within a two-dimensional framework, and is harmonious but unreal, even unstable in its perspectives. The rhythmic lines of the bridge, boats and river lead the eye somewhere *outside* the picture: the encompassing of its rhythms expands our sense of space, creating an effect of open-endedness, even instability. There is a temporal effect too: the print captures a single point in time in the long and rich history of the location, yet at the same time curiously extends our sense of a temporal continuum into the future.

In *Three Japanese Lyrics* Stravinsky achieves the elusive spatio-temporal effect of the waka poem and the Japanese print *by juxtaposing two streams of rhythmic movement that do not meet or relate*. The timbre of the vocal line always stands out in bright timbral contrast to that of the soft, muted group of solo instruments. Further, he imitates their two-dimensionality by structuring his two rhythmic lines so that their actions *against* each other are analogous to the movement of the waka text and the open rhythmic perspectives of the woodblock print.

The two streams of sound which create each song are to be heard separately, but held in tension against one another as they unfold. The fragmentation of the vocal line makes a direct contrast with the continuous instrumental line and holds it discrete and distinct. The pace of each line of motion remains constant and distinctive in itself, but each *progresses against the other in a way analogous to that of the text*. Together, they create an open-ended, two-dimensional experience that has both delicacy and temporal depth: the effect is of a hybrid, elusive temporality. As with the innovative rhythmic combina-

tions of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, the juxtaposition of independent, asymmetrical rhythmic streams creates temporalities that are quite new in Western music.

The poem of the first song is by Yamabe no Akahito:

*To one I love  
[I] want to show  
plum blossoms on the plum tree  
[They] cannot be identified one from the other  
because the snow fell<sup>230</sup>*

In this song we move from the thought of showing a loved one the spring flowers, to snow falling to cover them: winter has not yet given way to spring. The fragmented soprano part patterning six pitches is heard against the continuous instrumental parts patterning all twelve semitones, in similar quaver movement. As the instrumental stream expands higher and lower to surround the vocal “flowers” it moves with a more marked pulse, like snow falling.

The poem of the second song is by Masazumi Miyamoto:

*By the mountain-valley wind  
of melting ice  
through every crack  
overflowing waves are  
first blossoms of Spring*

The instrumental layer represents the wind whistling through the valley with circular figures around a central *sul ponte* D sharp. Out of this movement the fragmented thirds of the vocal part emerge and unfold at a stately pace evoking the appearance of spring flowers.

The poem of the third song is by Ki no Tsurayuki:

*Cherry blossom  
it looks like they are in bloom  
between the mountains  
white clouds can be seen*

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<sup>230</sup> I give a “spare” word-for-word translation to evoke the elusive temporality of the original poem, rather than the looser translation that would be used if the song were to be sung in English.

Various comparisons of cherry blossom to white clouds appear in at least five of Tsurayuki's poems. The cherry tree is the national tree of Japan and it held an almost mystical position in the waka tradition, for from its origin as a symbol of unity and solidarity among the people, it became an image of shade and peace and its full-blown blossom a sign of Man's destiny or immortality. This song contrasts the small intervals of the short vocal phrases against the large, flexible intervals of the four bar instrumental variations. They join in legato style for four bars only, to celebrate the fullness of the blossom and the season of spring. The song – and the set of songs – is sealed by a diminution of time values.

### **Time qualities in *Le Sacre du Printemps***

Stravinsky's exploration of ways to express new temporal experiences in music, from clock-time to the psychological and spiritual, from the cosmic to the minimal and elusive, reached a dramatic climax in *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

Stravinsky's vision of a ritual self-sacrifice among the ancient Slavs seems not to have been inspired by any conscious technical theories but to have come directly from his sub-conscious: he described himself as the *vessel* through which the work passed. "I heard", he said, "and I wrote what I heard" (Stravinsky & Craft 1981: 147-8). It was in recalling that period of his life just before the outbreak of War in 1914, and his patriotic feelings for Russian folk poems, that he later observed that "the phenomenon of music is given to us with the sole purpose of establishing an order in things, including, and particularly, the coordination between *man* and *time*. To be put into practice, its indispensable and single requirement is construction" (Stravinsky 1975: 54). His belief in the necessity of construction to coordinate man and time, already formed by 1913, can be traced in its first purposeful form from about 1910 onwards, in his juxtaposition of timbrally-contrasted layers of sound to interact to spatial-temporal effect. In the context of contemporary thought, the *maturing* of this creative philosophy in *Le Sacre du Printemps*, may be seen as a sudden eruption from Stravinsky's subconscious of a series of increasingly complex and "self-organising" musical movements that mirror a much discussed contemporary topic: the *relative* relationship of motion and time.

Commissioned by Serge Diaghilev for the Ballets Russes in Paris, and premièred on the 29th May 1913, Stravinsky's re-presentation of the temporalities of the solemn pagan rite in which sage elders, seated in a circle watched a young girl dance herself to death, took the public by storm. The conductor recalled that everything that could be thrown at the orchestra, *was*, but that they just went on playing. To the general public, the subject matter appeared, perhaps, to be threateningly unfamiliar and "primitive". For the choreodrama of the ballet, Stravinsky had approached Nicholas Roerich, a painter specialising in

pagan subjects “who knew the secret of our ancestors’ close feeling for the earth” and could represent in the costumes and set design pictures of “earthly joy and celestial triumph, as understood by the Slavs”. (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 77)

The ballet is in two scenes: the first, “L’Adoration de la Terre” depicts the Slavs’ closeness to the earth as they celebrate the rhythms of Nature, its cycles of return and the eternal force which sustains it. We see the ritual dances and games of young girls, the divining of the future by a very old woman, a game of seduction and the entrance of the oldest and wisest man of the village to imprint a sacred kiss on the earth. The second scene, “Le Sacrifice”, sets the scene for “celestial triumph” and builds in power towards the ritual offering of human life. As night falls, young virgins perform circular dances on the sacred hill and choose the victim that they will honour. She will dance herself to death before the elders clad in bearskins – the ancient Slavs believing the bear to be man’s ancestor. The choreography was by the newly-discovered dancer Vaslav Nijinsky, who conceived the ballet as de-centralised, with each of the forty seven dancers as a soloist with an individual part (Hodson 2008). The choreography was described, initially at least, by Stravinsky, as of the “utmost importance”, in that it provides an additional layer of complexity to contribute to each quality of temporality. The dialogue that is being carried out through varied temporal qualities in sound is reinforced *visually* by the physical gestures and circular patterns of the dancers on the stage, which have been designed either to synchronise or counterpoint patterns in the music.

Stravinsky seems to have constructed his dialogue of temporalities, from the time of “Earthly Joy” to the sacred time of “Celestial Triumph”, quite instinctively. In Bergsonian terms, Stravinsky’s organisation of the movement of both rhythm and pitch builds a process of “being” and “becoming”, matter taking on the movement of the spirit, in “a single endless dialogue, an inconceivable conversation” (Grainger 1974: 90-91). This conversation, expressing the growth of power in *Le Sacre du Printemps* is however, crafted with four clear types of movement which are elaborated upon, to vary our depth of temporal experience. Paradoxically their succession is very clear-cut, and they emerge from each other in blocks of dialogue from the “clock-time” of the work’s Introduction. I have called these four types of motion simply A, B, C, D. Each type of movement is uniquely distinctive in its construction and quality, but in dialogue they bridge these earthly and heavenly qualities by a “self-organising” process in which each level gives rise to the next, *a process quite new in music at this time*. As each temporal level emerges from the previous level, it “gives substance, and therefore stability, to the category of the present”, leading us seamlessly through a spectrum of temporal experiences (Stravinsky 1975: 54). Stravinsky achieves these changes of temporal level *by a change in the musical elements that are dominant*. This process heightens the

layering and recessing of juxtaposed streams of sound and increases the complexity of their interactions and non-interactions.

**Movement Type A** begins the work. It is the movement in the “here and now” of clock-time, of living creatures and their potential for growth and becoming. In the Prelude to Part One, Stravinsky evokes “the awakening of nature, the scratching, gnawing, wiggling of birds and beasts” (Stravinsky & Craft 1981: 141), and the “terror... at secret forces... that can grow and develop infinitely” (Stravinsky 1913). Individual orchestral instruments develop their solo musical lines independently, with contrasting pitch collections, and *in the “rhythmic manners” of their own “umwelt”, or time scale*. The individual lines (beginning with the haunting high register of the bassoon) are not at all blended but are held clearly distinct from each other by highly contrasting timbres.

**Movement Type B** makes its first dramatic appearance at the beginning of “Les Augures Printaniers”. It is forged from the sudden and dramatic gathering of the disparate elements of Movement A into a dense linear force. As the curtain rises on the dances of the young girls we are shocked by the sudden concentration of energy and directed linearity that now brings massive forward propulsion. All the individual elements of movement A, rhythms, pitch collections, registers, dynamics, timbres and textures, are subsumed into a single, unanimous dynamism constructed of one or more distinctive strata unified by a single pitch collection and pitch centre. The emergent temporality is made still more immediate and powerful by the clash of non-metrical accents against the metrical pulse.

**Movement Type C** begins to emerge from this collective life force just nine bars later at figure 14. Power and momentum now diversifies into separately defined interacting strata of a circular kind, whose revolving rhythms and melodic motifs mirror the circular dance formations of the ancient Slavs. The skilfully designed juxtapositions of these circular motifs and melodies, in varying number, graduate the depth of time that we experience, and begin the long expansion of musical space and time towards the experience of “celestial triumph”. They draw us away from a focussed “now” into the absorbing time of ritual. All dynamic force is now becalmed: the angular figures of Movement B give way to short ostinato motifs and the conflict between metre and accents collapses into synchronised regularity. The repeating Khorovod themes of motion C are largely contained within a range of four or five pitches. Interacting strata of movements are held distinct by heightened contrasts of timbre, and recessed by texture and dynamic. The extent to which we experience an expansion of musical space and a deepening of experiential time depends on the degree to which these distinct strata are synchronised, are rhythmically regular and harmonically related, or, by contrast, are irregular and juxtaposed to create tension. The most complex juxtaposition of irregular circular

strata occurs at figure 64 just before the procession of the Sage: a long irregular repeating theme for trombones is pitted against a circular repeating theme for woodwind and strings and a short repeating motif for horns, and finally a strident trumpet motif. The degree of regularity or irregularity between strata creates variable densities within Motion C and hence fluctuating temporalities along a spectrum from the regular and peaceful, to the irregular and disturbing.

**Movement Type D** is first heard in the Introduction to Part Two, “Le Sacrifice”. It expands the musical space and time of the work to its furthest extent as a context for the following ritual. Here, the brooding context of great musical space and depth of time are created by just two streams of contrasting movement. At the macro level, an irregular and vastly extended recall of a Khorovod melody is heard intermittently in changing metres and timbres: at the micro level drifts of quavers are repeated regularly in two bar phrases. Their highly contrasted rates of unfolding evoke a state of static succession, of great space and “other-worldliness”. The effect is maximised by a very wide pitch range, highly contrasted dynamics, transparent textures, harmonics for stringed instruments and muted wind and brass tones.

CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPORALITIES IN *LE SACRE*

<i>Part One</i>	<i>Movement Type</i>	<i>Figure</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Introduction	A		Preview of C at fig. 12+3
Augurs of Spring	B	13	0-11 dissonance
	C	14	3 regular circular strata: accompaniment figures
	B	14+4	
	B/C	15	
	C	16	3 regular circular strata: emergent melodic motif
	B	18	
Ritual of Abduction	C	22	Fluctuates between 1&4 strata: emergent melody fig 25, new irregular melodic stratum 28+4
	B	37	
Spring Rounds	C	48	1-4 strata: lapidary rhythms, new harmonic density fig. 53
	B	54	
	C	56	waiting
Ritual of Rival Tribes	B	57	
	C	61	2 regular circular strata
	B	62	
	C	64	2 circular strata, 1 irregular (Sage)
The Sage		65+2	Irregular 3rd stratum emerges
		71+1	waiting: potential
Dance of the Earth	B	72	

<i>Part Two</i>	<i>Movement Type</i>	<i>Figure</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Introduction	D	79	
	C	84+3	2 strata: brooding development
Mystic Circles of Young Girls	C	91	Circular Khorovod / accomp. figs of fluctuating density: potential
		103	'Orchestral haemorrhage'
Glorification of the Chosen One	B	104	
Evocation of the Ancestors	B	121	
Ritual Action of the Ancestors	C	129	2 strata intertwined
	C	132	3 strata recessed, developed
	B	135	Gestural
	C	138	recessed strata: ancestors circling
	C	139	2 strata, fig.129 modified
Sacrificial Dance	B	142	
	C	174	fragmented strata: halts momentum
	B	180	resumes momentum
	C	181	3 strata
	B	186	

Whereas the dominant characteristic of Movement A was the *individual* “*um-weld*” of each creature, that of Movement B was *collective rhythmic* force, and that of Movement C was *interacting circular strata*, the foremost musical element of Movement D is that of *timbre clarifying spatial distance*. Stravinsky remarked that “though the mediumising of sound levels does only negligible damage to some music, it deprives *The Rite* of one of its dimensions...” (Stravinsky & Craft 1982: 90). The clarification of sound levels, and hence the definition of streams of movement, make the development of variable densities clearly audible. *Le Sacre du Printemps* is largely a dialogue between Movement Types B and C set in the contexts of the introductory movements of Movement Types A and D. The explosions of linear energy which we hear in Movement B both drive the ritual forward and promote the emergence of fragments of “ritual” time which are created in varying qualities of Movement C.

“The endless dialogue and inconceivable conversation” of *Le Sacre du Printemps* is constructed from the interplay of Movement type B, which varies the force and pace of our *forward* momentum, and Movement type C, which modulates the *depth* of time that we experience as the atmosphere of the ritual takes effect. This dialogue of temporal densities embodies the notion of self-sacrifice for the regeneration of the earth and the good of the community which is brought about in the time of Motion C, but which is made effective through the raw energy of Motion B. These varying movements of layers of sound are supported by pitch collections of varying clarity: Stravinsky’s construction of this dialogue of variable densities and temporalities also involves the careful selection of pitch networks appropriate to the density of the time quality to be created. Allen Forte, Pieter van den Toorn and others have shown how Stravinsky fluctuates between diatonic, “8-note”, octatonic and chromatic pitch collections, as the needs of clarity or attraction to a pitch centre require (Forte 1978; van den Toorn 1986: 130). The play of expansion and contraction within supersets and subsets and between diatonic, 8-note, octatonic and chromatic contexts is a strong contributory factor to the direction, pace, and quality of each of these four types of movement, and transitions from one type to another are important to its creation of a living organism.

The power of *Le Sacre du Printemps* lies in the fact that we “live through it”, as its qualities of time unfold and fluctuate in depth like our everyday consciousness. The function of a ritual, is not only to create a structure that may be entered into and lived through, but to enable by *cumulative* activity, new realms of experience, both individual and collective, which are not ordinarily accessible. The form-building process of “becoming” heard in the music is reinforced visually by the human gestures on stage, and in the absence of a detailed “story”, we connect its “choreographic succession” into a continuous entity. Stravinsky even marked directions in the score wherever gestural patterns on stage are to coincide or counterpoint the rhythmic structure of the music. He referred in his *Montjoie* article of May 1913, to the dynamism of Nature’s endless becoming and the potential of the musical substance of *Le Sacre du Printemps* to renew itself ceaselessly, its capacity for “imitating nature in its way of operating”<sup>231</sup> (Stravinsky 1913). Working hard at rehearsals in February 1913, Nijinsky described the work as “really the soul of Nature expressed by movement to music.... It will be danced only by the corps de ballet, for it is a thing of concrete masses, not of individual effects” (Stravinsky & Craft 1979: 95). “Play *Le Sacre*”, wrote Stravinsky to Andrei Rimsky-Korsakov, “I am certain that in time *you will begin to feel it....*” (Stravinsky &

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<sup>231</sup> On the 29th May 1913, Stravinsky published an article: “Ce que j’ai voulu exprimer dans *Le Sacre du Printemps*”, in the journal *Montjoie*. Writing, the following August, to amend the English translation of this article, about to be published in *Muzyka*, Stravinsky’s language reflects Bergsonian concepts of “becoming” and dynamic substance, speaking of a force concealed within the music, its turbulent power and the growing and swelling of its musical substance.

Craft 1979: 25). Stravinsky later described *Le Sacre du Printemps* as “architectonic”, “a series of rhythmic mass movements of the greatest simplicity which would have an instantaneous effect on the audience...” (Stravinsky 1975: 48). It was a work in which he pushed himself a step further towards “a vast abstraction”.

One hundred years on, several thoughts present themselves about the historical significance of *Le Sacre du Printemps* and the disturbance it caused, in relation to the awareness of time and temporalities.

Firstly, the work re-presents a pre-historic ritual which expresses the dependency of a community on a return to sources for the regeneration of Creation, for a repetition of that outpouring of energy, life and fecundity which occurred at the Creation of the world. It leads to the breakthrough of the sacred or “supernatural” into the earthly world and brings men into relation with unseen powers. Archaic man attached importance to the value of *collective* return as a spiritual activity, for the healing of the community and for affirming social belonging and solidarity. Uniting the physical, mental and emotional aspects of a human being in a ritual, or act of corporate symbolism dealing with *time*, has a powerful effect at a deeper level of the human psyche than that of the emotions or intellect alone. In great contrast to prevailing attitudes in society, *Le Sacre du Printemps* was composed and first performed in the troubled years leading to World War One, a time when, through the work of Freud, the emphasis was on regeneration and healing for the *individual*, rather than the community, brought about by a return to origins (or childhood) through psycho-analysis.

Secondly, and reinforcing this troubled aspect, we see the elders dressed in bear-skins enacting the ancestors of Man. The first performances followed in the aftermath of the recent outrage caused by Darwin’s ideas on Evolution and the shock of having to both recognise our close genetic links with the apes and to revise our estimate of the age of the earth as considerably older than we had believed from our former understanding of the Bible.

Thirdly, as we look back at *Le Sacre* in the light of recent neuroscience discoveries, we are beginning to understand how the work’s changing qualities of time can activate changing centres of attention in the brain. In Motion A the brain selects and groups overtones together in order to recognise *each* quality of timbre and keep each one separate. The independently unfolding instrumental lines of Motion A in the Introduction to Part One exploit the early functions of the auditory system and mimic the effect of hearing a multitude of individual creatures living close to the earth, in a very focussed “here and now”. The forceful, highly directed energy of Motion B stimulates the primary auditory areas of both temporal lobes, but particularly activates the left temporal lobe as *rhythmic* energy takes over as the predominant element. The sudden homogeneity of timbres, dynamics and textures emphasises its for-

ward momentum, while the subsequent conflict between metre and accents increases its power: metre and accents are processed by neurally separate areas of the left temporal lobe that are in strong competition with one another. This strong rhythmic pulse stimulates the parts of the brain concerned with *timing*, not only the substantia nigra and basal ganglia, but also the cerebellum, the oldest part of the brain. As they track the beat, timing and coordination of movements on stage, connections are made from these areas to the amygdala, frontal lobes, and other emotion processing areas.

With Movement types C and D, our attention shifts to the foreground elements of timbre and contour and the relationships between the movements of the distinct musical layers. These elements engage the processes of the right temporal lobe, and also neighbouring parietal lobe areas concerned with spatial movement. As our absorption in the timbral elements and spatial relationships that are of interest to the right temporal lobe increases, so our spatial sense is enlarged and our awareness of clock-time decreases towards an experience of timelessness.

After the sensuously Romantic indulgences of the late 19th century, the early 20th century saw Stravinsky pioneering a new awareness that music is essentially a temporal art, an art that can both bring us into a healing awareness of the changing temporalities of our existence and give us a glimpse of a timelessness that is beyond it. From *Petrushka* to *Le Sacre du Printemps*, Stravinsky begins to develop techniques for embodying his insights with respect to music and its relationship with time, and towards building a musical unity, based on a *dynamic* passage through time, that will echo in the soul. He described himself, not as a revolutionary, but rather as a “turning-around” point in the history of music, recapturing music’s ability to express our spiritual nature and our relationship with a creative power over and beyond ourselves.

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**PRZYBYSZ**





## Music and emotions

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### Abstract

This paper discusses contemporary empirical approaches to the topic of music and emotions that are conducted at the intersection of psychology, neuroscience and musicology. I show that within this interdisciplinary programme a number of general issues were posed that are not that distant from the questions asked by the classical authors such as Stravinsky and Hanslick. The main purpose of the paper is to show that there are three areas of cognitive and behavioural activity of the listener and the respective types of musical emotions: embodied emotions, cognitive emotions, as well as associative and contextual emotions.

**Keywords:** music and emotion; emotional response to music; absolutist vs. referentialist views of musical meaning; psychology of music; Stravinsky.

### Introduction

The aim of the present article is to take a look at contemporary research on music and emotions that is conducted at the intersection of psychology, neuroscience and musicology. This kind of research assumes that there exists a close relationship between music and the sphere of emotions, and that the range of body's affective and emotional responses to a musical stimulus stretches from physiological and behavioural reactions to subtle aesthetic feelings. Unfortunately, the nature of this relationship, the various functions thereof (e.g. the role of musical emotions in the evolution of the species), as well as the neuronal basis and mechanisms thereof remain far from recognised and conclusively explained. Nonetheless, for the time being it is still possible to point towards the main areas of human cognitive and behavioural activity in which musical emotions become apparent. For this reason, in the present paper I try to differentiate between various types of musical emotions, e.g. affects connected with the excitation of the body, cognitive emotions and

emotions connected with the context of listening to the music. Obviously, a further step should be to point out to specific mechanisms that are responsible for the appearance of musical emotions in the aforementioned areas.

The article is comprised of four parts. In the first part I reconstruct critical arguments against emotionalism in music as formulated by Igor Stravinsky. I believe that they constitute a good starting point for considering the relationship between music and the emotional spheres, especially in the context of differentiating between “everyday emotions” and “aesthetic emotions”. In the second part I show that within the programme of empirical interdisciplinary research into musical emotions a number of general issues were posed, pertaining e.g. to whether musical emotions are utilitarian, everyday emotions, or whether they have an aesthetic character; whether we experience them, or only perceive the emotional content of a piece, and whether the music itself or the extra-musical context are the reason behind emotions - issues that are not that distant from the questions asked by the classical authors such as Stravinsky and Hanslick. In the third part I refer to the results of psychological, physiological and neuroscientific research which show that musical emotions are not merely illusions, but real phenomena, which can be studied effectively with the use of empirical methods. Finally, in the fourth part I suggest differentiating between three areas of cognitive and behavioural activity of the listener and the respective types of musical emotions: embodied emotions, cognitive emotions, as well as associative and contextual emotions.

### **1. The essence of music and its emotive functions. Stravinsky on emotions induced by music**

Reflections on emotions expressed and induced by music occupy an important place in the European musical culture. It is mainly due to the unremitting disputes between the authors who perceived music as a closed formal structure and those for whom the meaning of music was identical with stirring an emotional response (cf. Dahlhaus & Eggebrecht 1992: 35-43)<sup>232</sup>. The critics of music being strongly associated with emotions referred, among others, to the specificity of the musical piece itself - an orderly structure of sounds that refer only to other elements of the same structure. The task of music understood in this manner is not to invoke nice and pleasant feelings, but to prompt the listener to follow the course of the music with the senses and intellect, and hence to experience it aesthetically.

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<sup>232</sup> According to Hans Eggebrecht, European music is permeated by tension - revealing itself with historically changing intensity - between two opposite, although, at the same time, constitutive notions: “emotion” and *mathesis*, cf. Dahlhaus & Eggebrecht (1992: 42)

Thus, the postulate not to connect music with emotions results directly from the philosophical view on the nature (essence) of music. Due to the fact that music - mostly instrumental music – is something fleeting, abstract and non-visual, the most basic problem of the theory and philosophy of music has become the question whether at all it can “designate, depict, or otherwise communicate referential concepts, images, experiences, and emotional states” (Meyer 1956: 32-33). According to Leonard Meyer, in response to this question there emerged two opposing positions: absolutism (resp. formalism – e.g. Hanslick, Stravinsky) according to which a musical piece is an autonomic piece that refers to itself and defined as a system of intra-musical references<sup>233</sup>, and referentialism, according to which music refers to a broadly understood extra-musical sphere, e.g. events in the world, notions or emotions (cf. Meyer 1956: 1).

According to absolutists, the beauty of music “is not contingent upon, or in need of any subject introduced from without, but that it consists wholly of sounds artistically combined” (Hanslick 1891: 66). There is also a *negative* version of the absolutist approach, the gist of whose criticism is directed against the search for beauty and meaning (designation) of music in the extra-musical sphere, among others, among emotions, moods and feelings that music arouses. In his classical work *The Beautiful in Music* Eduard Hanslick argued that beauty is a basic category of aesthetics in music, while a feeling (an emotion) is only an auxiliary, secondary category. He treats these two categories as separate ones: (a) the aim of beauty is not to arouse feelings, (b) beauty is not influenced by whether someone experiences pleasant feelings, (c) an item may be beautiful even if it does not arouse any feelings in anyone (cf. Hanslick 1891: 18-19)<sup>234</sup>.

Autonomy, specificity and the untranslatable character of musical experience were also emphasised by Igor Stravinsky, who has sometimes been, for this very reason, counted as one of the absolutists<sup>235</sup>. In his aesthetical reflections and comments on his own body of work there appear theses consistent with

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<sup>233</sup> What is the most characteristic for the approach of the absolutists is defining music through referring to an ideal type of a musical piece understood as “pure” instrumental music, “absolute music”. Eduard Hanslick (1903: 47ff) wrote about the exceptional place of instrumental music (as “art alone”) in research on musical meaning). A philosophical and cognitive characteristic of the phenomenon of music alone, unaccompanied by “text, title, subject, program, or plot”, was suggested by Peter Kivy (1990).

<sup>234</sup> Despite this, Hanslick sees the possibility of indirect arousing feelings by beauty (via sensations and imagination), (cf. Hanslick 1891: 19-23, 69).

<sup>235</sup> As it seems, quite rightly so. Stravinsky wrote about people seeking meaning outside music in this way: “They never seem to understand that music as an entity of its own apart from anything that it may suggest to them. In other words, music interests them in so far as it touches on elements outside it while evoking sensations with which they are familiar” (Stravinsky 1936: 256).

the negative version of the absolutist approach that are aimed at excessive emotionality, sentimentalism or expressionism of music:

*For I consider that music is, by its very nature, essentially powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature, etc. . . . Expression has never been an inherent property of music. That is by no means the purpose of its existence. If, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality (Stravinsky 1936: 83-84).*

Stravinsky's attitude towards the relationship between music and emotions is, however, much more complex and multilayered, as it also involves, e.g., the criticism of making use of music in order to arouse everyday life-related emotions and the criticism of treating it as an easy escape route from the everyday life:

*Most people like music because it gives them certain emotions, such as joy, grief, sadness, an image of nature, a subject for daydreams, or still better oblivion from "everyday life." They want a drug, "dope." It matters little whether this way of thinking of music is expressed directly or is wrapped up in a veil of artificial circumlocutions. Music would not be worth much if it were reduced to such an end (Stravinsky 1936: 256).*

Thus, it seems that in order to grasp the complexity of the absolutist critique of emotionalism in music, several constitutive elements have to be distinguished. Therefore, I propose the distinction between: (i) musical anti-expressivism (music is not capable of expressing or rendering individual feelings or the creator's mood); (ii) musical anti-representationalism (music is not capable of presenting or imitating adequately extra-musical phenomena, such as the essence of an emotion or a mood); and (iii) musical anti-emotivism (the task of music is not to arouse in its listeners natural emotions and everyday feelings).

I believe that Stravinsky's (and Hanslick's) approaches to emotions in music are a mixture of thus understood anti-expressivism, anti-representationalism and anti-emotivism, but it is a mixture of uneven proportions that never achieves an ideally fitting shape. While Stravinsky's absolutism makes him reject the excessive role of emotions in music, it is never an absolute rejection. Firstly, resistance towards connecting music and emotions is, in Stravinsky, postulative in character and does not consist in questioning the fact that in real situations music does, after all, express and arouse emotions in people. Stravinsky notices that, but he treats it as an auxiliary, insignificant function of music:

*It is simply an additional attribute which, by tacit and inveterate agreement, we have lent it, thrust upon it, as a label, a convention in short, an aspect which, unconsciously or by force of habit, we have come to confuse with its essential being (Stravinsky 1936: 84).*

Secondly, he is annoyed by it and does not like it when music arouses trivial, everyday feelings and emotions - which are auxiliary from the point of view of the music. However, he allows for and accepts a situation in which music arouses in the audience *unique feelings*. Should these “unique emotions” be treated – as I postulate – as a kind of aesthetic emotions, it will turn out that Stravinsky’s anti-emotivism is not as radical as it may seem. It is aimed at trivial, everyday feelings and emotions, but not at aesthetic emotions. For instance, Stravinsky connects the phenomenon of music with the listener organising sounds in time on an ongoing basis and, thus, experiencing the present in a unique manner. It is an entirely unique experience, as due to cognitive limitations, in normal situations humans are only able to grasp time in the shape of the past or the future (cf. Stravinsky 1936: 84; Stravinsky 1974: 27-37). And it is precisely constructing order and contemplating the order of sounds in time that arouses unique experiences and feelings in a listener.

*It is precisely this construction, this achieved order, which produces in us a unique emotion having nothing in common with our ordinary sensations and our responses to the impressions of daily life. One could not better define the sensation produced by music than by saying that it is identical with that evoked by contemplation of the interplay of architectural forms. Goethe thoroughly understood that when he called architecture petrified music (Stravinsky 1936: 84-85).*

In his subsequent words, the author of the *Symphony of Psalms* leaves no further doubts that he allows for and proposes that music arouses “higher” aesthetic pleasure in the listeners:

*When people have learned to love music for itself, when they listen with other ears, their enjoyment will be of a far higher and more potent order, and they will be able to judge it on a higher plane and realize its intrinsic value (Stravinsky 1936: 256-257).*

To summarise, firstly, the criticism of the role of the presence of emotions in music results directly from Stravinsky’s philosophical absolutist attitude towards the essence of a musical piece. I believe that this shows that for the absolutists the way music is perceived was dependent on the nature (structure) of the musical stimulus. Additionally, they were slightly arbitrary in trying to sharply separate the emotional perception of music from sensual and intellectual cognition thereof. Secondly, the anti-expressivism and anti-representationalism of the author of *The Rite of Spring* does not consist in a radical banishing of emotions out of music, but, rather, it only constitutes a

postulate not to mistake the essence of the musical piece with its auxiliary function that is expressing and representing feelings, moods and other mental states. Thirdly, as it seems, Stravinsky does not entirely reject the postulate that music should arouse feelings in its listener, on the condition, however, that these are pleasures experienced as a result of admiring the internal form of music, e.g. following the musical course, noticing melodic or harmonic tensions between the piece's elements, etc. This suggests that he divides the sphere of musical emotions into two parts - everyday emotions (which are natural) and aesthetic emotions - and he only ascribes the authentic experiencing of beauty in music to the latter.

As we will see further, the echoes of the dilemmas which the musical absolutists faced can be found even in contemporary research on emotions in music, conducted from the perspective of biological science. This suggests, on the one hand, that discussions around the approach of the absolutists are not at all separate from real problems with understanding music, and, on the other, that the field of empiric research on music is not free from profound theoretical problems and philosophical tensions.

## **2. Empirical research on musical emotions – general problems and debatable issues**

In contemporary research on musical emotions conducted at the intersection of cognitive psychology, neuroscience of music and musicology there dominates an empirical and experimental approach. It partly results from rejecting a normative approach that tries to establish by philosophical means what the essence and the main role of music is<sup>236</sup>, and partly from being based on the tradition of biological research on expressing emotions in humans and animals (Darwin 1902, 1988; Ekman 2012), dimensional approach to emotion (Russell 1980) and empirical aesthetics (Berlyne 1971). The classic cognitive approach to musical emotions in musicology is represented in this trend mainly through the strong and unquestioned position of Meyer's work therein (Meyer 1956; cf. Huron 2006).

The researchers are convinced that music fulfils multiple roles and functions - for instance a cognitive, social, therapeutic or aesthetic role - and that these need to be taken into account when answering the question about the affective effect of music on the listener (cf. the articles collected in Juslin & Sloboda 2001 and Juslin & Sloboda 2010). At the same time, the aesthetic function is treated not as a unique one, but as one equal to the others. The commonness

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<sup>236</sup> Philosophical research and reflection on the nature of music and its emotional resonance (mainly in the cognitive and aesthetic dimension) are still being carried out and developed, c.f. e.g. Kivy (1989), Madel (2002), Davies (2003), Scruton (2009), Levinson (2011).

of music and its interference into human life on almost every level forces the researchers to take into account as many musical genres as possible (classical and popular music, instrumental music and singing, film music, etc.) and to take into account a wide array of musical phenomena (e.g. convivial music-making, music that accompanies everyday activities, cf. Sloboda & O'Neil 2001; Sloboda 2010).

One of the aims of such research is an empirical study on how particular elements and features of music (e.g. loudness, high and low pitch, tempo, regular or irregular rhythm, ascending or descending melody, tonality, etc.) and combinations thereof can cause an emotional effect in a listener. They also seek to explain the way in which affective arousal can be modulated by the listener's perceptual and cognitive activity, how the kind and strength of the experienced emotions are influenced by the quality and manner the piece is performed and how the appearance of an affect is influenced by various circumstances that accompany listening to music. It is assumed that the affective influence of a musical stimulus on the recipient's perceiving and emotional system is multi-level and can take place in the layer of physiological, brain, behavioural or psychological arousal (cf. articles collected in Peretz & Zatore 2003, Koelsch 2012).

Closely related to the above is the issue of acquisition of ability to react emotionally to music in children and the influence of brain injuries on affective response to musical stimulus (cf. e.g. Peretz 2001; Trehub 2003). Similarities and differences in reacting to music and related sound phenomena, such as speech, arouse much interest (Patel 2010). The central questions in this research area concern whether music and the emotions it generates are evolutionary adaptations, and if they have a survival value (cf. e.g. Cross 2003).

A research programme ranging so broadly necessarily results in a strong fragmentation of the conducted studies and forces the researchers to utilise various research methods (cf. e.g. Juslin, Liljeström et al. 2010), which, in turn, creates the need to coordinate, integrate and discuss the entirety of results achieved in such diverse fields (cf. Juslin & Sloboda 2010; Arbib 2013). On this occasion, there are revealed problems of a more general nature, which usually remain invisible from the perspective of the experimental researchers. Many of these problems and question marks pertain to issues similar to those that the absolutists would earlier discuss. Below I focus on three such key issues pertaining to the connection between music and emotions.

2.1. *Does music evoke natural basic emotions?* – Are emotions aroused by music similar to basic affects, such as fear, sadness, disgust or joy? And does music and the emotions specific to it perform an adaptive function and somehow aid humans in survival? Or do they perhaps constitute a separate, autonomous category of aesthetic emotions whose importance for survival is likely smaller?

This problem was noticed already by Charles Darwin, who believed that “Music arouses in us various emotions, but not the more terrible ones of horror, fear, rage, etc. It awakens the gentler feelings of tenderness and love, which readily pass into devotion” (Darwin 1902: 735). Does that mean that emotions of this type have nothing to do with experiences that accompany the biological struggle for survival? Darwin himself suggested another solution - he ascribed aesthetic pleasures and emotions with a role in sexual selection. He traced them to the rituals of courtship, competing for a partner and triumph over the adversary (Darwin 1902: 733-737; cf. e.g. Miller 2000). It is also possible that musical emotions fulfil a functional role in social life. Emotions that accompany singsongs, dancing or rites may strengthen social bonds, consolidate a group of people in achieving common goals and thus contribute to its survival and success.

Another possibility is that emotions aroused by listening to music possess a primarily aesthetic value and are not fully authentic, natural life emotions. Accordingly, the publications by Scherer (2004), as well as Zentner, Grandjean and Scherer (2008) distinguish between *utilitarian emotions*, connected to interest and well-being of an individual, and *musical aesthetic emotions*, which have no direct effect on the wellbeing of an individual. These researchers work on the assumption that the standard approach to researching the affective influence of music, consisting in looking for natural basic emotions, is unreliable. In the experiments they conducted Zentner and Scherer aimed to point out those characteristics of emotional and aesthetic experience of music which differentiate this type of experience from the remaining affects. To this effect they used a questionnaire containing a broad selection of emotional descriptors associated with music, including aesthetic ones<sup>237</sup>. In their research, they registered that feelings evoked by music were described with the use of positive adjectives by a vast majority of listeners (they used such words as *relaxed, happy, joyful, dreamy*) and only marginally negative (aggressive, anxious, sorrowful, depressed, angry). Negative emotions such as sadness or fear were more frequently recognised in music, although they did not spread to and “infect” listeners. This may probably be accounted for by the fact that in a typical situation a listener of music experiences relaxation and “getting lost” in the music allows him or her to temporarily separate from worries and

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<sup>237</sup> The so-called Geneva Emotional Musical Scale (GEMS), cf. Zentner, Grandjean & Scherer (2008).

problems of everyday life. Even if the listener experiences, say, sadness, it is not the same sadness as that caused by everyday experiences. It may take on the form of a paradoxical sadness, where the feeling of sadness is combined with admiration for the musical piece, or it may manifest in the form of one of the sadness-like aesthetic emotional categories, such as melancholia. In both cases the feeling of aesthetic sadness ceases to fulfil a role of a typically negative emotion of an aversive character, as evidence by the fact that typically we do not avoid or flee from music that expresses sadness. According to researchers, the terms used by the subjects to describe emotions that accompany listening to music correspond to the nine aesthetic musical emotions: wonder, transcendence, tenderness, nostalgia, peacefulness, power, joyful activation, tension and sadness (Zentner, Grandjean & Scherer 2008: 507; Zentner 2010: 106).

*2.2. Feeling vs. perceiving musical emotions?* – Another controversial issue concerns whether in a given instance music evokes emotions in the listeners, or whether they merely perceive and recognise the emotion expressed in the piece. The answer to this question differentiates between the emotivist and cognitivist approach. According to the former, a musical piece one hears is treated as a stimulus that causes the listener to experience certain emotions. It activates a chain of affective reactions of psychological, physiological or motoric character: the feeling of happiness, relaxation, it eliminates muscle tension or causes the tendency to tap rhythmically. A different aspect of the relation between music and emotions is emphasised if we consider a musical piece to be the expression of the composer's or performer's emotions. The emotions contained by the piece may spread to the listener, but they do not always do so (Konečni 1993: 701-702). Sometimes the listener merely engages in recognising them without succumbing to them. In such a situation, we do not encounter an emotive but a cognitive relation. For instance rather than feeling joy and happiness any time I listen to *Ode to Joy*, I can merely recognise the emotion in it and differentiate between it and other emotions, such as sadness.

According to K. Scherer and V. Konečni, the imprecise distinction between the two aspects of the emotional impact of music leads one to overinterpreting the results of various experiments testing the emotional sensitivity of the listeners. This concerns most of all psychological questionnaire-based research. Only a carefully thought-out and precise construction of such a questionnaire allows for final conclusions to be drawn regarding whether the participants reported their own emotional experiences or the emotions they perceived in the piece of music (cf. Scherer 2004: 239; Konečni 2008: 118ff).

2.3. *What arouses musical emotions: the music itself or the extra-musical context?* – The next difficult question concerns whether it is the course and form of the music that arouses emotions or is it rather occasioned by the circumstances that accompany the listening? This is particularly relevant in all those situations where music constitutes background for other parallel extra-musical events (for instance a mass in church, dancing, marching music, etc.) or when music constitutes the impulse that triggers the intellectual activity of the listener (for instance memory or imagination) directed at the extra-musical sphere. It also shows that the referentialist view broadly linking music to the external world is not without a point.

It can be related to the place in which I listen to music, for instance during a funeral, where “the structure of the musical piece is irrelevant and I feel sadness regardless of the piece’s structure” (Sloboda 1999: 42<sup>238</sup>). Group singing used by football fans at the stadium has an essential goal - to create the feeling of unity with one’s team and demonstrate one’s strength to the opponent. Stadium music is therefore intrinsically directed towards causing emotions related to mobilisation, towards readying one’s organism for action and towards lowering the threshold of aggression. In a situation at the stadium, just as during a funeral or a wedding, the complex structure of a piece of music loses importance and it is ideally reducible to a few simple and widely recognisable musical schemata. In such situations the music is supposed to uphold, stabilise and sometimes reinforce the emotional reaction which is appropriate to a given place and social context. Therefore, it is difficult to describe such emotions as purely musical.

Emotions generated by traces of memory have a similarly context-dependent character. For emotions initiated by traces of memory, what matters is with whom and in what circumstances we heard a musical piece in the past - subsequently, “every time you hear this piece, it touches your hearts because it is music associated with a loved one” (Sloboda 1999: 43<sup>239</sup>). Some feelings, such as nostalgia, are based on a similar contextual-temporal relationship with the past. This feeling may be caused by hearing a song remembered from one’s youth and evoking a chain of memories related to the good days of old.

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<sup>238</sup> Translation EB & NS.

<sup>239</sup> Translation EB & NS.

### **3. Psychological, physiological and neuronal indicators of emotional reactions to music**

Assuming that music is only “vibrations moving through the air” may prompt one to scepticism when it comes to ascribing music with the ability to arouse authentic emotions. However, a strong argument for the realness of musical emotions is that their manifestations can be observed and registered in the same spheres in which basic emotions manifest:

- in the sphere of subjective feelings and experiences (e.g. the feeling of sadness resulting from listening to sad music),
- in the sphere of physiological and behavioural arousal (e.g. changes in pulse, blood pressure, skin conductivity, growth or decline in muscle tension accompanying the experience of emotion, involuntary propensity to tap out the rhythm), and
- in the sphere of neuronal activity (among others, the subcortical centres belonging to the limbic system and the reward system, the paths of dopaminergic activity)

Developmental research on perception and feeling musical emotions have shown that this ability appears quite early in a child’s development and that the ability to discriminate emotions is based on increasingly complex musical indicators grows gradually as the child ages. It is already between the second and the fourth month of their lives that children prefer and connect pleasant feelings with consonant sounds, and unpleasant with dissonant sounds (cf. Trainor, Tsang et al. 2002). Presumably it is around the third and the fourth year of their lives that children master the ability to recognise joyful music, while slightly later - around the sixth year – they are capable of recognising a wider set of emotions possible to express through music, such as sadness, fear or anger (Cunningham & Sterling 1988). The child first masters the ability to identify basic musical emotions, joy or sadness, based on recognising tempo differences (fast, slow), and only later – based on other criteria (e.g. grasping the difference between major vs. minor modes) (cf. Dalla Bella & Peretz et al. 2001).

The abilities developed in childhood decide whether the adults, both those who received musical education and those without it, can quickly and aptly sense and recognise in music the majority of basic emotions and moods, e.g. joy, sadness, peace or threat (cf. e.g. Viellard, Peretz et al. 2008; Mohn, Argstatter et al. 2011). In experimental circumstances recognising musical emotions is possible both in a categorical approach to emotion, when the research subjects are to determine which of the words denoting emotions (“sad”, “happy”, etc.) are most relevant to the given musical fragment, and in a dimensional approach to emotion, when the task would be to assess a musical stimulus on

appropriate scales, e.g. when it comes to the level of arousal it causes and the valence (positive /negative emotions) (cf. Viellard, Peretz et al. 2008; Eerola & Vuoskoski 2011).

There is a certain problem that researchers face in this kinds of studies (that is, ones based on verbal reports), namely the decision whether a given person experienced a given emotion or only recognised it in the musical material. The conducted studies suggest that in the majority of cases when the subjects of the study recognise a given musical emotion, at the same time they share it to some degree (cf. e.g. Juslin & Laukka 2004). It is, however, obvious that there appear situations in which feeling and experiencing an emotion do not coincide. If a person in a joyful mood is presented with a fragment of a sad piece, it is likely that this person will be able to recognise these emotions, but will not experience them (cf. Gabrielson 2002).

According to P. Juslin, music is fundamentally capable of causing the same emotions as other life events; however, there exists a statistically noticeable difference that characterises this way of emotional perception. In a study conducted by Juslin, Liljestrom, Västfjäll, Barradas and Silva it was discovered that positive emotional states, such as happiness-elation and nostalgia-longing more frequently accompany episodes of listening to music than everyday life situation in which there is no musical background. Conversely, anger-irritation, boredom-indifference or anxiety-fear were encountered more frequently among everyday emotions than when listening to music (Juslin, Liljestrom et al. 2008). Similar conclusions were reached by M. Zentner, D. Grandjean and K. Scherer, who, in a series of studies, showed that music causes positive reactions (relaxation, joy, amusement, dreaming) in people decidedly more frequently than negative ones (aggression, anxiety, regret, depression, anger) (Zentner, Grandjean & Scherer 2008).

On the other hand, in studies conducted by Carol Krumhansl (1997) with the use of apparatuses that registered physiological reactions of the body (e.g. respiration, blood pressure or skin conductance) it was shown that when listening to fragments of musical pieces expressing sadness (e.g. Barber's *Adagio for Strings*), fear and anxiety (e.g. Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain*) and joy (e.g. *Spring* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*), the level of the body's physiological arousal changes. During the study the sad musical fragments influenced the most such features as changes in the heartbeat frequency, blood pressure and skin conductance (SCR – cf. also Khalifa, Peretz et al 2002) and body temperature in the listeners. Music expressing fear and anxiety caused, most of all, circulation effects such as changes in pulse parameters. Finally, happy music resulted mainly in changes in breathing parameters of the study subjects.

Various behavioural reactions with an emotional background were also studied by J. Sloboda (1991) and J. Panksepp (1995). In Sloboda's questionnaire-based study, the subjects reported that listening to music causes a whole range of behavioural reactions in them, such as shivers down the spine, laughter, a lump in the throat, tears, goose bumps, sweating, increased heart rate, yawning, sexual arousal and others. Shivers turned out to be the most frequent reaction, with 90% of respondents admitting to them. The aim of Sloboda's experiment was also to correlate the body's behavioural response with specific musical forms. The results achieved showed that for example tears were most often elicited by melodic appoggiaturas, while sudden changes in harmony caused shivers in the listeners. Chills that appear while listening to the music were also the subject of Panksepp's study. It demonstrated that a reaction of this kind appears more frequently in the case of listening to sad, rather than happy, musical fragments and that women experience those more often than men do.

The results of neuroimaging experiments showed, in turn, that emotions experienced while listening to the music are frequently accompanied by activation of similar brain areas as it happens in the case of natural emotions. For instance, Anne Blood and Robert Zatorre (2001), as well as Vinod Menon and Daniel Levitin (2005) demonstrated – respectively – with the use of positron emission tomography (PET) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) that emotions experienced while listening to music are accompanied by activation of the so-called reward system in the brain and dopaminergic neural activity, analogously as it takes place in cases of natural euphoria caused by erotic stimuli, eating chocolate or using other stimulants.

Similar conclusions, based on his own research and a review of neuroimaging studies and lesion studies, were reached by Stefan Koelsch (2010, 2012 – chapter 12.6). In his opinion, based on the experiments conducted so far, one can draw the conclusion that musical emotions are accompanied by activation of subcortical structures, especially limbic and paralimbic areas: of the amygdala, hippocampus, the parahippocampal gyrus, the nucleus accumbens, the ventral tegmental area, the insula, the anterior cingulate cortex and the orbitofrontal cortex. This may evidence the fact that at least some of musical emotions are associated with the activity of structures important for survival, which manage basic affective mechanisms formed in the process of evolution. This constitutes the best proof that emotions of this kind are not an illusion, but something real (Koelsch 2010: 133).

#### 4. Areas of a listener's behavioural and cognitive activity. A preliminary typology of musical emotions

Numerous factors, which are, on the one hand, connected with the music itself (e.g. the elements of structure of the musical piece), and, on the other hand, with the situation in which music is perceived (the quality and manner of performance, individual features of the listener, outside circumstances amounting to the context of the listening experience) significantly complicate the possibility of coming up with a homogenous process or singular mechanism through which music can induce emotions. For example, Patrik Juslin and Daniel Västfjäll, relying mainly on the existing empirical and theoretical findings, mention as many as six various mechanisms with the aid of which, they believe, music influences emotionally the listening person. These are: (1) brain stem reflexes (2) evaluative conditioning, (3) emotional contagion, (4) visual imagination, (5) episodic memory and (6) musical expectations (cf. Juslin & Västfjäll 2008).<sup>240</sup>

Conversely, within the perspective I assume, a more promising starting point for determining key mechanisms and processes whereby musical emotions are induced is to point towards basic areas of the listener's behavioural and cognitive activity in which emotional reactions to music appear. I therefore propose a distinction between three such basic areas in which musical emotions appear. Emotional reactions to music can be:

- generated directly as perceptual and behavioural reactions of the listeners, that is as their bodily reactions (*embodied musical emotions*)
- mediated through the recipients' cognitive activity directed towards analysis of the musical structure and form (*epistemic musical emotions*);
- a result of directing the subject's cognitive activity towards extra-musical outside factors (*associative and contextual musical emotions*).

4.1. *The field of embodied musical emotions* – Embodied musical emotions appear independently from cognitive factors, most frequently as reactions of the autonomic nervous system that is perceptually aroused by the elements of the sonic structure of a musical piece. Perceiving music can cause increase in heartbeat rate, sweating, shivers or tears, as well as other physiological and

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<sup>240</sup> The authors considered (and even tested experimentally) the possibility of adding additional mechanisms of arousing musical emotions to the list, that is the mechanisms of (7) cognitive appraisal and (8) rhythmic entrainment (cf. Juslin, Liljeström et al. 2010: 616, 621).

bodily reactions of this type (cf. e.g. Sloboda 1981; Krumhansl 1997). The reactions that are raised then should be connected, among others, with the activation of the subcortical areas: the brainstem, elements of the limbic system, such as the amygdala and the hypothalamus, which control the behavioural, hormonal and vegetative reactions of the body (cf. Berlyne 1971: chapter 8).

The elementary stimuli capable of initiating such bodily reactions in a listener bottom-up are, above all, such features of the musical stimulus as, for instance: a sudden sound, its loudness, rhythm, dissonance, etc. (cf. Juslin & Västfjäll 2008: 564, Johnstone & Scherer 2000: 294-296). However, the reasons behind bodily reactions to music can also lie in slightly more complex mechanisms, such as, e.g. emotional contagion. What causes is that, for example, happy or sad music can mechanically infect the listener with the emotion inside it and cause corresponding emotional arousal, that is the feeling of happiness or sadness, increase or decrease in muscle tension or secretion of appropriate hormones in blood (prolactin, endorphins) (cf. e.g. Juslin & Västfjäll 2008: 564-566; Huron 2011). Human voice and musical expressions based thereon have unique capabilities of emotional contagion. For example, the capabilities that singing has in this respect are much higher than the possibilities of instrumental music, which derives from the fact that physiological changes characteristic for particular kinds of emotion – e.g. breath rate when experiencing fear – are more closely connected with changes in parameters of voice emission (cf. Gorzelańczyk & Podlipniak 2011: 80). It is also interesting that emotional contagion by the means of vocal resources is more effective in the case of emotions such as fear or anxiety than in the case of the emotion of disgust, which is probably connected with adaptive functions of voice as a means of communication over distance, such as using it in a group in order to signal the approaching danger, and thus eliciting fear of this danger (while it is difficult to communicate disgust with the use of voice [cf. Johnston & Scherer 2000: 223; Gorzelańczyk & Podlipiniak 2011: 81]). Emotional contagion with the use of vocal resources also works efficiently in the case of other emotions, such as the emotion of sadness, which may also be caused by the acoustic voice parameters characteristic for this emotion – a decreased rate of articulation, a decrease in the intensity of the voice, attenuation of voice frequency energy – and their emotional influence on the listener (cf. Johnston & Scherer 2000: 227).

*4.2. The field of epistemic musical emotions* – The factor that makes it possible for musical emotions to appear may lie in the listener's cognitive activity, e.g. in the shape of his/her expectations, imaginings, an increased engagement of working memory directed at the analysis of the musical piece. The key cognitive activity that takes part in the initiating of emotion are the anticipations that appear while listening to the music. When listening to a given piece, the

recipient – consciously or unconsciously – harbours in advance specified expectations regarding its further course. They may pertain to e.g. the appearance of an accord at a specified time, the continuation of a melodic line, repetition or complementation of a specific phrase or motif.

The influential conception of musical emotions as proposed by Leonard Meyer in the mid-1950s asymmetrically represents precisely such an approach. The general definition of emotions provided by Meyer connects the appearance of emotions with the stopping of some important life function or practice: “Emotion or affect is aroused when a tendency to respond is arrested or inhibited (Meyer 1956: 14, see also 31). The example he references is the case of a heavy smoker who may react emotionally upon reaching to his pocket for cigarettes and not finding them (Meyer 1956: 25, 39). This example shows that emotions may arise as the result of broken expectations. A similar thing happens when listening to music. By intervening in the listener’s musical expectations, a composer or a performer of a piece may arouse the emotion of surprise in the listener. The composer may cause that a sequence in the musical material “need not be the one which was specifically expected” (Meyer 1956: 26). The anticipation may also be fulfilled, but after a delay. The initial musical stimulus may allow for various developments with equal probability, that is create an impression of indecision and uncertainty in the listener. Other than the composer, also the performer of the musical piece can aesthetically and creatively manipulate the listener’s expectations through the so-called “performance deviations” within tonality, chromatics, ornamentation or the level of the expressiveness of a given performance (see Meyer 1956: chapter 6).

*4.3. The field of associative and contextual musical emotions* – Listening to music can arouse the listener emotionally through outside associations that the given piece evokes. Thanks to music, the recipient turns in his/her imagination or episodic (or semantic) memory towards items, people, events and ideas from the extra-musical sphere (cf. Sloboda 1985). For example, in the listener’s mind there appear images pertaining to e.g. past events, places or people whom he/she encountered, and which/who cause emotional arousal. It is also the place in which the listener is at the moment (a church, a concert) and the people who accompany him/her while listening that can contribute to generating specific emotions. Music can also make the recipient consider his/her own life in a more abstract manner, or even to think about the sense of being, which, in certain situations, may put him/her into a specific affective state - cause sorrow, sadness or even fear.

There probably exists a whole range of mechanisms - differing in the level of cognitive control, consciousness level, the influence of individual factors and the speed of emotional reaction to a musical stimulus - that manage this kind of “redirecting” attention towards the extra-musical context which takes place

in memory or imagination when listening to the music. For example, one of such mechanisms worth mentioning in this context has the shape of the – learned, culturally automatised and habitual – process of initiating associations common for a large number of people by music. Such *culturally organised associations* (which Meyer calls “connotations”) connect elements and ways of musical organisation, and even the sound or the images of the instruments with the extra-musical world: “The organ, for example, is associated for Western listeners with the church and through this with piety and religious beliefs and attitudes, The gong is linked by contiguity to the Orient and often connotes the mysterious and the exotic” (Meyer 1956: 259). Associations created on this basis contribute to a specific directing of an emotion or a mood, e.g. associations caused when listening to Christmas carols may lead to the appearance of Christmas mood and emotional feelings connected with family, tenderness and the sense of closeness.

### Conclusion

The phenomenon of arousing emotions through music constitutes an important aspect of everyday and aesthetic human experience. It is, in fact, one of the aims of the contemporary interdisciplinary research into musical experience conducted at the intersection between cognitive psychology, neurocognitive science and musicology to show that musical emotions constitute a phenomenon that can be explained, and thus made more understandable, with the use of scientific methods. However, this goal, among other things – due to the intangible and mysterious character of musical emotions – is very difficult to realise and controversial as such.

In the present article I have tried to demonstrate that, in spite of the difficulties that the programme of interdisciplinary research into musical emotions must face, it has led, as it may seem, to a certain change in the way of looking at this phenomenon. Firstly, it was demonstrated that musical emotions are not an illusion, but a phenomenon that exists where psychology, physiology and brain function are concerned. Secondly, it was demonstrated that emotional experiences related to music are not limited to aesthetic experiences and can be variously connected to cognitive and behavioural activity of the listener. Thirdly, it is known that feeling musical emotions depends on the work of many different mechanisms – brain, cognitive and behavioural ones – which determine the quality and intensity of the experienced emotions.

The essence of the proposal posed in the present text lies in the conviction that there are three types of musical emotions, defined by the different spheres of behavioural and cognitive reactions to music: embodied reactions, reactions that are elicited cognitively and directed at the musical work, and reactions

that result from the combination of mental associations and the interaction with extra-musical context of the listener.

At the same time, I attempted to emphasise the fact that empirical research into musical emotions is not and will never be exempt from the need to pose general questions and from the need to philosophically highlight the problems it discusses. An example of this type of general problems may be for instance the question whether musical emotions are utilitarian or aesthetic in nature, whether we experience or merely perceive the emotional content of the piece, or the question whether it is music itself or extra-musical context that is the source of emotions. I believe that these questions do not differ that much from the lofty philosophical questions posed by classical authors such as E. Hanslick and I. Stravinsky.

There are obviously numerous issues on which the proposed solutions contradict the classical proposals of Hanslick and Stravinsky. The most important point of controversy is probably the fact of considering aesthetic experiences to be on par with other kinds of affective musical experiences. In spite of the fact that this accusation is partly justified, I do not believe it to be fully so (cf. Juslin 2013). In contemporary empirical research into musical experience, the trend which emphasises the exceptionality of musical aesthetic experiences marks its presence very strongly (cf. e.g. Konečni 2005; Zentner & Scherer 2008; Zentner 2010; Trost, Ethofer et al. 2012). The research programme of the neuroaesthetics of music may serve to increase the chances of finding an explanation for the aesthetic aspects of the impact music has on brain functions (cf. Brattico & Pearce 2013; Przybysz 2013). In light of these facts, the thesis about the exceptional character of aesthetic musical experience remains, in my view, an inspiring hypothesis, and will remain the subject of empirical research in years to come.

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**GARDNER**





## Igor Stravinsky: The Poetics and Politics of Music<sup>241</sup>

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Stravinsky, 1915

The most famous sentence in Igor Stravinsky's autobiography reads: "Music is by its very nature powerless to express anything at all."<sup>242</sup> When it appeared, this sentence surprised his audience. After all, Stravinsky had composed some of the most expressive music of the twentieth century, from the lyrical *Petrouchka* to the dramatic *Le sacre du printemps* (The Rite of Spring) to the elegaic *Symphony of Psalms*.<sup>243</sup> But ever the polemicist, Stravinsky was in actuality blasting those whom he regarded as his aesthetic opponents, such as the followers of Richard Wagner; such "impurists" were always marshaling music in the service of extramusical ends, from national solidarity to religious freedom. Seeking to repair a perceived imbalance, Stravinsky portrayed the musician as a craftsman whose materials of pitch and rhythm in themselves harbor no more expression than the carpenter's beams or the jeweler's stone.

**Keywords:** Stravinsky; *Le sacre du printemps*; The Rite of Spring; Poetics; Politics; Music.

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<sup>241</sup> The first version of this paper was published in Howard Gardner's *Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen Through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi* (Basic Books 1993). The text is published with kind permission of the Holder of the copyright.

<sup>242</sup> Stravinsky, "Music is by its very nature . . ." is quoted in Druskin 1983: 70.

<sup>243</sup> Hereafter, pieces are referred to by the name most commonly used in performance.

### THE POLITICAL FACE OF CREATION

Stravinsky may have been correct that, in the absence of an externally imposed “program,” music is simply music. He spoke of the “poetics” of music, which in its literal sense refers to the making (*poiesis*) of music. Unintentionally, however, Stravinsky vividly illustrated a different point through his own life: the extent to which the making of music is *not* possible without the externally triggered factor of politics. All creative individuals—and especially all musicians—must deal with a set of associates who not only help the creators realize their vision but also eventually, with a wider public, determine the fate of the creators’ works.

In comparison with the artistic and scientific pursuits we have surveyed so far, the making of music emerges as an intensely public activity. If merely scored and available for perusal, music has little effect. An ensemble of individuals (including performers, publishers, publicity agents, and ticket sellers) and a collection of materials (including instruments, a concert hall, billboards, and programs) are required if a musical idea is to achieve public expression. And when, as in Stravinsky’s case, one elects to mount huge spectacles like a ballet or an opera, the number of individuals involved quickly reaches the hundreds.

When his friend and collaborator Robert Craft began to sift through Stravinsky’s correspondence, spanning nearly seventy years, he was astonished by what he found. It seemed that as much of Stravinsky’s considerable energies had been directed toward the management of his musical life as toward actual composing and performing. Moreover, Stravinsky had thrown himself into this political arena with enormous gusto and determination. Craft comments:

*Whether or not Stravinsky’s letters<sup>244</sup> to bankers, brokers, lawyers, and estate agents provide sufficient documentation to diagnose a ‘split personality,’ the concentration, logic, and concern with minutiae that he devoted to business affairs are awesome, at any rate in a great musician. . . . Stravinsky’s mind seems to divide almost equally into musical genius and moneylender. . . . After finishing *Le sacre du printemps* on a November morning in 1912, he apparently spent the afternoon writing letters about investment properties.*

In introducing three extensive volumes of published letters, Craft remarks almost apologetically:

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<sup>244</sup> Craft, “Whether or not Stravinsky’s letters . . .” is from Craft 1984: 261.

*The correspondence does not include<sup>245</sup> any of the extensive exchanges between Stravinsky and his banks in Russia from 1912 until the Revolution. It also omits the example of the numerous letters in which Stravinsky asks for advances from publishers, impresarios, patrons, and performance organizations—documents that contrast strikingly with the letters from people asking him to pay overdue bills. . . . This chapter does not examine any of Stravinsky's dozen or so ill-advised lawsuits.*

With respect to his embroilment in personal and professional politics, Stravinsky represents an extreme, both within our sample of creative individuals and within the population of musical composers. (The analogy is perhaps best drawn with Picasso's increasingly entangled love life; quite possibly, both men derived pleasure from these conflict-laden affairs.) One need not engage in (typically futile) lawsuits to become a great physicist or an immortal composer. And yet, by throwing the political aspects of creation into sharp relief, Stravinsky reveals the extent to which an artist must work with the field that regulates his chosen domain. Only the rarest of individuals is fortunate enough to be embraced by the field without external prodding; only a few adult artists are blessed with another individual who is willing to run constant interference on their behalf, and, at least until the recent past, the need to justify publicly one's own creative output placed an even greater burden on women. Whether they do so well or poorly, eagerly or reluctantly, nearly all creative individuals must devote significant energies to the management of their careers. Such political activity by no means guarantees success; but in its absence, aspiring creative individuals risk permanent oblivion.

### A RUSSIAN CHILDHOOD

Nearly all remembered childhoods are redolent of a gentler, simpler past; this seems particularly true for children reared in pre-Soviet Russia. From the writings of individuals like Vladimir Nabakov or Boris Pasternak, one receives the impression of cities in czarist Russia filled with delightful castles and scrumptious treasures, elegant hotels and clubs, countrysides dotted with snow-covered hills and splendid dachas, and a constant convivial atmosphere involving large, nurturant families, faithful servants, doting grandparents, and embracing nannies. In his nostalgia for the Russia of his youth, Stravinsky resembled others of the prewar generation, but his specific memories proved far less idyllic than those of his literary peers.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Craft, "The correspondence does not include . . ." is from Craft 1984: 276.

<sup>246</sup> For more about Stravinsky's childhood memories, see Stravinsky 1962: 3–4.

The third of four sons of landed gentry on both sides, Stravinsky was born in Oranienbaum, Russia, in 1882. He spent the winters of his youth in St. Petersburg, a city he especially prized; and he summered with the family in the country, at various estates owned by members of his extended family. The Stravinsky family's principal home was an intellectual center in St. Petersburg, frequented by individuals like the novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Stravinsky's father was a well-regarded opera bass and a gifted actor at the Imperial Opera House. Young Igor heard much music at home and also attended concerts and operas where, in one of the most memorable experiences of his youth, the nine-year-old boy spied Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky shortly before the great composer died.

Stravinsky seems always to have been interested in music, and some of his most vivid and faithful initial memories involve sound. He recalled a peasant who could not speak but who had a fascinating habit of clicking his tongue very noisily. The peasant would then sing a song of two sounds (the only ones he could pronounce) with great speed and dexterity. He accompanied these sounds by pressing the palm of his right hand under his left armpit and then made a series of noises that sounded (euphemistically) like resounding kisses. Stravinsky attempted to recreate this music at home. As a young child, Stravinsky also imitated the unison singing of women from the neighboring village as they wended their way home from work.

It is risky to overinterpret such childhood crystallizing experiences. After all, both the families of creative individuals and the individuals themselves are likely to search for early markers and, if necessary, to embroider memories until those prove "worthy" harbingers of the adult talent. Yet, it does seem reasonable to assume that individuals differ in the kinds of childhood experiences that attract them and that prove memorable, and in this spirit, we may think of Stravinsky's early aural experiences as analogous to Einstein's fascination with the compass (see chapter 4) or to Eliot's vivid visual and tactile sensations (see chapter 7). Stravinsky was also able to remember accurately the visual components of these scenes, a kind of embroidery that would have been unnecessary if one were merely trying to make the case that the "golden ear" had been present since early childhood. Ultimately, Stravinsky was also distinguished from other composers by his mastery of the visual components of dramatic performances.

Though immersed in music, Stravinsky was not a musical prodigy. Indeed, as a child, he seems to have been more interested in painting and in theater than in music per se. He began piano lessons at the relatively late age of nine and advanced quickly. He read opera scores in his father's library and attended concerts with keen interest. From early on in his musical education, he was interested in improvisation and persisted in creating his own melodies and

variations, even though his family and teachers criticized these as a waste of time.<sup>247</sup>

Stravinsky grew up in an atmosphere conducive to his musical and intellectual development; but unlike other White Russians of the period, he seems not to have had a happy childhood. His father, a lawyer and civil servant as well as an artist, was strict and cold. Young Igor had only dutiful feelings toward his mother, though he loved his German governess, Bertha, and was deeply shaken by her death in 1917. Among his siblings he liked only his older brother, Gury, who died on the Rumanian front during the First World War. Stravinsky remembers being quite lonely as a child: "I never came across anyone who had any real attraction for me,"<sup>248</sup> he recalled in his autobiography. In a manner reminiscent of Einstein, he did find some support from his uncle Alexandre Ielachich, a fervent music lover as well as a liberal intellectual, and from an older friend Ivan Pokrovsky, who introduced him to French composers.

By his own testimony, Stravinsky was not a good student and usually performed at or below the average level for his class. Unlike Picasso, however, who appears to have had genuine learning problems, Stravinsky was simply uninterested in formal schooling<sup>249</sup> and preferred throughout his life to educate himself. Ignoring his son's antischolastic inclinations, Stravinsky's father insisted that Igor follow in his footsteps and receive legal training. Stravinsky did not like law school at all, and this alienation only exacerbated his tense relation with his father and his general disaffection with his current situation.

### MUSIC AT THE CENTER

By the time of his entry to St. Petersburg University, Stravinsky had decided that music was his life's calling. Much of his education continued to be self-initiated. He disliked the study of harmony but liked counterpoint and was particularly excited by the opportunity to set and solve his own problems. He began to listen to new music; and like other promising young artists of the time, he soon found himself in a circle of intellectual and artistic peers, with a particular interest in the forms of contemporary expression in Russia and in Western Europe.

The most important event in Stravinsky's musical training was his 1902 meeting of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, the dean of Russian composers. While responding unenthusiastically to Stravinsky's youthful compositions, Rimsky-

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<sup>247</sup> For more on Stravinsky's early interest in improvisation, see Boucourechliev: 1987: 29.

<sup>248</sup> Stravinsky, "I never came across . . ." is from Stravinsky 1962: 8.

<sup>249</sup> For more on Stravinsky's lack of interest in formal schooling, see White and Noble 1980: 240.

Korsakov gave him shrewd advice about which studies he should undertake; moreover, and to young Igor's great surprise, Rimsky-Korsakov generously offered to supervise his composing.

For the next six years, until Rimsky-Korsakov's death in 1908, Stravinsky was the senior composer's pupil and, increasingly, his friend, confidant, and ersatz son. Much of the instruction was technical. Rimsky-Korsakov guided Stravinsky in orchestration, teaching him how to compose for each instrument; they would each orchestrate the same passages and then compare their versions. Stravinsky was an apt pupil, whose rapid advances pleased his mentor; and, perhaps for the first time in his life, Stravinsky found himself in a milieu that fully engaged him. The early crystallization in the musical domain was now transmuted into a lifelong course.

Stravinsky and Rimsky-Korsakov held similar philosophies about education, both favoring a strict disciplinary regime. As Stravinsky was to state later: "No matter what the subject may be, there is only one course for the beginner: He must at first accept a discipline from without, but only as the means of obtaining freedom for, and strengthening himself in, his personal methods of expression."<sup>250</sup> And yet, their musical preferences were quite different. In many ways Stravinsky was more attracted to the music of Rimsky-Korsakov's Russian rivals such as Tchaikovsky than to his teacher's own programmatic music. For his part, Rimsky-Korsakov was suspicious of Stravinsky's interest in ancient Russian forms, his intoxication with current French music, and his curiosity about emerging hybrids of the Russian and European musical traditions. Displaying pride laced with ambivalence, he declared: "Igor Stravinsky may be my pupil but he will never be my or anyone else's follower, because his gift for music is uniquely great and original."<sup>251</sup>

At this time the domain of music in Russia was in a state of flux, reminiscent in some ways of the "multiple options" discernible in the domain of physics in Germany or of painting in France. Exerting considerable influence was a group of five composers who had banded together around 1875 to promote a national school of Russian music. Included in their ranks, in addition to Rimsky-Korsakov, were Alexander Borodin, Cesar Cui, Mili Balakirev, and Modest Mussorgsky. These composers fashioned themselves to some extent in opposition to Tchaikovsky and to Mikhail Glinka, who were seen as more influenced by Western European music, and to Aleksandr Glazunov, who favored an academic style that was faithful to the classical orchestral forms. Of course, Stravinsky also drew on the works and traditions of many European composers of the past.

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<sup>250</sup> Stravinsky, "No matter what the subject may be . . ." is quoted in White 1947: 17.

<sup>251</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, "Igor Stravinsky may be my pupil . . ." is quoted in Craft 1982, frontispiece.

According to critics, Stravinsky's early work was unremarkable. Like workers in all creative fields, he was mastering the languages of his predecessors. Stravinsky drew on his contemporaries in a most catholic way. His initial compositions can be variously compared to those of Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, and other Russian composers in whose work he became interested and whom he often consciously imitated. There are intimations of Ludwig van Beethoven, Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss, and other favorite Germanic composers. Eager to listen to new music, Stravinsky cofounded a Society of Contemporary Music in 1906; much of the tantalizing (but dangerous) new French music of Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and others was performed there. While Stravinsky remained the eager pupil throughout most of the decade, his progress during that time was notable. Indeed, the critic Jeremy Noble claims that "the distance Stravinsky had already travelled in the four or five years since the sonata [of 1903 and 1904] is remarkable."<sup>252</sup>

### EARLY TRIUMPHS AND A FATEFUL ENCOUNTER

The first public performances of Stravinsky's works occurred in St. Petersburg in 1907 when his sonata was performed; his first symphony was performed in 1908. The composer was in his mid-twenties, not a youthful time for first performances. The pieces were not particularly well received by the audience or by Rimsky-Korsakov. More positive reactions greeted two brief pieces for large orchestra—the *Scherzo fantastique* and *Fireworks*—performed shortly thereafter. These pieces were explosive, brilliant, dynamic, and programmatic; the orchestration of simple motifs with rich harmonies was under firm control throughout. Perhaps more importantly, these brief compositions began to reveal Stravinsky's own artistic voice.

In attendance at a 1909 concert where the *Fireworks* was probably performed<sup>253</sup> was a young Russian lawyer-turned-impresario named Serge Diaghilev. Following an abortive career as a composer (Rimsky-Korsakov had discouraged him from pursuing this calling), Diaghilev had founded a publication called *Mir Iskusstva* (World of Art), which served as a rallying point for young artists, much as *Arte Joven* had done for Picasso and his Barcelona colleagues a few years earlier (see chapter 5) and as *Blast* was to accomplish for T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Wyndham Lewis in London a few years later (see chapter 7). The journal, which (again, like most of its counterparts) lasted but five years, helped situate contemporary avant-garde Russian art strategically between the academicians, on the one hand, and the political revolutionaries, on the other. It embraced art for art's sake, with a judicious blend of authentic

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<sup>252</sup> Noble, "the distance Stravinsky . . ." is quoted in White and Noble 1980: 243.

<sup>253</sup> No definitive documentation seems to have been found.

Russian and contemporary European influences, and it gathered into Diaghilev's orbit the most talented young artists and writers of the time.

Diaghilev was a most remarkable individual. He was a grand and flamboyant seigneur, part gambler, part intellectual manqué, part artist manqué, part schemer, part dreamer. He loved intrigue, and for a charismatic homosexual living in the midst of a group of temperamental young artists and performers, such intrigue was never in short supply. He had an uncanny ability to pick out new talent and a virtually unerring sense of what was likely to shock (yet fascinate) an audience: Sexuality and ecstasy, violence and death were his chosen themes. And while he sought the modern, he never lost sight of his audience and the box office.

Diaghilev knew himself. As a young man in his early twenties, he had written to his stepmother:

*I am firstly a great charlatan though con brio; secondly, a great charmeur; thirdly, I have any amount of cheek; fourthly, I am a man with a great quantity of logic, but with very few principles; fifthly, I think I have no real gifts. All the same, I think I have just found my true vocation—being a Maecenas.<sup>254</sup> I have all that is necessary save the money—ma i s ç a v i e n d r a [but that will come].<sup>255</sup>*

Stravinsky wrote of him: “He had a wonderful flair, a marvelous faculty for seizing at a glance the novelty and freshness of an idea, surrendering himself to it without pausing to reason it out.”<sup>256</sup> Fated not to be a great creative artist himself, Diaghilev takes his place within a tiny cohort of catalytic nurturers of talent in the twentieth century, among them the photographer Alfred Stieglitz, the teacher of composition Nadia Boulanger, the editor Maxwell Perkins, and the theater director Max Reinhardt—individuals who fostered the artistic history of the twentieth century.

Having conquered St. Petersburg through his influential publication, well-received performances, and powerful stable of talents, Diaghilev set his sights on Europe, and particularly, on Paris. First he organized an exhibit of Russian art at the Grand Palais in 1906, then five concerts at the Opéra the following year, then in 1908 a *Boris Gudonov*, which was a sensation.

In 1909, Diaghilev undertook perhaps his most daring step, as he launched the Ballets Russes dance company. Ballet had a mixed reputation as an art form, with many intellectuals considering it an ancient and somewhat passé activity. But Diaghilev felt that there were many great ballets and that the form

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<sup>254</sup> Gaius Cilnius Maecenas was a Roman patron of letters.

<sup>255</sup> Diaghilev, “I am firstly . . .” is quoted in Eksteins 1989: 21.

<sup>256</sup> Stravinsky on Diaghilev, “He had a wonderful flair . . .” is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 39.

retained tremendous potential, especially given his Russian troupe's special gifts. With performances of the Chopin-inspired *Les sylphides*, Borodin's *Polovtitsna* dances, and other spectacles, Diaghilev's Ballets Russes took Paris by storm.

By 1909, Diaghilev had already assembled a wonderful group of dancers (including Vaslav Nijinsky), choreographers (Mikhail Fokine), and designers (Leon Bakst and Alexander Benois), but he lacked one thing: a composer who could work steadily with his troupe. Hearing the Stravinsky composition, he knew that he had found his man. As one who trusted his impulses completely, Diaghilev had no hesitation in asking Stravinsky point-blank to orchestrate the A-flat major nocturne and the *valse brillante* of *Les sylphides*. He had also been toying with the idea of mounting a ballet around the story of *The Firebird*, and he soon commissioned Stravinsky, now in his late twenties, to prepare the score for that dramatic saga.

The meeting with Diaghilev and the invitation to join the Ballets Russes company changed Stravinsky's life overnight. From a pupil of the recently deceased Rimsky-Korsakov, a youthful composer with some talent but neither institutional affiliation nor guiding mission, Stravinsky became a valued member of what was possibly the most innovative performing artistic group in the world. Just as Stravinsky had taken immediately to the instructional discipline of the paternalistic Rimsky-Korsakov, he was attracted equally to the ensemble of quirky talent gathered around the indomitable Diaghilev.

Now, instead of working mostly alone, Stravinsky had almost daily intercourse with the ensemble—a new and heady experience for someone who had craved the companionship of individuals with whom he felt comfortable. Stravinsky turned out to be a willing pupil, one who learned quickly and reacted vividly to everything. He was sufficiently flexible, curious, and versatile to be able to work with the set designers, dancers, choreographers, and even those responsible for the business end of the enterprise. Benois<sup>257</sup> remarked how unusual Stravinsky was among musicians by virtue of his deep interest in theater, architecture, and the visual arts. From Diaghilev young Igor learned two equally crucial lessons for ensemble work: how to meet a deadline and how to compromise on, or mediate amongst, deeply held but differing artistic visions.

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<sup>257</sup> Benois's remarks about the young Stravinsky are quoted in White 1947: 25.

### THE BALLET MASTERED: THE FIREBIRD AND PETROUCHKA

These disparate lessons came together when Stravinsky began work on the score to the ballet *The Firebird* in the winter of 1909 and the spring of 1910. As he later recalled: “I worked hard and this meant being in continual contact with Diaghilev and his collaborators. Fokine worked on the choreography of each number as I sent them to him. I was always at the company’s rehearsal and that day used to finish with Diaghilev, Nijinsky [who was not in fact dancing in this ballet] and me sitting down to a large dinner washed down with a good claret.”<sup>258</sup>

*The Firebird* showcased Stravinsky’s emerging gifts superbly. The story, in many ways a typical fairy tale, features the evil magical ogre king Katschei, the hero prince Ivan Tsaverich, the lovely princess Tsarevna, and the glittering “good fairy” Firebird. The fantastic creature is first imprisoned, then released, and finally helps Ivan save his love from the ogre.

This dramatic saga gave wide rein to Stravinsky’s theatrical imagination. Seizing on devices to which Rimsky-Korsakov had introduced him, he found a specific register for each character realm—for example, using chromaticism to refer to the supernatural, a diatonic style for human characters, and Oriental strains to evoke legendary Russia. Stravinsky also had the opportunity to express in musical terms the characteristic physical gestures and movements of each of the protagonists. Moreover, as the composition featured nineteen different scenes, he was able to mobilize his various orchestration techniques to full advantage. Though debts to French and Russian forbears were quite audible, the mastery of melody, harmonic progressions, and rhythmic movement marked the composer as one who had come into his own; he proved capable of creating vivid musical themes as well as clearly delineated sections and fragments that clashed energetically with one another. Not a few Hollywood films have been able to exploit devices that were handled to perfection in this, Stravinsky’s first major work.

Diaghilev had confidence that Stravinsky would enter a new sphere as a result of his masterful work on *The Firebird*. The impresario declared on the eve of the first performance: “Take a good look at him. He is a man on the threshold of fame.”<sup>259</sup> And indeed, the reception to *The Firebird*, with Claude Debussy and other notables in the audience, was sufficiently enthusiastic to catapult Stravinsky to celebrity status almost immediately thereafter. As the biographical entry in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* notes:

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<sup>258</sup> Stravinsky: “I worked hard . . .” is from Stravinsky 1936: 42.

<sup>259</sup> Diaghilev, “Take a good look at him . . .” is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 31; see also White 1947: 27.

*The success of The Firebird altered the course of Stravinsky's life. At that time Paris was the international centre of the world of art, the Ballets Russes one of its prime sensations; and Stravinsky's the most important original score in the ballet's repertory. This meant that overnight he became known as the most gifted of the younger generation of Russian composers, and during the next few years his music became better known and appreciated in western Europe than in his native Russia.*<sup>260</sup>

None of the other six creators I am describing enjoyed a more meteoric rise. The success of *The Firebird* also gave a cosmopolitan thrust to Diaghilev's company and fused the fates of Stravinsky and Diaghilev for the next two decades.

Stravinsky was ambivalent about the success of *The Firebird*. It remained for the rest of his life the piece for which he was most famous and the piece that was most often performed and parodied (though generally not under copyright, which infuriated this instinctively litigious person). Perhaps underestimating its originality and its influence on his subsequent work, Stravinsky came to regard *The Firebird* as conventional in terms of conception and orchestration—a throwback to nineteenth-century narrative with its showstopping set pieces and its expressive excesses. Unhappy with some of the choreography, he seems to have been relieved when the suite began to be performed as part of an orchestral concert. As he commented sardonically: "It is more vigorous than most of the composed folk music of the period but it is also not very original. These are all good conditions for a success."<sup>261</sup> But at the time, Stravinsky did not wallow in pride or in ruefulness; like other highly creative artists, he was too busy working on his next pieces.

### **The Innovations of Petrouchka**

Visiting Stravinsky in the summer of 1910, Diaghilev found that the composer was working on an orchestral piece, "a picture of a puppet, suddenly endowed with life, exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggios. The orchestra in turn retaliates with menacing trumpet blasts. The outcome is a terrible noise which reaches its climax and ends in the sorrowful and querulous collapse of the poor puppet."<sup>262</sup> Fascinated, Diaghilev convinced Stravinsky to convert the piece into the ballet score *Petrouchka*. Stravinsky worked on the score during the fall and winter; it was performed

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<sup>260</sup> "The success of *The Firebird*" is from White and Noble 1980: 244.

<sup>261</sup> Stravinsky, "It is more vigorous . . ." is quoted in Van den Toorn 1983: 2.

<sup>262</sup> "a picture of a puppet . . ." is from White and Noble 1980: 244; see also Druskin 1983: 40.

at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, in June 1911, and garnered an enthusiastic response.<sup>263</sup>

*The Firebird* showed that Stravinsky could synthesize the lessons from his masters and fashion a piece that excited the field of his era. *Petrouchka* was a far more audacious work. The setting was both ancient and modern—a mix of traditional folk songs and popular urban songs against the background of a holiday festival. The mood shifts from the lyrical and the picaresque to the tragic, and unlike in *The Firebird*, the tragedy of the lonely puppet is genuine rather than formulaic.

The compositional techniques are innovative: Harmony alternates with polyphony, polytonality, and a touch of chromaticism; the predominant diatonic language is contrasted with a more dissonant idiom. Featured is the jarring Petrouchka chord in which a C-major triad (all white keys) and an F-sharp-major triad (all black keys) are superimposed. Stravinsky is able to create tiny episodes, some of them barely a phrase, that often sound quite discordant at first hearing, yet fit comfortably with one another; these recur in analogous contexts and combine to produce a larger, highly expressive, and satisfyingly integrated whole. There are also interesting characterizations: For instance, the poignant Petrouchka is portrayed through the seemingly contrasting vehicle of the carnival's wild abandon.

Probably the greatest innovations occurred in the rhythmic sphere. In the face of a seemingly inexhaustible invention of new meters, with binary and ternary rhythms superimposed, the overall sense is nonetheless of a completely integrated, almost mechanically precise score. Throughout, rhythm serves as the primordial organizing element, with a driving regularity punctuated by episodes of calculated asymmetry and syncopation. Perhaps not surprisingly, the composing of such an original score did not come easily to Stravinsky; in fact, he tried for a month to compose the poignant finale, seeking on the piano the last bars of the tableaux.

Far more so than *The Firebird*, *Petrouchka* has the feeling of a collage—a collection of individual pictures artfully integrated into a convincing larger tapestry. Unlike *The Firebird*, which follows the expected narrative sequence, *Petrouchka* is an effort to convey through suggestion the mood or feeling of the puppet and its world. Given that this work was created at precisely the same time as Picasso and Braque were experimenting with visual collages (see chapter 5), and Eliot was interspersing “overheard” conversational fragments in his poems (see chapter 7), one is tempted to envisage some artistic zeitgeist at work.

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<sup>263</sup> A description of the score of *Petrouchka* is in Tansman 1949: 170.

Once again, Stravinsky worked closely with the members of the Diaghilev troupe, with Benois serving in this instance as joint author of the libretto. But in contrast to the customary procedure, the musical score was composed first, and it therefore controlled the shape of the dance. While this approach was entirely to Stravinsky's liking, it alienated Fokine, who eventually left the ballet corps. Stravinsky also participated far more actively in the actual staging. As the biographer André Boucourechliev comments: "It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the active role played by the composer in the stage presentation of the work, which finally confirmed his professional status as a man of the theater."<sup>264</sup> As Stravinsky gained in knowledge and confidence, he also found himself engaged in strenuous disputes about characterization, choreography, and instrumentation.<sup>265</sup> Ultimately, he and Benois were also to fight bitterly about control of the rights to the piece.

Like *The Firebird*, *Petrouchka*, ably conducted by Pierre Monteux, staged by Benois, and choreographed by Fokine, was a triumph. No doubt a considerable proportion of the great success of the premiere was due to Nijinsky's brilliant performance as the puppet. Stravinsky always paid tribute to his marvelous inventiveness: "As Petrouchka he was the most exciting human being I have ever seen on stage."<sup>266</sup> The positive reaction was also important for Stravinsky himself: "The success of Petrouchka was good for me, in that it gave me the absolute conviction of my ear just as I was about to begin *Le sacre du printemps*."<sup>267</sup>

### A Telling Failure

Given Stravinsky's incredible productivity from 1910 to 1913, with three unchallengeable masterpieces completed during that brief interval, it is tempting to envision the young composer on an unprecedented roll, strutting from one success to another. Instead, Stravinsky actually devoted considerable energy during this period to *The King of the Stars*, a short cantata for male chorus and large orchestra, set to a text by the poet Konstantin Balmont. Stravinsky had great hopes for this composition, which he dedicated to Debussy, but the piece simply did not work. Indeed, due to the complexity of the choral writing and to other difficulties, the piece was not performed until 1939 and has rarely been heard publicly since then.

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<sup>264</sup> Boucourechliev, "It is impossible to exaggerate . . ." is from Boucourechliev 1987: 52.

<sup>265</sup> For more on the dispute about characterization, see White 1947: 36.

<sup>266</sup> Stravinsky, "As Petrouchka he was . . ." is quoted in Van den Toorn 1983: 98.

<sup>267</sup> Stravinsky, "The success of Petrouchka . . ." is quoted in Van den Toorn 1983: 98.

Acknowledgment of a singular failure, against this background of unprecedented triumphs, is important. It reminds us that even the most creative innovators can proceed down a false path and that they differ from others in the way they recover, rather than in their intrinsic infallibility. Indeed, as noted earlier, the student of creativity Dean Keith Simonton has collected evidence suggesting that the greatest creators simply produce more works, which includes more inferior as well as more superior works.<sup>268</sup> One ought to think of *The King of the Stars* as a kind of failed *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*, a discarded early draft of *The Waste Land*, or Freud's "Project for a Scientific Psychology"—the creator's sincere, but still fumbling, search for a publicly accessible symbol system to capture an emerging, but still inarticulate, personal artistic vision. While unsuccessful by the usual public criteria, these particular searches may have harbored considerable significance for the creator himself: They helped him discover what he did, and did not, wish to achieve in his work and how best to pursue those goals in future works.

#### LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS: COMPOSING SOUND FOR A NEW CENTURY

In the spring of 1910, while finishing the score for *The Firebird*, Stravinsky had a dream: "There arose a picture of a sacred pagan ritual: The wise elders are seated in a circle and are observing the dance before death of the girl whom they are offering as a sacrifice to the god of Spring in order to gain his benevolence. This became the subject of *The Rite of Spring*."<sup>269</sup> It is possible that the dream itself was inspired by a poem by a Russian modernist, Sergei Gorodetsky. Over the next three years, and particularly in the period following the completion of *Petrouchka*, Stravinsky worked on the score to this tableau. As is well known, the premiere of *Le sacre du printemps* was a major artistic scandal; but within a few years, the piece came to be considered a seminal work and, no less, a turning point in modern musical composition.<sup>270</sup>

Writing about music or ballet is more difficult for me than writing about literature or poetry, but I shall try to re-create the composition of, and reactions to *Le sacre*. The events surrounding the actual composition constitute a complicated tale. Shortly after Stravinsky told Diaghilev about his vision, he was given a formal commission. Stravinsky realized that he would benefit from collaboration with someone knowledgeable about Russian pagan rituals, so he began to work intensively with Nicholas Roerich, a painter, archaeologist, and

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<sup>268</sup> For Simonton on the number of good and bad works produced by creative individuals, see Simonton 1988.

<sup>269</sup> Stravinsky, "There arose a picture . . ." is from Stravinsky 1989: vii.

<sup>270</sup> For more on the sources used for the early drafts of *Le sacre*, see Stravinsky 1969; and Van den Toorn 1987.

ethnographer. Though the most concentrated scoring was not to occur until two years later, Roerich declared as early as 1910 that “the new ballet presents a number of scenes from the celebration of a holy night among primitive slavs. The action begins during a summer night and finishes before actual sunrise, as the sun’s first rays appear. The choreography consists of ritual dances, and the work will be the first attempt to reproduce life among a primitive people without using any definite dramatic story.”<sup>271</sup> Fokine was already committed to other projects, and so the choreography fell to Nijinsky; because Ballet Russes members were already involved in developing two new spectacles (the notable *Daphnis and Chloe* of Maurice Ravel and Debussy’s *L’Après-midi d’un faune*), there was no prospect of a performance of *Le sacre* until 1913.<sup>272</sup>

The composition of *Le sacre du printemps* did not proceed nearly as swiftly or smoothly as that of earlier works. The longer gestation period probably occurred because of the novelty and incredible complexity of the task Stravinsky had set for himself. In *The Firebird* he was working on a well-known form of narrative, using familiar musical techniques (if in a highly polished way), and collaborating intimately with the whole Diaghilev team. In *Petrouchka* he was using the relatively familiar story of a harlequin in a circus setting, and he had the good fortune of a principal dancer whose genius perfectly matched the part. But in *Le sacre* nearly all of the components were new—the theme, the folk material, Roerich as the collaborator, Nijinsky as the choreographer, and perhaps above all, an increasingly radical musical idiom that the composer was formulating for himself.

Drafts for the score of *Le sacre* exist, but in my view, there is less to them than meets the eye. Not exhaustive in any sense, they are particularly lacking in materials from the first period of composition: Stravinsky’s “sketchbook” is more a logbook, or a record of critical points, in the evolution of the score. Still, some facts seem reasonably well established. The tides and scenarios were worked out with Roerich in the summer of 1911. Sketches for the parts “The Augurs of Spring,” “Spring Rounds,” and “Ritual of Rival Tribes” were prepared at about that time. Folk melodies—heard and remembered ones—were important ingredients in several of the sections. Stravinsky also conceived the chord whose rhythmic articulation has since become the signature of the work—the highly dissonant *sacre* chord, a combination of E-flat major with added minor seventh, and F-flat major. As he recalled, Stravinsky was unable to explain or justify the construction of the chord, but his ear “accept-

<sup>271</sup> Roerich, “The new ballet . . .” is quoted in Van den Toorn 1987: 34. Roerich, “The action begins . . .” is quoted in Druskin 1983: 64.

<sup>272</sup> For more on there being no prospect of a performance for *Le sacre*, see Van den Toorn 1987: 34.

ed it with joy.”<sup>273</sup> Interestingly, the opening sections depicting the awakening of nature, which lay the groundwork for the *sacre* chord, apparently were sketched later, and possibly even after the entire first part (of two) had been completed.

In both the initial vision and the early sketches, Stravinsky had in mind what the overall piece should sound like. (Here, the original vision resembles the early notions of *Guernica* and *The Waste Land*—very schematic but on the mark in terms of emotional tone and organizational structure.) “I had imagined the spectacular part of the performance as a series of rhythmic mass movements of the greatest simplicity which would have an instantaneous effect on the audience, with no superficial details or complications. The only solo was to be the sacrificial dance at the end of the piece.”<sup>274</sup>

Stravinsky generally composed a piece straight through, and, with some significant exceptions, *Le sacre* seems to have been drafted in much the same form as it is now heard; though the introduction may well have been penned at a relatively late stage (see figure 6.1). But, again, the composing involved problems: For example, there are no less than seven separate notations for the Khoborovod melody that frames the “Spring Rounds,” and the slow chromatic sections in the opening movements of the second part clearly caused significant struggles. In the sketchbook, the pianistic parts appear in almost final form, while those without such a clear pianolike quality are most extensively worked through. Since Stravinsky always composed on the piano, it is scarcely surprising that the non-pianistic portions would have caused him the most problems.<sup>275</sup>

One significant alteration occurred in the ordering of pieces. The “Abduction,” which now comes close to the beginning, right after “The Augurs of Spring,” had originally been scored to occur near the end of the first part, after “The Sage.” Pierre van den Toorn, who has carried out the most thorough investigation of the composition of *Le sacre*, believes that this reordering was instituted to prevent the first part from being anticlimactic.<sup>276</sup>

The sketches reveal another peculiar quality. While the work’s greatest innovation is now considered to be in its rhythmic configuration, the most painstaking efforts seem devoted to orchestration rather than to the rhythm. Whether this is because Stravinsky had already conceived the rhythmic details or because he did not generally deal with them in his written sketches cannot be determined.

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<sup>273</sup> Stravinsky, “accepted it with joy . . .” is quoted in Van den Toorn 1983: 139.

<sup>274</sup> Stravinsky, “I had imagined . . .” is from Stravinsky 1962: 28.

<sup>275</sup> For more on the problems associated with the composing of *Le sacre*, see Van den Toorn 1987: 34.

<sup>276</sup> For more on the reordering of scenes of *Le sacre*, see Van den Toorn 1983: 31.

FIGURE 6.1.

Interim page, *The Rite of Spring*, various sketches for “Savage Dance,” “The Ancestors,” and “Sacrificial Dance.”

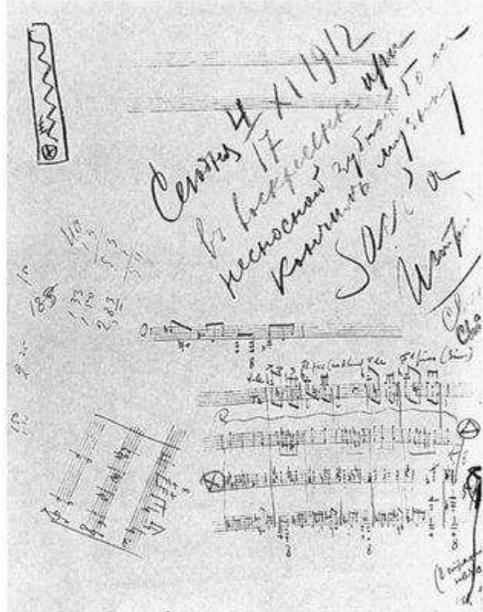
© André Meyer/Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Without question, the composition of *Le sacre* was a long, complex, and arduous process that took its toll on Stravinsky. In one celebrated annotation on the final page of the sketchbook he declared: “Today, November 17 1912, Sunday, with an unbearable toothache I finished the music of the Sacre. I. Stravinsky, Clarens, Chatelard Hotel”<sup>277</sup> (see figure 6.2). To compound matters, the rehearsal process did not go smoothly. Stravinsky fired the German pianist and began to play the piano part himself at rehearsals. Then, for unknown reasons, he stopped attending rehearsals regularly and left them in the hands of the capable conductor Monteux (though he made changes requested by Monteux until close to the time of the first performance). There was time for only a very few stage rehearsals at the new Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, where the piece was scheduled to debut at the end of May 1913.

<sup>277</sup> Stravinsky, “Today, November 17 1912 . . .” is quoted in Van den Toorn 1987: 24.

FIGURE 6.2.  
Final page, *The Rite of Spring*, signed, I. Stravinsky, and dated, November 1912.  
© André Meyer/Artephot-Ziolo, agence photographique, Paris.



Still, despite the meager rehearsal time for so intricate and innovative a piece, there were few intimations of the tremendously hostile reaction at the premiere. Stravinsky had played the piece in four-hand version with Debussy in the spring of 1913. Debussy had been awestruck, “as though by a hurricane from the remote past, which had seized our lives by the roots,”<sup>278</sup> as an observer, Louis Laloy, had recalled. The dress rehearsal on May 29 had been attended by Debussy, Ravel, and the Paris press, none of whom appears to have had the slightest intimation of the turbulent reaction that would occur the next day.

#### LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS: THE PERFORMANCE AND THE AFTERMATH

No other significant piece of classical music performed in modern times has been greeted with so overtly hostile a reaction as *Le sacre*. The audience at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées was agitated from the opening bars. When the curtain rose to reveal dancers jumping up and down, hissing and howling followed. The din continued throughout the performance and included whistling, stamping of feet, honking of automobile horns, and shouting of insults. Apparently, the audience unrest reached such a pitch that it was not possible to hear the music: Choreographer Nijinsky had to stand in the wings and shout numerals to the dancers.

<sup>278</sup> Laloy, “as though by a hurricane . . .” is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 64.

The extremity of the reactions is conveyed by oft-quoted eyewitness accounts. The artist Valentine Gross Hugo said: “It was as if the theater had been struck by an earthquake. It seemed to stagger in the uproar. Screams, insults, hoots, prolonged whistles drowned out the music, and then slaps and even boos.”<sup>279</sup> The author and photographer Carl van Vechten wrote: “Cat-calls and hisses succeeded the playing of the first bars and then ensued a battery of screams, countered by a foil of applause. . . . Some forty of the protestants were forced out of the theater but that did not quell the disturbance. The lights in the auditorium were fully turned out but the noise continued and I remember . . . the disjointed ravings of a mob of angry men and women.”<sup>280</sup>

Most of the initial written reviews were equally condemnatory. Opening season critics commented:

*Surely such stuff should be played on primeval instruments—or, better, not played at all.*

*The music is ingenious since if the composer be more than two years of age, he must have suppressed all he knew in order to devise it.*

*A crowd of savages, with knowledge or instinct enough to let them make the instruments speak, might have produced such noises.*

*Practically it has no relation to music at all as most of us understand the word.*<sup>281</sup>

Ernest Newman, the dean of British critics, announced in the *Sunday Times* that “the work is dead,” “the bluff is failed”; and he termed the event “the most farcical imposture in music of our time.”<sup>282</sup>

Why such a negative and hostile reaction to a work that had been appreciated in rehearsal and keenly anticipated by many of the Parisian cognoscenti? While the theme of a virgin who danced herself to death to propitiate the god of spring was provocative, it was certainly no more so than the bloodily erotic story recounted in Strauss’s *Salomé*. The ballet was lengthy, but not significantly more so than other of Stravinsky’s works and those of Tchaikovsky, Ravel, and other contemporary artists. Despite an air of surface chaos, the composition was highly structured and organized, in both its instrumentation and its rhythm.

One clue to the reaction may come from the undoubted technical skill of the composer and the widely acknowledged sophistication of the Ballet Russes.

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<sup>279</sup> Hugo, “It was as if the theater . . .” is quoted in Riding 1990: 17.

<sup>280</sup> Van Vechten, “Cat-calls and hisses . . .” is quoted in Eksteins 1989: 13.

<sup>281</sup> For more on the early criticisms, see Lesure 1980; and White 1947: 44.

<sup>282</sup> Newman, “the work is dead” and other comments, see Lesure 1980: 75.

Audience members in Paris had been accustomed to attending the ballet and being provoked (as in Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un faune*), but to remaining largely in command of the theatrical experience. Where other pieces had appeared outrageous, their authors had taken an ironic stance or had otherwise winked at the audience. *Le sacre*, however, seems to have fallen outside of the audience's customary categorical scheme, and the ensuing anomie was distinctly unsettling. All of the talent gathered on the stage of the theater seemed marshaled in an effort to shock, provoke, and challenge, and the audience simply decided not to collaborate in the effort. In particular, the early critics seem to have felt that they were being asked to accept too much, and they used their journalistic platforms to vent their anger.

Rather than there being any simple or single factor that caused the anger and alienation, I believe that the *combination* of factors engendered hostility. To begin with, the overt theme of a primitive sacrifice—a volitional self-annihilation—lacked any touch of pathos or moderation; it was unrelievedly amoral. The dissonant *sacre* chord was not played a few times: It was repeated for thirty-five solid bars and for a total of some 280 times in one section alone. Two- and three-note fragments were also reiterated many times in a monotonous and ceaseless alteration. There were not just frequent changes in rhythm: In some sections, nearly every bar differed from the previous one, with rhythms shifting abruptly from 9/8 to 5/8, 3/8, 2/4, 7/4, 3/4, 7/4, 3/8, 2/4, 7/8, and so on. The music was not just loud: It proceeded at unrelieved fortissimo for long percussive passages until suddenly stopping. Promising melodic passages appeared with tantalizing brevity, only to be dropped with unanticipated decisiveness. Stravinsky had thrived on juxtapositions since *The Firebird*; but now dissonant chords, irregular rhythms, exotic scales, and modified accent patterns virtually rained down on the listener. The method of melodic development—a process of breaking down, rearranging, and permuting simple four-note motifs based on Russian folks songs—shocked ears nurtured on nineteenth-century symphonic forms.<sup>283</sup> The superimposition of simple diatonic thematic material and discordantly complex harmonic texture within a relatively plotless structure was also difficult to assimilate.<sup>284</sup> Virtually every musical and balletic expectation had been violated most provocatively. What had been barely audible in *The Firebird* and tantalizing in *Petrouchka* transgressed the threshold of tolerability in *Le sacre*.

To add to this musical shock value, Nijinsky's choreography made little sense to the audiences of the time. Having dancers jump up and down or walk for no apparent purpose seemed just another flouting of convention: Symmetrical

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<sup>283</sup> On the method of melodic development in *Le sacre* as a shock to ears nurtured on nineteenth-century symphonic forms, see Tansman 1949: 39.

<sup>284</sup> On the superimposition of thematic material, see White 1947: 41.

body movements were abandoned to shuffles, jerks, and stamps; instead of presenting pirouettes, arabesques, or pas de deux, the dancers simply mimed the jarring sounds and irregular rhythms.<sup>285</sup>

Of all the commentators on the first *Le sacre*, the composer Ravel, one of Stravinsky's friends, may have had the deepest insight. Ravel declared that the piece's novelty lay not in the orchestration but in the musical entity itself.<sup>286</sup> The orchestra had to be seen as a single multiregistered instrument seeking a single effect. Stravinsky himself was later to deny that the piece was revolutionary: "What I was trying to convey was the surge of spring, the magnificent upsurge of nature reborn,"<sup>287</sup> he declared. But it is the overall work that one must either accept or reject.

Apparently, the work alienated so many initial auditors for many of the same reasons it ultimately became accepted and even taken for granted. Of course, it is the field, rather than the work that changed. The rhythmic experiments came to be heard as exciting in themselves and as peculiarly appropriate to the first intimations of spring, the tensions among the boisterous young boys, the mysterious and severe sages, and the hapless virgin. The brief introduction and sudden abandonment of so many motifs in an ever-increasing cacophony conveyed the scattered contributions of nature to the primitive rite, even as it forecast the drive toward an inevitable destructive climax. The very introduction and dropping of sections called on the listener to carry out a creative, integrating function.<sup>288</sup> In addition, the studied repetition of certain notes and phrases provided another kind of anchoring point for the listener. The playing of archaic folk themes by a full orchestra conveyed Stravinsky's sense of distance from the events being portrayed: It was as if a primitive rite were being performed with a full awareness of contemporary urban life, as happens with Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Debussy's comment on *Le sacre* is apt: "An extraordinary, ferocious thing. You might say it's primitive music with every modern convenience."<sup>289</sup>

Paraphrasing Debussy, one might say that in composing *Le sacre*, Stravinsky used every gesture and trick he knew in order to communicate an original idea. The issue was less whether one liked the combination than whether one accepted it. Not surprisingly, older, more conventional, more traditional listeners were offended, if not insulted. Those who were younger, who enjoyed

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<sup>285</sup> On Nijinsky's choreography, see Eksteins 1989, pp. 50–51. For a revisionist view, see Riding 1990.

<sup>286</sup> For Ravel on *Le sacre* as a novel entity, see Stravinsky 1970.

<sup>287</sup> Stravinsky, "What I was trying to convey . . ." is quoted in Vlad 1967: 29.

<sup>288</sup> On the listener being called on to carry out a creative, integrating function, see Boucourechliev 1987: 73.

<sup>289</sup> Debussy, "An extraordinary, ferocious thing . . ." is quoted in Eksteins 1989: 51.

the spectacle, who shared the composer's impatience with the romanticism of the late nineteenth century and who sought to expand what was possible for the eye and the ear were invigorated. The very disconnections, disjunctions, repetitions, and abandonments that had so strained the early listeners became the essence of the work for a younger audience, which had its listening habits nurtured by repeated performances of *Le sacre*. The same lines of division determined the initial reactions to works like Joyce's *Ulysses*; Eliot's *The Waste Land*; or Picasso's *Portrait of Gertrude Stein*, *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*, and the early cubist works. And, as was the case with these works, initial distaste or noncomprehension gave way rather rapidly to a recognition—indeed to an insistence—that one was dealing with a novel work of power and, perhaps, a masterpiece. As the biographer Alexandre Tansman comments: "It is difficult to tell what is more admirable in *The Rite*—the boldness of the innovation or the total absence of the hesitation in its realization, combined as it is with the absolute certainty of an uncompromising convention that stops at nothing."<sup>290</sup>

And what of Stravinsky's own reactions? Without doubt, Stravinsky was disappointed and dejected by the initial lack of comprehension of his efforts. The design and execution were clear in his own mind; he was satisfied with Monteux's conducting, though, with the passage of time, he became increasingly critical of Nijinsky's choreography. As with his earlier ballets, Stravinsky was pleased that *Le sacre* could so readily and effectively be presented by an orchestra alone. Whether he received a certain satisfaction from the scandal it caused is not clear; Diaghilev obviously derived some pleasure, and in later life Stravinsky became only too aware of the dividends of controversy.<sup>291</sup>

Stravinsky continued to revise the work, more so than with any other of his works, and he did so mostly to clarify the design and harmony.<sup>292</sup> He also revised his rationale for the work, downplaying narrative and imagistic elements and stressing the purely musical aspects. Also, the issuing of later, more definitive versions allowed Stravinsky to control the performances of the piece and to receive new royalties. The work was later rechoreographed, and Stravinsky was much more satisfied with Léonide Massine's version, which was performed in New York and Philadelphia in April 1930, with Martha Graham dancing the role of the Chosen One.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Tansman, "It is difficult to tell . . ." is from Tansman 1949: 17.

<sup>291</sup> On Diaghilev's delight in the scandal surrounding *Le sacre*, see Horgan 1989: 20.

<sup>292</sup> For more on revisions of *Le sacre*, see Craft 1982: 398.

<sup>293</sup> For details on the version performed by Graham in New York in 1930, see Graham 1991, pp. 127–133.

### FROM POETICS TO POLITICS

On the eve of the performance of *Le sacre du printemps*, Stravinsky gave an interview to a journal called *Montjoie!* in which he described what he wished to express in his new composition. To a contemporary reader the description seems straightforward. Each of the approximately one dozen sections is sketched in terms of its purpose and orchestration. The composer concludes with words of gratitude to Nijinsky, the choreographer, and to Roerich, the scenarist.<sup>294</sup>

Nonetheless, Stravinsky was infuriated by the publication of the interview, claiming to have been misrepresented. He seems to have been particularly incensed by the orotund opening, in which he declared: “In the *Prelude* before the curtain rises, I have confided to my orchestra the great fear which weighs on every sensitive soul confronted with the potentialities, the ‘being in one’s self which may increase and develop infinitely.’”<sup>295</sup> To make matters worse, a Russian journal, *Muzyka*, published a translation of the interview, prompting Stravinsky to retort that the interview had been given “practically on the run,” that the Russian translation was even less accurate than the French, and that the style of the piece was misleading. He declared to the editor of *Muzyka*: “It is highly inaccurate, full to overflowing with incorrect information, especially in the part concerning the subject of my work.”<sup>296</sup> But a version of the article revised by Stravinsky contains mostly grammatical changes. Finally, fully fifty-seven years after the original publication in *Montjoie!* Stravinsky declared in a communication to the *Nation* that the interview had been “concocted by a French journalist” and that he had disavowed it many times.<sup>297</sup>

Stravinsky’s concern about the way he is thought to have conceptualized his most famous work is not in itself surprising. What is anomalous are two further considerations. First, when given the opportunity to make corrections, Stravinsky made very few, and indeed in subsequent verbal accounts of *Le sacre*, he echoed many of the same remarks he apparently was rejecting in the *Montjoie!* account. Second, there is the oddity of a composer, whose music certainly could be expected to speak (or sing) for itself, caring so much about a chance interview published early in the century in an obscure French review.

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<sup>294</sup> For more on the *Montjoie!* incident, see Van den Toorn 1987: 5.

<sup>295</sup> “In the *Prelude* . . .” is quoted in Van den Toorn 1987: 5.

<sup>296</sup> Stravinsky, “It is highly inaccurate . . .” is quoted in Craft 1982: 55.

<sup>297</sup> On Stravinsky’s many disavowals of the *Montjoie!* article, see Van den Toorn 1987, pp. 5–6.

### A Legalistic Bent at Play

But as already noted, a concern with political minutiae seems to have characterized Stravinsky almost from the first. Like his father, Stravinsky had legal training. We may surmise that a legalistic (if not litigious) atmosphere pervaded the Stravinsky house and, perhaps, the intellectual and artistic circles in which his family traveled. Of course, Diaghilev was also trained as a lawyer, and Stravinsky had observed his mentor engaged in many negotiations throughout their twenty-year association; in some of them, Stravinsky and Diaghilev found themselves on the same side, but increasingly over the years, Stravinsky found himself at odds with his artistic mentor.

One source of information about the “political Stravinsky” can be found in his voluminous written legacy. Here, the Stravinsky-Diaghilev relationship does not come off very well. In addition to being terse, their telegrams to one another are devoid of any human touch and, with increasing frequency over the years, contain veiled or not-so-veiled threats. In letters, Stravinsky can be even more biting. For example, he writes to his friend conductor, Ernest Ansermet, about Diaghilev in 1919:

*His “moral integrity” about which he speaks incessantly is not worth much. . . . I was really ill when I learned of all this, not so much from his taking refuge in these “legal rights” as from his alluding to them, especially at a time when a friend finds himself in a difficult situation. A strange way to express friendship . . . I henceforth renounce all moneys that he might decide to send me without acknowledgement of my rights, moneys that I consider gifts and refuse to accept. And he should not complain about my behaving in this manner for he provoked it.*<sup>298</sup>

Stravinsky then enumerates his understandings of every property in dispute between Diaghilev and himself, in the process stipulating precise dates, lengths of commitments, and rights of ownership and performance as they apply in different parts of the world.

Some years later Stravinsky finds himself on equally tense terms with Ansermet. He writes: “Two words in response to your strange note of the 15th, *mon cher*. I am sorry but I cannot allow you to make any cuts in *Jeu de cartes*. The absurd one that you propose *cripples* my little March. . . . I repeat: either you play *Jeu de cartes* as it is, or you do not play it at all. You do not seem to have understood that my letter of October 14 was categorical on this point.”<sup>299</sup> Similarly barbed sets of exchanges take place with Monteux<sup>300</sup>, who had given

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<sup>298</sup> Stravinsky, “His ‘moral integrity’ . . .” is quoted in Craft 1982: 134.

<sup>299</sup> Stravinsky, “Two words in response . . .” is quoted in Craft 1982: 226.

<sup>300</sup> For more on the exchanges with Monteux, see Craft 1982: 210; and Craft 1984, pp. 66–67.

such exemplary performances of Stravinsky's early works, and with the conductor Serge Koussevitzky, whom Stravinsky labels as "the enemy."

Such charged relations extend even to the Swiss writer C. F. Ramuz, who idolized Stravinsky, and with whom the composer enjoyed a Braque-like artistic intimacy for some years, during which their families also became quite close. Their correspondence includes any number of tense communications about the ownership of different facets of works they coauthored. Throughout, Stravinsky seems determined to wreak out every advantage, no matter how small. He browbeats Ramuz: "I hold firmly to my argument, dear Ramuz, and it would deeply sadden me to learn that you were the one who composed that unfortunate page (of credits), knowingly, and with an ulterior motive."<sup>301</sup> I am reminded of the quip that "the haggling is so bitter because the stakes are so small."

Toward nonartists Stravinsky can be even more peremptory and brutal. His correspondence is filled with litigious threats and unrelenting cajolings directed at the phalanx of agents, brokers, bankers, publishers, and publicity agents with whom he had to deal during his lengthy career. Much of the argument between Stravinsky and his collaborators was over tiny sums of money. Some of the concerns were no doubt genuine: Stravinsky had had to abandon his personal property when the Bolsheviks took over Russia at the end of the First World War; and in the 1920s, he had been financially responsible not only for his four children but also for an ever-expanding extended family of émigrés. Yet, even after Stravinsky's family had decreased in size and he had personally become quite wealthy, the penny-pinching and the litigating continued unabated. The ungenerous aspects of his personality come through all too regularly in correspondence with his children and with his hapless first wife.<sup>302</sup>

Not that Stravinsky was incapable of wielding words in more flattering ways. When he wanted composers, performers, or agents to do his bidding, Stravinsky could turn on the charm. For example, Stravinsky induced the patron of the arts Werner Reinhart<sup>303</sup> to pay him for performances that did not take place and even to make Stravinsky's negotiating victories look like concessions. And when he wanted someone to help him achieve a wish—for example, to travel to America during the First World War, to gain entrance into the French Academy,<sup>304</sup> or to pledge to keep the story of a collaboration a secret—

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<sup>301</sup> Stravinsky: "I hold firmly to my argument . . ." is quoted in Craft 1985: 55.

<sup>302</sup> On Stravinsky's letters to his family, see Craft 1992, chaps. 8 and 9.

<sup>303</sup> On Stravinsky's relation to Reinhart, see Craft 1985: 139.

<sup>304</sup> On Stravinsky's wish to enter the French Academy, see Craft 1982: 5.

he could be unabashedly ingratiating.<sup>305</sup> His egocentrism and focus on his own needs and desires were great, but not so great as to blind him to the “voice” he had to adopt to increase the likelihood of getting his way. For him, as for the famed war strategist Karl Marie von Clausewitz, threats and suits were just negotiations being carried on by other means. While other creative masters did not avoid legal hassles, Stravinsky appeared to revel in legal wrangling and to continue with it as long as he was alive.<sup>306</sup>

To be sure, such inclinations to some extent reflect accidents of personality and upbringing. Certainly, an artist does not have to be as compulsive or embattled as Stravinsky, nor do most creative individuals live in the legal atmosphere that Stravinsky imbibed as a child. However, any artist involved in large-scale performances *does* have to enter the political arena, either directly, as Stravinsky did, or through the use of various representatives, agents, and patrons, which he also did in his later life.

Stravinsky’s early career experiences mirror those of many other artists who do not have the option of hiring a representative and do not have a sponsor. To all intents and purposes, then, artists who wish to work with others must either fight for their own rights and beliefs or surrender those to people with greater power or more persuasive arguments. The most notable creators almost always are perfectionists, who have worked out every detail of their conception painstakingly and are unwilling to make further changes unless they can be convinced that such alterations are justified. Few intrepid creators are likely to cede any rights to others; and even if they are consciously tempted to do so, their unconscious sense of fidelity to an original conceptualization may prevent them from following through.

### **Work on a More Intimate Scale**

Having composed three major works in a short span of time, and having participated actively in the roller-coaster-like atmosphere of mounting these productions, it is not surprising that Stravinsky did not attempt another large ballet for a period of time. Given his physical and mental exhaustion, the advent of the Great War, his settling in Switzerland, and the difficulty of initiating any large-scale cooperative performing enterprises at this time, it became virtually inevitable that Stravinsky would elect to work on a smaller scale.

Even before the war, Stravinsky had been attracted to Japanese art. As he put it: “The impression which [Japanese lyrics] made on me was exactly like that made by Japanese paintings and engravings. The graphic solution of problems

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<sup>305</sup> On Stravinsky as unabashedly ingratiating, see Craft 1982: 94; and White 1947: 61.

<sup>306</sup> On how Stravinsky reveled in negotiating, see Libman 1972.

of perspective and space shown by their art incited me to find something analogous in music.”<sup>307</sup> And so Stravinsky composed a set of miniatures, including several based on Russian folk songs, and set a number to music. His collaboration with Ramuz came to center on works that were both solid and small-scale, especially *Histoire du soldat*, which could be read, played, and danced by a small troupe of performers and a performing ensemble of limited size. Other works of the time, such as *Renard*, *Cat’s Cradle*, and *Four Russian Songs*, were all of a much more confined, though not less original, scale than *Petrouchka* or *Le sacre*. It may have been at this time that Stravinsky arrived at his explicit philosophy of composition: that the setting of rigorous constraints on himself functioned as a liberating experience.

### LES NOCES: A DIFFERENT KIND OF MASTERPIECE

As early as 1912, Stravinsky conceived of a choral work on the theme of a Russian peasant wedding.<sup>308</sup> While his initial conception was to present an actual wedding spectacle, Stravinsky soon realized that he really wanted to present “wedding material through direct quotations of popular—i.e., non-literary—verse.” As he explained it later, *Les noces* consisted of a suite of wedding episodes through which waft clichés and quotations of the sort overheard in *Ulysses*. Rather than a connecting thread of discourse, there is instead the creation of an atmosphere. And rather than individual personalities, there are roles that impersonate different types of character.

Actual composition of this masterpiece began in 1914. When Stravinsky played an early version for Diaghilev in 1915, the impresario was so touched that he wept; it was to become his favorite Stravinsky composition and the one dedicated to him.<sup>309</sup> *Les noces* is said to have been Stravinsky’s favorite composition as well. The music was composed in short-score form by 1917, but a complete score was completed only in 1923, just before the premiere.<sup>310</sup>

None of Stravinsky’s works underwent so much rescoring—“so many instrumental metamorphoses,”<sup>311</sup> as he put it. The initial version was scored for a large orchestra.<sup>312</sup> Next Stravinsky divided the various instrumental groups into separate ensembles on stage; for instance, the strings were contrasted

<sup>307</sup> Stravinsky, “The impression which [Japanese lyrics] . . .” is quoted in Druskin 1983: 126.

<sup>308</sup> For more on the theme of a Russian peasant wedding, see Van den Toorn 1983: 155.

<sup>309</sup> On *Les noces* as Stravinsky’s favorite piece, see Libman 1972: 227.

<sup>310</sup> For a description of *Les noces*, see Van den Toorn 1983: 155. For more on the exposition and development of *Les noces*, see Van den Toorn 1983, pp. 130–134.

<sup>311</sup> Stravinsky, “so many instrumental metamorphoses . . .” is quoted in Van den Toorn 1983: 156.

<sup>312</sup> On the evolution of the composition of *Les noces*, see Vlad 1967: 70.

with the brass. In other versions Stravinsky contrasted the winds with the percussions, or combined pianolas (a kind of player piano) with bands of brass instruments. Later the brass were replaced by a harmonium and the strings by a pianola and two Gypsy cymbals. Finally, in 1921, Stravinsky arrived at a satisfying solution: "I suddenly realized that an orchestra of four pianos would fulfill all my conditions."<sup>313</sup> He complemented the pianos with a collection of percussion instruments.

Despite the lengthy compositional period with its variety of contemplated orchestrations, *Les noces* emerges as a unified piece. It consists of three tableaux and four movements. Musical and literary references illustrate several components of the traditional wedding ceremony (referred to as matchmaking, separation of the couple, at the bride's house, at the bridegroom's house, the bride's departure, lament, parental blessing, sacrifice, ritual meal, funeral, the wedding bed, the burial of virginity, and so on).<sup>314</sup>

The composition is typically intricate. Stravinsky carefully studied the phonetics of Russian folks songs and made sure that he captured the precise accents and stammering in the accompaniment. He also conferred a witty touch by means of syncopated rhythms and choral voices. The rhythm, which dominates the composition, is largely obsessive, synchronous pulsation; there is a fundamental motif of a fourth divided into a minor third and a major second. The melodies are largely folk songs, and the timbre features a contrast between percussion, on the one hand, and the continuity of the singing voice, on the other. With the instrumentation restricted to percussion instruments, the piece features simple combinations of piano, xylophone, and triangle.

*Les noces* can be instructively contrasted with *Le sacre*. It has been described as a kind of civilized, "cultural" answer to the explosive "pagan" ritual of *Le sacre*. Absent are the harsh violence, abrupt shifts, or ear-blasting passages of *Le sacre*; the piece is austere, concise, concentrated, and intellectually controlled while still spirited and humane. The recurring "vertical" chromaticism of *Le sacre* is replaced by music that is largely diatonic. Instead of an extravagant spectacle, there is a formal tableau; instead of a splendid orchestra, there is a compact and rigorously functional ensemble of players, with voices as important accompaniments. Both compositions do create their own form, with thematic material shifting in the face of a pulsating rhythmic drive; but the thematic material in *Les noces* is far more closely related and integrated with the rhythm. As in *Le sacre*, the music's direction comes from coupling, rotation, and metric transformation of a small number of melodic scraps.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Stravinsky, "I suddenly realized . . ." is quoted in Vlad 1967: 70.

<sup>314</sup> Components of the traditional wedding ceremony are described in Vlad 1967: 69; and White 1947: 71.

<sup>315</sup> On *Les noces* coming from a small number of melodic scraps, see White 1947: 73.

Like *Ulysses* or *The Waste Land*, both completed at almost the same historical moment, the text is a montage of related, but deliberately unorganized, popular sayings; the consciousness of the audience member must provide the integration, which occurs at the level of intuition rather than formal analysis.

The extensive experimentation that Stravinsky went through in creating *Les noces* gives insight into his approach to composition. Stravinsky generally had a clear conception of the shape of the piece that he was creating; and with the help of the piano, he was able early on to identify its basic themes and rhythms. Not an inspired melodist, he relied as much on the scraps of the classical and folk musical cultures as on his own experience with the optimal instruments and ensembles in fulfilling his musical ideas and in determining how to juxtapose various fragments and sections to achieve the musical and expressive effects that he sought.

Stravinsky was engaged in a complex endeavor in which he had to balance literary themes, dramatic personalities, and dominant moods against the available instrumental and musical resources. We might say that the primary symbol system in which he worked was tonal music, but that the music had to be reworked constantly in light of linguistic, personal, visual-scenic, bodily-kinesthetic, and metrical considerations. Various drafts represent his changing efforts to mediate among these elements.

In my view *Le sacre* and *Les noces* are the two most important compositions by Stravinsky, comparable to *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* by Joyce, *Les demoiselles d'Avignon* and *Guernica* by Picasso, and, if one can cross the art-science chasm, to the two theories of relativity formulated by Einstein. We see at work what I have dubbed the ten-year rule, with significant innovations or reorientations occurring at approximate decade-long intervals after an initial decade in which the skills of one's trade have been mastered. In Stravinsky's case, the situation is complicated by the fact that the two compositions were begun at almost the same time, with *Les noces* having an extraordinarily lengthy gestation period. The reactions to *Les noces* were initially mixed, but its genius was gradually recognized; nowadays many find it a more satisfying work than the grander, but less elegantly shaped, *Le sacre*.<sup>316</sup>

Trying to label the stylistic provenance of these pieces serves little purpose. Yet in both cases, one observes Stravinsky struggling to reconcile the different influences upon, and pressures within, himself. The three great works of the immediate prewar period constitute Stravinsky's distancing himself from the Russian balletic tradition, as both the themes and the instrumental means become increasingly more radical: One can speculate that Rimsky-Korsakov would have been proud of *The Firebird*, ambivalent about *Petrouch-*

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<sup>316</sup> For more about the reactions to *Les noces*, see Tansman 1949, pp. 186–187; and White 1947, pp. 75–76.

ka, and personally offended by *Le sacre du printemps*. The latter piece belongs properly to, and helped to constitute, the Parisian avant-garde; it is remote from Russian national or Russian-European music.

In contrast, *Les noces* may be thought of as a kind of return to, and confirmation of, Stravinsky's Russian origins. The piece denotes an actual pivotal life event—the peasant wedding. Both the language and the music draw widely and deeply on folk materials, in a manner that reminds one of Béla Bartók; accordingly, the piece appears remote from current Western European concerns. The piece represents a further development in an increasingly personal idiom of a master in his prime.

### A FRESH RELATION TO THE MUSIC OF THE PAST

With *Les noces*, Stravinsky climactically spanned the Russian past and the modern era. In some ways, the effort to mediate between the two strands within him never ceased, he remained simultaneously Russian and modern throughout his career.

But from well before the completion of *Les noces*, Stravinsky had embarked on a new enterprise—a rediscovery of the classical music of the past and its re-creation through the embracing of a neoclassical style. As a neoclassicist, he paid homage to both the melodic sensibility and the forms favored by composers from the classical era. As had always been the case, Stravinsky was his own best teacher, and so he now pored over work from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the same discipline he had displayed two decades before in tackling modern masters. As Boucourechliev comments: “He was determined to make the whole of history his own, to use it for whatever attracted or inspired him at that moment, whatever the occasion or circumstance, and to use it to create a new work by Stravinsky.”<sup>317</sup>

While walking through the Place de la Concorde after the end of the Great War, Diaghilev suggested to Stravinsky that he study some music written by the eighteenth-century composer Giovanni Pergolesi. Stravinsky liked the music and decided to create a Pergolesi-inspired piece based on the figure of Pulcinella. Diaghilev arranged for Picasso, whom Stravinsky had met a few years earlier, to create the decor for the piece. Thus, the two indispensable creators of modern art became close collaborators for the only time in their lives. According to Stravinsky, “Picasso accepted the commission to design the decor of Pulcinella for the same reason that I agreed to arrange the music—for the fun of it.”<sup>318</sup> Stravinsky added: “[Picasso] worked miracles and I find it

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<sup>317</sup> Boucourechliev, “He was determined to make . . .” is from Boucourechliev 1987: 18.

<sup>318</sup> Stravinsky, “Picasso accepted the commission . . .” is quoted in Druskin 1983: 88.

difficult to decide what was more enhancing—the coloring, the design, or the amazing inventiveness of this remarkable man.”<sup>319</sup>

The composition of *Pulcinella* occurred at a critical juncture for Stravinsky. In 1920 he moved from Switzerland, a neutral no-man’s land, to France, thus casting his lot with the West and identifying more explicitly than before with the Western classical tradition. Stravinsky was aware of this pivotal moment: “*Pulcinella* was my discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible. It was a backward look of course—the first of many love affairs in that direction—but it was a look in the mirror too.”<sup>320</sup>

The parallels with Picasso have often been remarked on. The two men were born a year apart, both of them somewhat outside the orbit of mainstream Western European culture. Both gravitated to and made their first major splashes in Paris in the early 1900s, with Picasso more precocious than Stravinsky. Their most determinedly avant-garde works were produced in the years just before the Great War, with Picasso working alongside Braque, and Stravinsky immersed in the world of the Ballets Russes. During the war both tread water to a certain extent, with Picasso also meeting his first wife, who, interestingly enough, turned out to be a member of the Ballets Russes. Then, around the end of the war, both men embraced a middle-class life in Paris and moved into a neoclassical phase of creation, during which each was quite cognizant of what the other was doing. This postwar period also engendered an ingratiating playfulness in their work, as well as a preoccupation with more intimate compositional forms.

An interest in the work of the past is certainly an understandable step for a master, and particularly for one steeped in his particular art form and conscious of its origins and his own niche in its evolution. Such a historical bent may also be a normal reaction to an early career, in which one has quite explicitly rejected the canons of the past and one’s own roots. What one absorbed intuitively as a young student can now be revisited in a more conscious and detached way; and because one has already made a decisive break with the past, it is no longer perceived as a crushing weight. Frequently one goes back to more remote times, as Stravinsky noted: “It is in the nature of things that epochs which immediately precede us are temporarily further away from us than others which are more remote in time.”<sup>321</sup>

I submit that for Stravinsky and Picasso the opportunity to engage in a stimulating and sustaining dialectic with the past was one of the prime reasons each

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<sup>319</sup> Stravinsky, “[Picasso] worked miracles . . .” is from Stravinsky 1962: 81.

<sup>320</sup> Stravinsky, “*Pulcinella* was my discovery . . .” is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 141.

<sup>321</sup> Stravinsky, “It is in the nature of things . . .” is from Stravinsky 1962: 75.

could contribute creatively for so long. Reworking and learning from the past, they discovered further dimensions of their own voices. In this way they exploited an option not available to scientists or mathematicians. Had they lacked this playground of the past, they might have had little choice but to become yet more individualistic and radical, a tack that might have proved troublesome and counterproductive.

While Stravinsky's early work had been frankly and productively collaborative, his work in the 1920s and 1930s was more individual. Stravinsky did not stop collaborating, but he was more likely to initiate works and to do so with one or two other select collaborators of equal status, rather than as part of an established ensemble like the Ballets Russes.

In addition to several fruitful collaborations with Ramuz and the one with Picasso, Stravinsky also worked on *Oedipus Rex* with the French poet Jean Cocteau, and on *Perséphone*, with the French novelist and dramatist André Gide. He considered a collaboration with Berthold Brecht but found himself unable to work in revolutionary political theater. He began his longest, most fruitful, and most important association with the Russian-born dancer and choreographer George Balanchine; such rapport and mutual respect existed between the men over a forty-year period that there seems to have been little of the tension that characterized Stravinsky's other collaborations. I suggest that, of all Stravinsky's collaborators, Balanchine was closest to being his equal in terms of background, talent, and aspirations. Their tastes and their views of the relation between dance and music were cut from the same cloth, and both men were products of the same social and artistic tradition, with Balanchine exactly one generation younger than his father-figure and mentor, Stravinsky.<sup>322</sup>

Throughout this period Stravinsky deliberately strove to relate contemporary and earlier works. Like Eliot in *The Waste Land*, he pointedly used materials from other eras. As far as he was concerned, it was not necessary for an audience to appreciate a quotation directly; sensing at an unconscious level the use of themes with some substantial history and allusiveness sufficed. (This idea was quite similar to what Eliot termed the "objective correlative," as discussed in chapter 7.) Like his English counterpart, Stravinsky also spurned work that wallowed in individual self-consciousness; he wanted to confirm and sustain a tradition, not create an idiosyncratic style. He saw all of European music as a single, indissoluble whole to which one could contribute. As he once expressed it: "Did not Eliot and I set out to refit old ships? And refitting old ships is the real task of the artist. He can say again, in his way, only what has already been said."<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> For more on Stravinsky's relation to Balanchine, see Druskin 1983: 62.

<sup>323</sup> Stravinsky, "Did not Eliot and I . . ." is quoted in Druskin 1983: 79.

As Stravinsky became more established, he found himself in a position to dictate the terms for each of these works; ever the perfectionist, it was very important for him to maintain control over as many facets as possible. Increasingly, he stipulated the most stringent criteria for performance of his pieces, often insisting on conducting or playing his own works. Like a dictatorial military leader, he allowed conductors and interpreters virtually no leeway. He composed piano music for himself and commissioned violin music for a young Russian violinist, Samuel Dushkin, who willingly and wholly bent to the master's whims. The Stravinsky of the 1920s and 1930s became a small industry, all focused around his own career.

### THE MATURE THINKER AND PERSON

While working out his relation to the musical past, Stravinsky was also defining other aspects of his mature personality. In 1926, while attending the seven-hundredth anniversary of the Celebration of Saint Anthony in Padua, Stravinsky underwent a profound religious experience. Shortly thereafter, Stravinsky rejoined the same church he had abandoned in his youth. By a curious coincidence, Stravinsky's return to the Russian Catholic fold occurred almost simultaneously with Eliot's conversion to the Anglo-Catholic faith (see chapter 7). One cannot help wondering whether, in addition to the men's need for membership in a traditional church at a time of personal and worldwide turmoil, the respective conversions of these two exiles represented an atonement for past "sins" of aesthetic iconoclasm. It may also have been part of a bargain they struck with God, in an effort to sustain their creative powers. Even if his motives may have been mixed, Stravinsky experienced very powerful religious feelings, which remained with him throughout his life, affecting his daily activities. He declared: "I regard my talent as God-given and I pray to him daily for the strength to use it. When I discovered that I had been made custodian of this gift, in my earliest childhood, I pledged myself to God to be worthy of it. . . . First ideas are very important—they come from God."<sup>324</sup> And as he once told Robert Craft, in order to compose religious works he had to "not only believe in the symbolic sense, but in the person of the Devil and the miracle of the Church."<sup>325</sup>

For most of the rest of the world, irrespective of the personal demons with which he was wrestling, Stravinsky represented the quintessential cosmopolitan artist: well connected, well groomed, and living the good life in Europe; married, but with an attractive and artistic mistress named Vera de Basset (whom he married in 1940 following the death of his invalid first wife); sailing and later jetting all over the world to promote his own music and to confer his

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<sup>324</sup> Stravinsky, "I regard my talent . . ." is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 158.

<sup>325</sup> Stravinsky, "not only believe in the symbolic sense . . ." is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 158.

blessing—or to pronounce his curse—on others' music. As he grew older, Stravinsky contributed actively to this legend by his pungent writings and by his participation in various efforts to dramatize his intriguing persona. He was unquestionably a witty, charming, articulate, and literate individual, whose companionship delighted those charmed few admitted to—and retained in—his circle. Indeed, though I would clearly have been eager to know all of the individuals chronicled in this book, I believe I would have most enjoyed eavesdropping at the Stravinsky dining table.

But Stravinsky preferred to view himself as a workman in a long tradition:

*I was born out of due time in the sense that by temperament and talent I should have been more suited for the life of a small Bach, living in anonymity and composing regularly for an established service and for God. I did weather the world I was born to, weather it well you might say, and I have survived—though not uncorrupted—the histericism of publishers, musical festivals, recording companies, and publicity—including my own.<sup>326</sup>*

Clearly, the flamboyant, controversial, public Stravinsky was balanced by a cerebral, hardworking, private craftsman. He saw himself as embodying an Apollonian principle of order and balance, with only occasional forays into the turbulent Dionysian realm.

Stravinsky worked at least ten hours a day for many years. Beginning by playing a Bach fugue on the piano, he would compose for four to five hours in the morning and then, after lunch, orchestrate and transcribe for the rest of the day. His approach was very orderly; as his biographer Mikhail Druskin notes: “Stravinsky’s work table resembled that of a surgeon rather than that of a composer. The neatness and precision of his scores recalled those of a map, with every syllable, every note, and every rest perfectly drawn.”<sup>327</sup> He had available all conceivable writing implements and scoring paraphernalia he might need, and he used these like the most highly skilled craftsman.

Stravinsky introspectively described his own composing activity: “For me as a creative musician, composition is a daily function that I feel compelled to discharge. I compose because I am made for that and cannot do otherwise. . . . I am far from saying that there is no such thing as inspiration. . . . Work brings inspiration if inspiration is not discernible in the beginning.”<sup>328</sup> (I am reminded of Freud’s similar plaint: “When inspiration does not come to me, I go half way to meet it.”<sup>329</sup>) Stravinsky remarked on the opportunistic aspects of com-

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<sup>326</sup> Stravinsky, “I was born out of . . .” is quoted in Druskin 1983: 4.

<sup>327</sup> Druskin, “Stravinsky’s work table . . .” is from Druskin 1983: 11.

<sup>328</sup> Stravinsky, “For me as a creative musician . . .” is from Stravinsky 1962: 174.

<sup>329</sup> Freud, “When inspiration does not come to me . . .” is quoted in Jones 1961: 225.

posing: "I stumble upon something unexpected. This unexpected element strikes me. I make a note of it. At the proper time, I put it to profitable use."<sup>330</sup>

In describing the composing of *Petrouchka*, Stravinsky paid tribute to the role of his own bodily intelligence: "What fascinated me most of all in the work was that the different rhythmic episodes were dictated by the fingers themselves. . . . Fingers are not to be despised; they are great inspirers and in contact with a musical instrument, often give birth to unconscious ideas which might otherwise never come to life."<sup>331</sup> Noting his tendencies to obsessiveness,<sup>332</sup> he commented: "I would go on eternally revising my music were I not too busy composing more of it."<sup>333</sup> And he added: "They think I write like Verdi! Such nonsense! They don't listen right. These people always want to nail me down. But I won't let them! On the next occasion I do something quite different; and that bewilders them."<sup>334</sup> These words echo those of Picasso, Graham, and other introspective creators.

Always a reader and an intellectual, in a way that Picasso never was, Stravinsky hewed out a coherent musical philosophy during his middle years. While he did not enjoy literary composing per se, he was articulate. Working with gifted ghostwriters like Pierre Suvchinsky, and Alexis Manuel Lévy (who wrote under the pen name of Roland-Manuel), he voiced this philosophy in two seminal works: his autobiography of 1936 (*Chronique de ma vie*) and his Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard, delivered in 1939 and 1940 and published in 1942 as *The Poetics of Music*.

In these writings Stravinsky develops his positive views of music, while also seizing the occasion to castigate his opponents. Stravinsky's annoyance at the pretentiousness of Wagner's music, through which that composer sought to combine all art forms and to elevate his works to the status of a religion, motivated Stravinsky to assert, memorably, that music in itself is powerless to express anything. He wanted to replace unending melody with discrete order, syncretic and synthetic forms with self-contained ones, and emotional self-expression with strictly musical statements.

Suppressing whatever revolutionary impulses may have existed in his own person and animated his earlier music, ignoring the rich emotional associations of his early masterpieces, Stravinsky stressed the importance of conventions and traditions, and the utility of self-imposed constraints. He loathed disorder, randomness, arbitrariness, the Circean lure of chaos. Music was akin

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<sup>330</sup> Stravinsky, "I stumble upon something . . ." is from Stravinsky 1970: 55.

<sup>331</sup> Stravinsky, "What fascinated me . . ." is quoted in Vlad 1967: 14.

<sup>332</sup> For more on Stravinsky's tendency toward obsessiveness, see Tansman 1949: 9.

<sup>333</sup> Stravinsky, "I would go on eternally . . ." is quoted in Stravinsky and Craft 1962: 197.

<sup>334</sup> Stravinsky, "They think I write like Verdi . . ." is quoted in White 1947: 126.

to mathematical thinking and relationships, and one could discern powerful, inexorable laws at work. In the paradox-packed closing lines of *The Poetics of Music*, Stravinsky declared: "My freedom will be so much the greater and more meaningful, the more narrowly I limit my field of action and the more I surround myself with obstacles. Whatever diminishes constraints, diminishes strength. The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one's self of the chains that shackle the spirit."<sup>335</sup>

Stravinsky's philosophical statements about music and composing have taken on a considerable importance, analogous in spirit, if not equal in potency, to those put forth around the same time by Eliot with respect to literature. In fashioning coherent (and surprisingly congruent) philosophies, these men differ from Picasso, whose intellectual aspirations were less well honed. Eliot and Stravinsky also shared a conservative political orientation, one tinged with anti-Semitism and a sympathy for fascism; in one letter to his German manager, Stravinsky declared: "I loathe all communism, Marxism, the execrable Soviet monster, and also all liberalism, democratism, atheism, etc. I detest them to such a degree and so unreservedly."<sup>336</sup> Stravinsky's political conservatism did not blind him to the value of radical musical innovations. The same person who praised tradition and constraints had once declared: "I am the first to recognize that daring is the motive force of the finest and greatest artist. I approve of daring; I set no limits to it."<sup>337</sup>

However, the two artists differed in important ways. Stravinsky was not concerned about political matters, except to the extent that they impinged on his own artistic labors or pertained to the fate of his beloved Russia. And while much of Eliot's poetry now seems to be directly autobiographical, chronicling the agonies of his personal life, Stravinsky's music appears to have evolved intrinsically. Perhaps in the deepest sense, this lack of association between musical and extramusical events confirms Stravinsky's conviction that music cannot express anything by itself.

### FINAL MASTERY

In 1947, after the Second World War, Stravinsky was leading the life of the expatriate in southern California. Already in his mid-sixties, he had transcended his initial revolutionary period and had worked through an entire neoclassical agenda. Both the Russian and the European worlds had fallen apart. His parents, his first wife, and one of his children were dead; his other children were grown; and it would have been easy either to retire or to suc-

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<sup>335</sup> Stravinsky, "My freedom will be . . ." is from Stravinsky 1970: 87.

<sup>336</sup> Stravinsky, "I loathe all communism . . ." is quoted in Craft 1984: 236.

<sup>337</sup> Stravinsky, "I am the first . . ." is from Stravinsky 1970: 15.

cumb to the allure of Hollywood. Indeed, a number of attempts were made to get him to compose for the popular American screen and theater. Stravinsky's attitude about those opportunities is captured wonderfully in the story of his encounter with the well-known American impresario Billy Rose.<sup>338</sup> Rose had heard *Scenes de ballet* by Stravinsky and liked it, but he felt it could be improved by an arranger. Rose wired:

*your music great success stop could be sensational success if you would authorise robert russell bennett retouch orchestration*

Stravinsky immediately wired back the deflating response:

*satisfied with great success*

In later life, Stravinsky spoke about two crises he had had to deal with: the loss of Russia and his native language, after 1920; and the need to adjust after the Second World War to a new form of music, the austere serial style that Schönberg had developed in the early 1900s and that was being widely adopted in elite musical circles. In each case, he was able to make an adjustment and thereby to prolong his musical life.

Stravinsky was fortunate enough to create a third career, one that enabled him to compose with originality until the last years of his life. The energy and inspiration came from him, of course, but these were reinforced by pivotal contacts with two younger artists. In 1947, on a visit to the Chicago Art Institute, he had been greatly impressed by William Hogarth's engravings that depicted *A Rake's Progress*. He talked with his friend Aldous Huxley, the writer, about his plan to compose an opera based on this theme; soon thereafter Huxley introduced him to the young British poet W. H. Auden, who had also immigrated to America.

At Stravinsky's invitation, Auden joined the renowned musician in creating a full-length opera, *The Rake's Progress*. The two men worked for three years on the piece, spending approximately a year on each of three acts. From all evidence their collaboration delighted both men, who enjoyed obsessing over the details of versification as well as gossiping about the present and historical great figures of Europe and the United States. The opera was performed to considerable critical acclaim in Europe and in the United States in the early 1950s. Often considered the culmination of Stravinsky's neoclassical period, *The Rake's Progress* demonstrated that he was able to execute a major work in the English language and to reach new audiences without compromising his artistic integrity.

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<sup>338</sup> For more on Stravinsky's encounter with Rose, see Craft 1982: 211.

At about the same time that he met Auden, Stravinsky also made initial contact with the gifted young American conductor Robert Craft. Craft was intrigued by the compositional innovations associated with the Viennese school of twelve-tone, or serial, music, which Schönberg had instituted several decades earlier. Stravinsky was of course aware of these experiments; and earlier in his career, he had listened with sympathy to some of Schönberg's work, calling *Pierrot Lunaire* "this brilliant instrumental masterpiece."<sup>339</sup> He had declared in his 1940 lectures: "Whatever opinion one may have of Arnold Schoenberg's music, it is impossible for a self-respecting mind equipped with genuine musical culture not to feel that the composer of *Pierrot Lunaire* is fully aware of what he is doing and that he is not trying to deceive anyone."<sup>340</sup>

Nonetheless, Stravinsky had kept his distance from the serialists for several reasons, ranging from his personal antipathy to Schönberg, to his dislike of a pri-ori compositional schemes, to the understandable uneasiness induced by a major competitor, one who was arrogant about his work, sarcastic about the ballet, and dismissive of Stravinsky's own efforts. (Schönberg had declared: "I have made a discovery that will assure the preponderance of German music for a hundred years."<sup>341</sup>) Two somewhat paranoid personalities inevitably clashed. The gulf between the composers, while understandable, was unfortunate, particularly since they lived near one another in Los Angeles and shared many of the same interests and acquaintances.

Craft was not to be undone by these Old World tribal feuds. He gently pressured Stravinsky to listen to the music of the Schönberg circle, and Stravinsky found it far more stimulating than he had anticipated. He was particularly attracted to the work of Schönberg's younger associate Anton Webern, whose pointillistic, intervallic approach proved more congenial to his ear than Schönberg's grander and more harmonically oriented style. When Schönberg died in 1951 (roughly coincident with the conclusion of the *Rake* project), Stravinsky felt licensed to begin his own experimentation with serial techniques.

Even as the contact with Diaghilev had inspired Stravinsky in his twenties, and the revisiting of the classical repertoire had invigorated Stravinsky in midlife, the exposure to serial (twelve-tone) music fueled Stravinsky's compositional powers in late life. At a life stage when most creators have ceased to work altogether (like Eliot) or are susceptible to repeating themselves (as Picasso sometimes did), Stravinsky embarked on a set of compositions that, while never widely popular, are considered by some critics to be as important and innovative as his earlier works. In compositions like *Canticum sacrum*

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<sup>339</sup> Stravinsky, "this brilliant instrumental masterpiece . . ." is quoted in Vlad 1967: 39.

<sup>340</sup> Stravinsky, "Whatever opinion one may have . . ." is from Stravinsky 1970: 17.

<sup>341</sup> Schönberg, "I have made a discovery . . ." is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 210.

(1956), *Agon* (1957), *Threni* (1958), and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra* (1958–1959), Stravinsky created works in the language of serial music that retained his personal voice and reflected his lifelong aesthetic vision. Rather than being archetypal serial music, these works combined the tonal and the serial. Melodic invention and emotional immediacy were perhaps less evident than in earlier music; but his thematic and contrapuntal skills continued to develop, and the minted Stravinskian tonality, rhythmic organization, and sharp juxtapositions remained.<sup>342</sup>

We may think of this synthesis as what might have happened if Picasso had crossed the Rubicon into purely abstract art while adhering to key compositional principles that had animated his earlier periods, or, more metaphorically, if Einstein had succeeded in fusing the relativistic and quantum-mechanical approaches. To be sure, Stravinsky's work in the serial mode proved less accessible (and less frequently performed) than some of the earlier works. Stravinsky appeared to accept this with resignation tinged with a defiance; he stated in his autobiography: "The general public no longer gives my music the enthusiastic reception of early days. . . . Their attitude certainly cannot make me deviate from my path."<sup>343</sup>

Stravinsky's strength began to ebb in his eighties, and he suffered a series of debilitating illnesses, which gradually reduced his composing and performing activities. Still, he remained a vivid presence in the international artistic scene through a curious activity—the issuing of a long series of books and articles he and Craft penned. Craft is a gifted writer, a knowledgeable musician, and a sharp observer of the contemporary artistic scene; and in the twenty-odd years during which he lived with the Stravinsky family, virtually becoming one of its members, he came to know the mind of the master extremely well. He continued to invigorate his mentor by introducing Stravinsky to new music and encouraging him to listen again to some of the Germanic music he had earlier castigated.

What began with a series of questions and answers executed at Stravinsky's seventy-fifth birthday in 1957 culminated in writings where, as *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* entry indicates, "the two authors were beginning to sink their individual identities in a new character which was distinguished by some of the salient characteristics of both."<sup>344</sup> Controversy has arisen about the extent to which Craft placed words in Stravinsky's mouth (just as the same question could be raised about earlier collaborators, Suvchinsky, in his *Autobiography*, and Claude Roland-Manuel, in his *Poetics*). But we clearly know far

<sup>342</sup> For more on Stravinsky's brand of serial music, see Tansman 1949: 58; and White and Noble 1980.

<sup>343</sup> Stravinsky, "The general public . . ." is from Stravinsky 1962: 26.

<sup>344</sup> "the two authors . . ." is quoted in White and Noble 1980: 258; see also Libman 1972.

more about Stravinsky's views and sensibilities than we could ever have known, were it not for Craft's tireless conversing and chronicling of this oddly evocative friendship. It is as if Boswell and Johnson, or Goethe and Eckermann, had collaborated on a set of writings over fifteen years, or as if Françoise Gilot had remained on good terms with Picasso and thereby served as a continuing catalyst for the expression of his views. As Stravinsky once put it: "It is not a question of simple ghostwriting but of somebody who is to a large extent creating me."<sup>345</sup>

We have seen that, earlier in his life, Stravinsky received needed cognitive and affective support from Diaghilev and Roerich, as well as from the members of his tight-knit ensemble. In the absence of such support, Stravinsky might well have been unable to break away from the Rimsky-Korsakov mode of *Fireworks* and *The Firebird* and develop the more innovative languages of *Le sacre* and *Les noces*. During his middle years, Stravinsky enjoyed the support of a wide circle of friends and followers; but, like Picasso, he seems to have conducted his neoclassical experimentation in conversation with his redoubtable predecessors as much as with his illustrious contemporaries. In old age, however, Stravinsky may have felt the need for someone of greater vitality who could again play a nurturing role, this time providing parentlike guidance as well as intellectual sustenance. It is perhaps because Craft met the ensemble of needs so perfectly that Stravinsky sustained his creativity in old age more fully than did our other creators and that he remained active among the living musical creators of his era. I see Craft as the last, and in many ways the most influential, of the series of collaborators who provided cognitive and affective support to the master throughout his long life.

Like Picasso, Stravinsky lived through much of the twentieth century and helped place his distinctive mark on it. He was able to absorb an enormous set of influences and yet retain his own highly distinctive voice—or set of voices. He may have lacked Picasso's indefatigable energy and protean facility, but he surpassed Picasso in the coherence of his work, the consistency of his personal philosophy, and the ability to articulate his vision in words as well as in his chosen artistic medium.

Having elected to compose music, and to do so largely in formats that required the participation of many other individuals, Stravinsky was consigned to collaboration in a way less necessary for an individual working in a relatively solitary pursuit like painting or poetry. From Diaghilev he received a primordial model of how to collaborate; and he internalized much of the most positive, as well as many of the least attractive features, of that dominating personality. During the height of his career, Stravinsky as a collaborator could

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<sup>345</sup> Stravinsky, "It is not a question of simple ghost-writing . . ." is quoted in Boucourechliev 1987: 251.

be quite unpleasant, and as noted, Craft himself was shocked by the inflammatory paper trail left by Stravinsky during the early decades of the twentieth century.

In later life, Stravinsky appears to have become increasingly at peace with himself and with those around him. While remaining a stickler for details and a perennial skinflint, he seems to have been able to enjoy life, with access to the friends, the travels, and the publicity he needed, as well as the privacy he prized. Drawing on his understanding of the theater, he became a dramatic personality of his time. He was fortunate that he was able to continue composing until close to the end of his life, and to do so in an idiom that made sense to him and took advantage of the century's progress in his domain. He had the shrewdness to initiate collaborations with younger men like Auden and Craft that kept him in touch and engaged with the environment of the day. In this respect he was much more fortunate than Picasso, whose quest to remain young was more fervent but less well guided, secured chiefly through a never-ending search for young lovers and done with scant effort to remain in contact with the most innovative and fertile artistic streams. More so than our other creators, Stravinsky seems to have been able to preserve what was important from childhood while enjoying as well some of the fruits of later life.

I must mention one discordant note. Stravinsky's relations with his three surviving children were bumpy and, toward the end of his life, increasingly disrupted by legal entanglements over the ownership of rights. The children had never fully accepted Vera de Basset, Stravinsky's long-time mistress and second wife, and by the end of his life, his wife did not want to have anything to do with them; even their attendance at his funeral and at various memorial services became an issue. As with several of our other creators, a connection to the wider world seems to have been purchased at the cost of smooth and loving family relationships.

The waning of one's powers provides no pleasure for anyone, and this is perhaps an especially bitter experience for the creative titans of a century. But Stravinsky dealt with aging as well as any other master of our era, continuing to compose, being personally happy with his wife and his "adopted" son, Craft, and able to relinquish some of the most combative aspects of a creative life carried on amidst other creative individuals. As a final gesture of peace, he was buried, at his wish, in his beloved Venice, near to Diaghilev, with whom he had quarreled a half century earlier, but with whose founding and catalytic genius he wished to be reconciled in the end.

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**TAYLOR**





## Stravinsky and Others

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### Abstract

This paper revisits an old question that neither I nor anyone has been able to answer very well, namely, why is it that nineteenth century composers, who had fairly easy access to nonwestern musics in notation, rarely quoted them? But by the early twentieth century, such quotations became quite common. This article argues that the rise of finance capital, as theorized by Rudolf Hilferding in the early twentieth century, marked the ascendance of exchange value over use value. As a rise of the ideologies accompanying finance capital, composers, and everyone else, began to regard other musics, other sounds—other objects—as something that could be exchanged. This process is exceptionally clear in works by Igor Stravinsky such as *Le Sacre du printemps*, which, while drawing on nineteenth century nationalistic impulses, also shows a relationship to other musics, appropriated as raw material. The new ideology of exchangeability introduced by the rise of finance capital continued through *musique concrète* in the 1940s and into the rise of digital sampling in the 1980s and after.

**Keywords:** Stravinsky; music; composer; western; nonwestern; capitalism.

While no one today disputes the importance and influence of Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*, it is nonetheless incontrovertible that the work appeared in a period of extraordinary artistic ferment and creativity in some European metropolises in the early twentieth century, particularly the capitals of Paris and Vienna. Both were not simply capitals, but seats of empire, serving as magnets for people around the world, including imperialized subjects from central and eastern Europe—the extent of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—and from North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, the Pacific, and the Caribbean as parts of the French empire. Stravinsky's then-radical cultural production was by no means unique, and could only have happened when and where it did, a result of a particular confluence of social, cultural, and historical factors.

Despite the large amount of scholarship on musical modernism, and, more specifically, composers such as Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, Claude Debussy and Charles Ives, to name just a few—composers whose willingness to quote and manipulate folk or traditional or popular or other musics in their own music is well known and has been much studied—explanations for just why these composers made these engagements with other musics are inadequate.<sup>346</sup> Elsewhere, I have discussed these engagements in terms of changes in consumer capitalism and the decline of the importance of use value and the rise of exchange value in cultural production and consumption (Taylor 2007), but it seems to me now that these discussions did not go far enough. Composers in the nineteenth century had access to published examples of nonwestern musics in notation, yet they never quoted or engaged with nonwestern musics in any significant way. Why?

What I argue in this essay is that Stravinsky's relationship to other musics and the musics of Others was not unique, and in fact was part of a massive epistemological shift in the early twentieth century in which musics of Europe's Elsewheres, and its own past, became newly conceived as appropriable, exchangeable. This was in large part a result of an even larger shift in which the growth of the importance of finance capital in western countries and increasing urbanization ushered in a new relationship between subjects and how they constructed their objects, with profound ramifications for cultural production and consumption. Many western composers began to engage in wholesale quotations, emulations, and representations of musics from other cultures for the first time. I am building on an argument presented in Taylor (2007) on the music of Charles Ives, whose use of snippets of hymns and popular songs is well known, but now want to theorize more deeply and expand that argument to Stravinsky and other composers whose musics show an engagement with musics and sounds from other cultures, other social groups from their own culture, or the past.

In 1910, the Austrian-German economist and politician Rudolf Hilferding published *Finance Capital*, a book that explicated the importance of banks and the banking industry to capitalism, and in particular the capitalism of Hilferding's era. Finance capital in his thinking was globalized, helping to expand capitalism quickly, which in turn was aiding in perpetuating capitalist societies generally. This expansion united all of the wealthy in the service of finance capital (Hilferding 1981: 365). Hilferding defined "finance capital" this way:

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<sup>346</sup> See, for example, Brown (2000) on Bartók; Morton (1979) and Taruskin (1980) on Stravinsky; Howat (1995) and Mueller (1986-7) on Debussy; and Burkholder (1995) and Taylor (2007) on Ives.

*An ever-increasing part of the capital of industry does not belong to the industrialists who use it. They are able to dispose over capital only through the banks, which represent the owners. On the other side, the banks have to invest an ever-increasing part of their capital in industry and in this way they become to a greater and greater extent industrial capitalists. I call bank capital, that is, capital in money form which is actually transformed in this way into industrial capital, finance capital. So far as its owners are concerned, it always retains the money form; it is invested by them in the form of money capital, interest-bearing capital, and can always be withdrawn by them as money capital. But in reality the greater part of the capital so invested with the banks is transformed into industrial, productive capital (means of production and labour power) and is invested in the productive process. An ever-increasing proportion of the capital used in industry is finance capital, capital at the disposition of the banks which is used by the industrialists (Hilferding 1981: 225).*

Finance capital is thus capital that is owned by the banks that can be used by industry, a situation that gave banks enormous leverage and power.

V. I. Lenin, drawing largely on Hilferding, elaborated on this conception of finance capital:

*It is characteristic of capitalism in general that the ownership of capital is separated from the application of capital to production, that money capital is separated from industrial or productive capital, and that the rentier, who lives entirely on income obtained from money capital, is separated from the entrepreneur and from all who are directly concerned in the management of capital. Imperialism, or the domination of finance capital, is that highest stage of capitalism in which this separation reaches vast proportions. The supremacy of finance capital over all other forms of capital means the predominance of the rentier and of the financial oligarchy; it means the crystallisation of a small number of financially "powerful" states from among the rest (Lenin 1939: 59).*

Hilferding observed that finance capital gave the control of "social production" to a small number of large capitalist firms, and had the effect of separating management of production from ownership and socializing production to a certain degree. This socialization was limited by the division of the world market into "national economic territories of individual states." This division could only be overcome, partially and with difficulty, through international cartelization. The struggles of cartels and trusts against each other are aided by state power (Hilferding 1981: 367).

What I want to focus on here is the expanded role played by exchange value in Hilferding's thinking and what that meant for cultural production in the early twentieth century. First, Hilferding rehearses Marx on the process of exchange value:

*A commodity enters the process of exchange as a use value, having proved that it can satisfy a need to the extent required by society. It then becomes an exchange value for all other commodities which fulfill the same condition. This symbolizes its conversion into money, as the expression of exchange value in general. In becoming money, it has become the exchange value for all other commodities (Hilferding 1981: 34).*

Then, he makes a case for the heightened importance of exchange value in the realm of finance capital:

*The distinctive feature of commodity exchange trading is that by standardizing the use value of a commodity it makes the commodity, for everyone, a pure embodiment of exchange value, a mere bearer of price. Any money capital is now in a position to be converted into such a commodity, with the result that people outside the circle of professional, expert merchants hitherto engaged in the trade can be drawn into buying and selling these commodities. The commodities are equivalent to money; the buyer is spared the trouble of investigating their use value, and they are subject only to slight fluctuations in price. Their marketability and hence their convertibility into money at any time is assured because they have a world market... (Hilferding 1981: 153).*

What Hilferding is saying here is that exchange value has come to dominate (a major theme in Theodor Adorno's work on the culture industries and more generally, e.g., Horkheimer and Adorno 1990 and Adorno 2007); use value no longer matters. Later, he is more explicit: "[F]or the capitalist only exchange value is essential" (Hilferding 1981: 167).

Following Hilferding, others have focused on the importance of finance capital, such as Lenin (1939), as we have seen, and, most recently, many scholars concerned with the neoliberal capitalism of the last few decades (e.g., Duménil and Lévy 2004 and 2011; Harvey 2005). But I want to spend some time considering Giovanni Arrighi's important book *The Long Twentieth Century* (Arrighi 1994), which, inspired by Fernand Braudel, offers a long view of the role played by finance capital in western culture. If for Marx the "law of the motion of history" as Engels put it in his preface to *The Eighteenth Brumaire* (Marx 1963: 14), was the struggles among the classes, for Arrighi, history was shaped by the long spirals of growth, expansion, and speculation. And it can be seen as anticipating the economic decline of the US and the beginning of another upward spiral, this time in China (see Arrighi 2009).

Arrighi takes Marx's famous formula—MCM', or "buying in order to sell dearer" (Marx 1990: 256)—and expands it. This formula does not simply characterize particular capitalist investments, but can be understood to describe the workings of capital as a historical pattern in the capitalist world system (Arrighi 1994: 6). "The central aspect of this pattern," he explains,

*is the alternation of epochs of material expansion. . .with phases of financial rebirth and expansion.... In phases of material expansion money capital "sets in motion" an increasing mass of commodities...; and in phases of financial expansion an increasing mass of money capital "sets itself free" from its commodity form, and accumulation proceeds through financial deals. Together, the two epochs or phase constitute a full systemic cycle of accumulation* (Arrighi 1994: 6; emphasis in original).

Arrighi examines several of these cycles in history in which finance capital has played an important role in the capitalism of that era: Genoa from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth centuries, Holland from the late sixteenth through most of the eighteenth centuries, Britain from the latter half of the eighteenth century into the early twentieth century, and the US beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing to the present, though the US cycle is currently spiraling down; the recent financial crisis is evidence of this. Arrighi views the rise and fall of regimes of finance capital as occurring in a kind of spiral fashion historically. These spirals aren't necessarily discrete; there can be temporal overlaps, as in the British and American cases.

Britain's free trade imperialism, as Arrighi calls it, made London a natural financial center, out-competing other European capitals such as Amsterdam and Paris. London became the home of high finance (Arrighi 1994: 55). Britain's unilateral adoption of a free trade practice and ideology and the opening up of its domestic market meant that Britain created "world-wide networks of dependence on, and allegiance to, the expansion of wealth and power of the United Kingdom" (Arrighi 1994: 56). British imperial hegemony had created not just a world empire but a world economy. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, however, Britain began to lose control of the balance of power in Europe, and, later, the balance of power in the world, in part because of the development of Germany. And Britain was being surpassed by the US, which was greater in size and richer in resources.

The British and American phases of the influence of finance capital occurred in a historical moment of rapid urbanization in both Europe and the US, and I want to turn now to that question. Fredric Jameson (1997), in his study of finance capital and culture, notes that Georg Simmel's essay on the metropolitan experience, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," first published in 1903, contains, among other things, a diagnosis of the cultural effects of the rise of finance capital. Simmel's conception of the urban experience is in some sense an interpretation of how ideologies of finance capital entered the broader

culture. Simmel begins by noting the difficulties modern urban subjects have with maintaining conceptions of themselves as individuals, also noting how metropolitans react not emotionally but rationally to the myriad stimuli of the city. But Simmel quickly moves to recognizably marxian and (pre)-Hilferdingian discussion of the role played by capital in urban spaces, and in particular, process and ideologies of exchange. The city, as Marx pointed out long ago, is the center of capitalism, and it is no different with Simmel's metropolis. The "intellectualistic" (i.e., rational) ways that metropolitans interact with each other and, indeed, everything, is in a close relationship with the money economy. Simmel writes,

*They have in common a purely matter-of-fact attitude in the treatment of persons and things in which a formal justice is often combined with an unremitting hardness.... Money is concerned only with what is common to all, i.e., with the exchange value which reduces all quality and individuality to a purely quantitative level.... [I]ntellectual relationships deal with persons as with numbers, that is, as with elements which, in themselves, are indifferent, but which are of interest only insofar as they offer something objectively perceivable. It is in this very manner that the inhabitant of the metropolis reckons with his merchant, his customer and with his servant, and frequently with the persons with whom he is thrown into obligatory association (Simmel 1971: 326).*

In this rich passage, Simmel covers not only the nature of relationship between people and things but what these relationships owe to capitalism and, in particular, exchange in a capitalist market.

Under capitalism, according to Simmel, "the interests of each party acquire a relentless matter-of-factness, and its rationally calculated economic egoism need not fear any divergence from its set path because of the imponderability of personal relationships" (Simmel 1971: 327). The kind of rationality he describes is rather Weberian: "The modern mind has become more and more a calculating one" (Simmel 1971: 327). He continues, "It has been the money economy which has thus filled the daily life of so many people with weighing, calculating, enumerating and the reduction of qualitative values to quantitative terms" (Simmel 1971: 327-28). The rise of capitalism, coming to a form of maturity with the predominance of finance capital in the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, produced, for Simmel, a new kind of person, originating at the beginning of capitalism as we know from Weber, but taken to new extremes in this period and in these new urban environments and experiences.

Simmel also notes what he terms "the blasé attitude" that is prevalent among the metropolitan type, an attitude produced in part by the money economy: "The essence of the blasé attitude is an indifference toward the distinctions between things" (Simmel 1971: 329). Simmel writes that he does not mean that the difference between things goes unperceived, but that "the meaning and

the value of the distinctions between things, and therewith of the things themselves, are experienced as meaningless” (Simmel 1971: 330).

Money in Simmel’s view thus becomes the “frightful leveller,” hollowing out “the core of things, their peculiarities, their specific values and their uniqueness and incomparability in a way which is beyond repair. They all float with the same specific gravity in the constantly moving stream of money” (Simmel 1971: 330). Simmel also writes, “The development of modern culture is characterized by the predominance of what one can call the objective spirit over the subjective. . . .” The predominance of this objective spirit

*has been less and less satisfactory for the individual. Perhaps less conscious than in practical activity and in the obscure complex of feelings which flow from him, he is reduced to a negligible quantity. He becomes a single cog as over against the vast overwhelming organization of things and forces which gradually take out of his hands everything connected with progress, spirituality and value* (Simmel 1971: 337).

Simmel’s and Arrighi’s thinking on the importance of finance capital was taken up with respect to cultural production by Fredric Jameson (1997), who summarizes Arrighi’s argument before addressing what the rise of finance capital means for the production of culture, positing that it is a problem of abstraction, which in effect produced modernism

*Real abstractions in an older period—the effects of money and number in the big cities of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism, the very phenomena analyzed by Hilferding and culturally diagnosed by Georg Simmel in his pathbreaking essay....—had as one significant offshoot the emergence of what we call modernism in all the arts* (Jameson 1997: 252).

I am in agreement with Jameson on the question abstraction but only up to a point, for I think he overstates his case; abstraction in his thinking is too narrow a way of conceptualizing the modernist shift. Money produces equivalence, but equivalence doesn’t necessarily lead to abstraction. And when it does, it is not the only road to that particular destination. I would say that finance capital as money opened up this avenue but didn’t prescribe it, for, obviously, not all cultural production in the early twentieth century was abstract, not even all modernist cultural production. And abstraction can take many forms, not all of them manifesting as atonality in music or abstract expressionism in the visual arts. Abstraction in Jameson’s hands is too specific a way of conceptualizing what actually happened, and it strikes me as ahistorical, not paying enough attention to specific historical realities and aesthetic trends in the various arts.

For example, composers' embrace of dissonance, and, for many, an atonal musical language early in the twentieth century, was less a question of being motivated by a new ideology of abstraction ushered in by finance capital, but more of a technical response to their belief that tonality as a musical system had been used up, that nothing new could be done with it. And in several arts, technological advancements played a powerful role in creating a sense among some artists that abstraction needed to be pursued. For the Second Viennese School (Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton Webern, and others), the move to abstraction was a way to withstand the repeatability of music facilitated by new means of reproduction—player piano, phonograph, and radio—technological developments that many greeted with considerable consternation. Much the same occurred with painters, the course of whose art had been dramatically altered by the rise of photography in the mid-nineteenth century. Various reactions to these new technologies, whether fear, condemnation, or resignation that were evinced by major intellectuals such as Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin does not need to be rehearsed.

I would argue that what finance capital really wrought in the realm of cultural production was a new conceptualization of other cultural forms as exchangeable. Just as Hilferding's capitalism inculcated the ideology that everything was an exchangeable commodity, obliterating all differences between commodities other than their price, other musics (or modes of visual representation) could become reconceptualized as appropriable, suitable to be imported into one's own work. This is how I would explain certain trends in modernist cultural production in the twentieth century, whether composers borrowing from nonwestern musics or European folk musics, or visual artists such as Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque employing readymade objects such as newspaper fragments, bits of furniture, and wallpaper in their works around the same time as *Le Sacre*. Cultural forms in other realms, other fields, became thought of as appropriable, exchangeable, available to be used in one's own creation. Composers became willing to employ other music, and Others' musics, in their own creations. Relinquishing some time in music or space on a canvas to sounds or images other than your own became acceptable, even, in some circles, fashionable.

Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*, with its extensive use of Russian folk music (see Morton 1979 and Taruskin 1980) in many ways continues nineteenth century nationalistic musical treatments of folk musics. But since other works such as *Three Japanese Lyrics* (1913) and *Pribaoutki* (1914) composed around the same time, it becomes clear that Stravinsky was also engaging with sounds emanating from other cultures.<sup>347</sup> I would thus characterize *Le Sacre* not simply as case of the continuation of nineteenth century nationalism in music,

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<sup>347</sup> See Funayama (1986) for a discussion of Stravinsky's *Three Japanese Lyrics*; see also Watkins (1994).

but complicatedly as an example—along with the other such works as *Three Japanese Lyrics* and *Pribaoutki*—of the new kind of exchangeability made possible by the rise in importance of finance capital in the west, which elevated the importance of exchange value over use value.

Stravinsky's music, of course, wasn't the only musical symptom of this shift, since, as I and others have written (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000, Locke 2009, and Taylor 2007), many composers early in the twentieth century became fascinated with musics and sounds from other cultures and attempted to represent or emulate them in their music. But Stravinsky's representation of the Russian folk Other in *Le Sacre* using its own music—however modified—is perhaps the most salient example in the early twentieth century of this important shift in western culture.

Not viewing the influence of finance capital as simply a recourse to abstraction also helps explain Stravinsky's and others' later stylistic trends. I would argue that Stravinsky's later turn to a style that has been called neoclassical with works such as *Pulcinella* (1920) does not represent a break from his earlier, "Russian" stylistic period (in which *Le Sacre* is normally placed), but, rather, exemplifies the same sort of relationship with other music—this time musics from eighteenth century Europe rather than folk and traditional sounds from his native Russia. This, then, is another way in which I take issue with Jameson's thinking on abstraction (not to mention musicological stylistic periodizers): Stravinsky's turn toward musics from Europe's past was not, after all, a turn toward abstraction, but in fact an embrace of earlier musical languages, an embrace that could only be justified in a historical era when the predominance of finance capital and the ideologies accompanying it rendered such engagements with other cultural forms possible to artists and intelligible to viewers and listeners.

Let me now continue and expand the question of metropolitan life as advanced by Simmel and others. The condition of the individual, or, better, conceptions of the individual, constitutes another important set of social, cultural, and social factors at play in the early twentieth century. In an era when conceptions of the centered subject, an Enlightenment subject who believed he could control his own destiny, were being undermined by a number of ideas emanating from a number of directions—Freud on the unconscious, Saussure on the nature of language, Darwin on evolution, Marx on history, and the rise of mass culture (Hall 1989; Taylor 2007). The condition, the maintenance, of the individual in the early twentieth century was of great concern to a number of artists and intellectuals in this period, and they found various ways of reasserting their individuality or collective individualities in the face of the pressures just mentioned.

The nationalisms of the nineteenth century that gave rise to the collection of folk songs, some of which found their way into compositions in that century, were residual or (re-)emergent by this period of the early twentieth. The nationalisms of this later period that informed composers' and others' self-conceptions and cultural production, are part of this search for stability. Nationalism proved to be something to hold onto, something one could employ to help define oneself in a historical moment when everything seemed in disconcertingly and dangerously in flux. Even if nationalistic ideologies weren't that salient with respect to a particular individual, they were nonetheless circulating throughout Europe in this period, since some nations had only recently become nations—Italy for one, Germany for another. Stravinsky's interest in Russian folk music can be seen in this light.

Raymond Williams's thoughts on metropolitan artistic formations are especially useful here. He notes their proliferation in the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, observing that this is largely a metropolitan phenomenon and is strongly influenced by international members visiting European metropolises, a function of imperialism, and that immigrants play an important role as well (Williams 1981: 83-5). Williams writes elsewhere of the important role played by immigrants to the metropolis, many of whom played important roles in modernist cultural production, and how immigrants and others could form communities based on aesthetic affiliations (Williams 1989: 45). Immigration to the metropolis, in part because of some European countries' imperialist projects, helped fuel various modernist projects, while at the same time affording these immigrants to the metropolis a sense of community and belonging as parts of various aesthetic alliances.

There was also an efflorescence of aesthetic affiliations—frequently fluid and ephemeral—in which composers and other musicians could seek and find commonality with others with similar tastes and beliefs in cultural production. We thus find in Paris and Vienna in the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries—the two capitals of musical modernism—a veritable explosion of groups organized along common aesthetic beliefs, groups whose ideas on cultural production usually took the form of some sort of -ism—impressionism, expressionism, cubism, fauvism, primitivism, and many more. Finding common aesthetic cause with others was another solution to the problem of everything solid melting into air.

In the Paris of Stravinsky and so many other artists and intellectuals, part of the synergy provided by new immigrants was augmented by the rise of international exhibitions, which put on display peoples, sights, sounds, and smells from other cultures, displays that were influential not just on everyday Parisians but artists as well. These international exhibitions helped bring musics from Europe's Elsewheres to the French public, which famously captured the attention of many musicians in the French capital, Debussy perhaps chief

among them, who heard in nonwestern sounds new melodies and textures that they attempted to emulate in their own music.

Peoples and objects were on display in a juxtaposed fashion, creating a jumble of sights, sounds, and smells. An account from the 1889 exposition describes the scene thus:

*A little further along is the Exposition of Colonies. It is composed of a main palace surrounded by pavilions where Indochina, Vietnam, Madagascar, Guyana, Guadeloupe, Gabon display their products. We can, if we wish, stop in a Tahitian, Senegalese, Cochinchinese, or New Caledonian village, and examine the indigenous peoples: the tour of the world, no longer in 80 days or 80 hours, but an hour or an hour-and-a-half, and without risk of being massacred or devoured—that is truly something (Grison 1889: 23).*

And historian Rosalind Williams quotes a French journalist, on the 1900 exhibition: “Hindu temples, savage huts, pagodas, souks, Algerian alleys, Chinese, Japanese, Sudanese, Senegalese, Siamese, Cambodian quarters . . . a bazaar of climates, architectural styles, smells, colors, cuisine, music” (Williams 1982: 61).

The objects on display and that were imitated and purchased by Parisians soon acquired forms of value that had nothing to do with where they were from, but made sense in a changing social system in which foreign objects were increasingly consumed, since they had been newly conceptualized as possessing value. Foreign objects were just objects of exchange, objects to be consumed, whether curios or musical sounds. Composers and other artists, with the changes brought by finance capital, sometimes reacted positively to these exotic sights and sounds and were not reluctant to employ or imitate them in their works (see Taylor 2007).

The path taken by Stravinsky and others wasn't the only one pursued by composers in the twentieth century. Stravinsky's (and others') practices—which were the result, as I have been arguing, of the rise of the importance of finance capital and changing conceptions of cultural production formerly seen as “other,” quickly became an aesthetic, a position to be taken in modernist fields of cultural production. This position made the quoting or imitating of nonwestern music and music from Europe's past possible, and was held by French composers in addition to Stravinsky. But this wasn't the dominant position of its time, however, though it was certainly a prominent one given Stravinsky's fame and influence.

The dominant composers in the other major imperial capital of culture, Vienna, chose another route, staking out a different position in the field of modernist musical production. The music of Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School was much more self-contained, even hermetic, emphasizing the lone individual's uncompromising creativity. Here one can find music that prac-

ticed Jameson's abstraction but, even here not only a result of the rise of financial capital, as I have said.

After World War II, there was a concerted effort by the champions of the Second Viennese School to ensure that group's aesthetic legitimacy and supremacy over Stravinsky and the French. Books by Adorno (Adorno 1973) and others (e.g., Leibowitz [1949] 1970, Newlin 1947), defended Schoenberg and his school as the wave of the future, the only true path for the advancement of music following the war. As part of this defensive way, some authors also attacked Stravinsky and the French, mainly along the lines that these composers were too willing to compromise their originality.

The Parisian position of exchangeability as the incorporation of other sounds, whether "exotic" or not, became so tainted in the first couple of decades after World War II that scarcely any composer dared to adopt it. Those few that did faced severe recriminations, even ostracism, and to this day have been largely relegated to the footnotes of mainstream music history, if they are mentioned in that history at all.<sup>348</sup>

Adorno in particular assailed Stravinsky. His ballet *Petrushka* (1910-11), for example, owed something to the cabaret, to which Stravinsky was somewhat faithful, according to Adorno, but he

*rebelled against the elements of narcissistic elation and harlequin-like animation and he succeeded in asserting, against the Bohemian atmosphere, the destruction of everything intrinsically inaugurated by the cabaret number. This tendency leads from commercial art—which readied the soul for sale as a commercial good—to the negation of the soul in protest against the character of consumer goods: to music's declaration of loyalty to its physical basis, to its reduction to the phenomenon, which assumes objective meaning in that it renounces, of its own accord, any claim to meaning* (Adorno 1973: 142).

Adorno writes that Stravinsky's music in *Petrushka* is like the intellectual's idea of the fairground, "analogous to the position of the intellectual who enjoys films and detective novels with well-mannered naiveté, thus preparing himself for his own function within mass culture" (Adorno 1973: 143). Stravinsky and French composers, and still others, were thus seen as capitulating to mass culture, too amenable to the incorporation of the products of mass culture into their own work.

This struggle for the legitimacy of this position in the postwar field of the cultural production of concert music was successful for decades. The dominant position after the War became a kind of hermetic twelve-tone method of composition that excluded virtually everything that could not be controlled or

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<sup>348</sup> See Taylor (2007) on the *musique concrète* composers Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry.

manipulated by the composer's use Schoenberg's method of composing with twelve tones, extended in the immediate postwar era to encompass virtually every musical parameter that could be controlled by the composer. This was a kind of technocratic music that was of a piece with postwar ideologies that valued science and rationality above all else. What couldn't be created by the composer in his hermetic system was excluded. And this music evidenced a kind of extreme conformity, which was also the cultural norm of the immediate postwar era. Everything had to be in its place. Everything was organized. Nothing was left to chance. Except chance music, but even John Cage became so enamored of his method of making indeterminate music that he believed himself to have much in common with the composers of total serialism, and his methods of employment of chance operations was extremely rigorous.

This Viennese-inspired formalist hegemony lasted into the 1960s when some members of the counterculture began to call into question the formalist compositional procedures of the most famous postwar composers such as Pierre Boulez in Europe and Milton Babbitt in the US, thus increasing the assault on the dominant position in this field of cultural production. Some composers once again began to allow themselves to be influenced by other musics, whether popular musics from their own cultures or nonwestern musics and ideas about music. The best-known examples are the minimalist composers, whose debts to nonwestern musics and ideas is well known (see Fink 2005 and Grimshaw 2011). Philip Glass (1937- ) described the Paris scene in which he had been immersed as a field that was "a wasteland, dominated by these maniacs, these creeps, who were trying to make everyone write this crazy creepy music..." (quoted by Rockwell 1983: 111). Glass, Terry Riley (1935- ), and La Monte Young (1935- ) became influenced by classical music from India, Steve Reich (1936- ) by African drumming (Reich 1974). Such influences were evident in popular culture as well, with perhaps the Beatles' interest in India and Indian musics as the best-known example (see Farrell 1997).

Minimalism, however, was controversial, attacked by defenders of the existing position in the concert music field as dull, "like listening to paint dry," as one of my music analysis professors once put it. The minimalist composers played an important role in beginning to destabilize the hegemony of the formalist position, however, helping to introduce modes of cultural production that have been called postmodern (though that term seems to have outlived its usefulness).<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> There were, of course, plenty of other European and American composers who were operating against the dominant formalist position, composers such as Henry Cowell (1897-1965), and Lou Harrison (1917-2003), famously influenced by gamelan music, and, in Europe, Darius Milhaud (1892-1974), among many others. The minimalists, however, were more influential because they were part of a group, however loosely affiliated.

Despite the assaults by composers associated with the counterculture against the dominant formalist position, it wasn't until the 1980s that this position began to lose traction. It was in this period that the next phase in the relationship between composers and other musics begins, with the rise of neoliberal capitalism, another important era in the history of finance capital. In the realm of concert music production in this decade, it became common, even fashionable, to engage with musics from other cultures. While I was writing my dissertation on this subject in the early 1990s, I described the topic to a composer friend, telling him that I was writing about composers who borrowed or appropriated nonwestern musics. He laughed and said, "Who doesn't?"

This interest occurred with the rise of the category of world music in the 1980s, when the western music industry decided to recognize world music as a "genre," spurred importantly by the success of Paul Simon's *Graceland* (1986). The music industry began to carve out a space for it in the music industry infrastructure: world music charts were begun at *Billboard* magazine in 1990, a Grammy award was created in 1992 (and another in 2003, which was later removed in 2012), spaces opened up in brick-and-mortar record stores and in virtual ones such as iTunes, and commercial musicians increasingly had to learn to "compose" and perform sounds that could pass as world music (see Taylor 1997 and 2012).

With all of these developments, exchange values for world music began to be created. This process has been described by R. Murray Schafer ([1977] 1994) and Steven Feld (1994) as "schizophonia," a process whereby sounds are split from their makers, but this is in fact the process of the creation of exchange value, in which the laborer is divorced from the product of her labor. Once the exchange value of world music began to be established, it was much more likely to be appropriated by composers.

And it is in this period that one begins to see musicians engaging with musics from far away. Unlike Stravinsky or Bartók, employing folk and regional musics for quasi-nationalistic purposes (among others), or Debussy, writing gamelan-inspired music that he encountered through colonial pathways and modes of display such as international exhibitions, the entrance of some of the world's musics into the commercial marketplace as commodities with exchange values made it possible for composers not only to conceive of employing those musics in their own work, but made it possible to do so.

In the initial flowering of interest in world music by western composers in the 1980s and 1990s, Meredith Monk's (1941- ) opera *Atlas* (1991) serves as an example. It employs traditional western instruments (violins, viola, cells, clarinet, bass clarinet, french horn, keyboards) with the sheng, a Chinese version of a kind of mouth organ found all over Asia and that gave rise to the European pipe organ, and a shawm, a medieval wind instrument, precursor to the

oboe. The borrowed sounds here, far from being used as local color, or as revitalizing agents, or as abstract material, have now become a regular part of the contemporary composer's palette of sounds and techniques.

Monk's heroine, Alexandra Daniels, is based on the life of Alexandra David-Néel, one of the first westerners to travel to the east and meet with holy people of various traditions, most prominently, Tibetan Buddhism. The French-Belgian David-Néel (1868-1969), adopted a Tibetan lama as her son, and authored and co-authored several books on Tibetan Buddhism, some of which are still in print. In *Atlas*, Monk transplants David-Néel into contemporary America. The plot, as such, consists of thirteen-year-old Alexandra Daniels dreaming of traveling, then as an adult realizing this dream with two companions, Cheng Qing, of Hunan, China, and Erik Magnussen, a Norwegian. Two more join the party along the way: Franco Hartmann, Italian, and Gwen St. Clair, born in Montserrat, West Indies. They travel all over the planet. Magnussen dies along the way, but the others attain a kind of spiritual enlightenment, the narrative of the journey becoming a metaphor for the journey of a soul. And a parable of the composer's own era thought to be best characterized by the term "globalization."

Engagement with musics from far away wasn't the only manifestation of the influence of finance capital in this period. The rise of the world music category, as well as interest in it, was accompanied by new digital technologies that made it possible to copy exactly recorded music, which one could copy and use in one's own music, composed solely at the computer. Elsewhere I have discussed the rise of sampling as a practice related to the heightening of the importance of consumption in American culture in the 1980s and after (Taylor n.d.), though would now cast it as in part another phase in the development of finance capital in which consumption becomes more urgent. What we now call sampling, in the sense that it is a copying of sounds external to one's own work, has been technologically possible since at least the advent of magnetic tape after World War II, but those few composers who engaged in some form of sampling was quite marginal. Sampling as a widespread practice didn't begin to catch on until the 1980s, with changing attitudes towards music marked in part by the increased emphasis on consumption, but also, the increased role played by finance capital. Musicians began to think of sampled musics—other musics—in even more atomized, abstract terms. The nationalist, imperialist, and self-grounding impulses that shaped modernist composers interactions with other musics have seen the addition of more abstract modes of relating to other musics aided by new technologies, and occurring in at the beginning of the downward spiral of finance capital in the west.

Many, perhaps even most, of today's composers don't always listen to music as music, but music as something that might be copied, sampled. When asked by an interviewer where he gets his samples or ideas for samples, Toby Marks, whose electronic "band" is called Banco de Gaia, replied,

*It varies. Sometimes I'll just come across something I think is amazing and I might be able to imagine a tune built around it. Other times I stockpile stuff and when I'm working on a tune if I need a male Arabic vocal to fit a section I'll see if I have anything which would be suitable (Marks n.d.).*

Clearly, a different aesthetic, a different relationship to music, is at work. It is not unusual, of course, for composers consciously to take musics and sounds from other places, as in the Stravinsky case, but to seek out these other sounds as, it seems, the foundation of one's own music, and to listen to them in this atomized fashion is new. In the 1990s, once sampling technologies had been widely adopted and questions of its legality were largely over (see Demers 2006 on this), musicians began to articulate how they approached sampled musical material, going beyond simple conceptions of homage or novelty. Listen to the way Prince Be (formerly Prince Be Softly, 1970- ) discusses his work with interviewer Terry Gross, for example. Gross asked, "Now, how much of the music on your new record is played by musicians and how much of it is sampled, and is that balance changing?" Prince Be responded,

*I would pretty much 35% of it is musicians and are rest are samples. I'm a sampling artist, what can I tell you? I love listening to records, I love feeling vibes from other people, I love being influenced by everything. I guess that's why music takes the turns that it does because there are no boundaries in who we want and who we listen to; we can take a Sly Stone sample we can take a Joni Mitchell sample, we can take a James Brown sample, we can take a Cal Tjader sample. It doesn't really make a difference, it's just all vibes and how everything feels and how everything emotes itself, you know (Prince Be 1995).*

Or composer Henry Gwiazda (1952- ): "What interests me is the juxtaposition of various sounds, which feels right for the world we live in." He continues

*I have my domestic sounds, my musical sounds, my outside/environmental sounds, and my percussion sounds. I introduce the sounds all at once, and as the piece progresses I spend time with each category, letting the listener understand where each sound comes from. And I spend some time with each sound because I like the sounds (Gann 1991).*

Others have come to hear commercial recordings and works as incomplete or unfinished, since they can now be easily manipulated in one's home studio or by computer. John Oswald (1953- ), known for what he calls "plunderphonics," described in 1994 his working process, which was to manipulate existing recordings.

*I approach these works as if I've adopted the role of a producer. I try to frame the artist in a way that is complimentary and interesting. But I work with source material which in all cases seems like it's not quite finished. Even though it's something I might admire to no end, there's something that's missing, something that my ears want to hear that I think can be supplied by coaxing this raw material along. So I help finish it up. I help with the arrangement or help with the vocals in order to make Dolly Parton, for instance, sound her best (Bowman 1994).*

Oswald thus conceptualizes recordings that have already been approved by artist and producers and released for sale as raw material, incomplete, ready to be finished by him.

These new digital technologies have thus brought about entirely new genres of music, as well as those genres that would not be what they are without the practice of sampling. Some types of musics are characterized or even defined by the kinds of music or other sounds that they sample. Goa trance, for example, is characterized in part by its samples from science fiction movies (see Taylor 2001). The jungle music of the 1990s was marked by its sampling of reggae. In that case, reggae samples served to mark jungle as jungle and not some other (sub)genre of techno music.

For Jameson, “postmodern” cultural production represents another stage of abstraction (Jameson 1997: 252). Finance capital during the historical period that produced modernist artworks was about exchange value and monetary equivalence, which “provoked a new interest in the properties of objects” (Jameson 1997: 258). But this newer period witnesses “a withdrawal from older notions of stable substances and their unifying identifications” (Jameson 1997:258). Jameson believes that if everything has become equivalent as a commodity, money having reduced their differences as individual things, then “both color and shape free themselves from their former vehicles and come to live independent existences as fields of perception and as artistic raw materials (Jameson 1997: 258).

Jameson also introduces Deleuze and Guattari on the subject of deterritorialization, which he interprets in a Hilferdingian/Simmelian fashion of implying “a new ontological and free-floating state” (Jameson 1997: 260-1). He continues his argument about abstraction into the present “postmodern” moment. “What is wanted,” he writes, “is an account of abstraction in which the new deterritorialized postmodern contents are to an older modernist autonomization as global financial speculation is to an older kind of banking and credit, or as the stock market frenzies of the eighties are to the Great Depression” (Jameson 1997: 260-1). Jameson’s symptom of this new form abstraction is the fragment (echoing an earlier argument about modernist collage giving way to postmodern pastiche in Jameson 1991), offering as one example the transformation of the structure of film previews, which have had to become more

comprehensive than before, so much so, he believes, that to view the film that the preview is a teaser for is no longer necessary. I suppose one could characterize digital samples of music as fragments, but this seems to me to put too much emphasis on the symptom rather than the cause.

Jameson concludes by again contrasting modernist cultural production with postmodern, describing a kind of Baudrillardian universe awash in signs, fragments, that profoundly influence cultural production and consumption (Jameson 1997: 264-65). Today, again, I would, like Jameson, continue to argue for the importance of finance capital, though no longer precisely as theorized by Hilferding, or, for that matter, like Jameson, at least with respect to his concern for abstraction as its main effect in cultural production. Finance capital, thanks to the development of powerful computers and communications devices that allow for split-second financial transactions anywhere on earth have ushered in a whole new era of the dominance of finance capital in the capitalisms of the so-called advanced countries in the last few decades. But I am less interested in stylistic categories (collage, pastiche, fragment) than what might call infrastructural shifts in the culture industries that affect modes of cultural production and fields of cultural production, and shifts that affect distribution of cultural forms and their consumption and interpretation (see Taylor n.d.).

Today's finance capital has been instrumental in creating these new attitudes, but I do not want to imply that older attitudes toward other musics, and Others' musics, have disappeared. Stravinsky's and other composers' relationships to other musics became, as I said, an identifiable position in the field of modernist musical production, and that position still exists; the new form of engagement via sampling has not supplanted to the old one. Both positions co-exist. There remain plenty of composers who continue to engage with other musics as did Stravinsky, Debussy, and others before World War II (see Locke 2009, Taylor 2007, and Tenzer 1994). But the field of the cultural production of postwar concert music has changed since the champions of Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. There are more positions that are seen as legitimate, and more positions to be taken as the old hegemonies slowly break down.

This is neither to praise finance capital nor simply condemn it. Appropriations of Others' music, particularly Others who are historically disadvantaged such as ethnic minorities or formerly colonized subjects, raises complex questions of ethnics (if not legality, since now most digital samples are cleared with copyright holders). But, if Arrighi was right and hegemony and the influence of finance capital do rise and fall in spiral form, we can only wait with impotent interest to see what the declining hegemony in the west will bring with respect to cultural production while we watch what happens as China rises.

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**TARUSKIN**





## Resisting *The Rite*

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### Editorial abstract

The paper analyses multifaceted manifestations of resistance to "Rite of Spring" by Igor Stravinsky. It discusses artistic, cultural, philosophical, and political sources of the resistance.

**Keywords:** Stravinsky; The Rite of Spring; Le Sacre du printemps; resistance; music; ballet.

We in the Stravinsky game saw this coming from afar. We knew that we would spend the 2012-13 season dancing with *The Rite of Spring*. It was one of those inescapable tributes to round numbers on which the classical music business depends. In North Carolina we stole a march on the actual centennial by starting our celebrations in the fall of 2012, thus staying clear of the twin steam rollers, Wagner and Verdi, heading our way in 2013. But practically every year there's something. In 2011 it was Liszt. 2010 brought us Chopin and Schumann. There was Haydn in 2009 and Rimsky-Korsakov in 2008 (inescapable in Russia, anyway, even though they didn't get around to the official celebrations until 2010). The Shostakovich centennial in 2006 was one that I personally resisted. I spent the whole year declining invitations, and waited till 2007 to start airing a talk that I subtitled "Post-centennial Reflections," in which I reviewed and deplored the polluted pool that Shostakovich studies have become, so full of political invective and fraudulent claims. But I found the prospect of commemorating *The Rite of Spring* irresistible.

Why the inconsistency? Is there an inconsistency? I would like to argue that there isn't, because the *Rite* centennial differs from the others in that it celebrates not a person but a piece, and how many pieces of music have that kind of stature? I can think of only one other, and I will name it in due course. But not even that one possible rival has actually been celebrated, as far as I know, with galas and conferences and exhibits all over the world. *The Rite* is unique, and uniqueness invites inquiry.

So why *The Rite*?

To begin with—and this is something musicologists are apt to forget—*The Rite* is not just a piece of music. It originated, very self-consciously, as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a mixed-media synthesis, and belongs to the histories of dance and stage design as well as music. One of the marks of *The Rite*'s unique status is the number of books that have been devoted to it—certainly a greater number than have been devoted to any other ballet, possibly to any other individual musical composition (with that same likely rival). They include general introductions by Peter Hill, in English, Volker Scherliess, in German (the latter published during Stravinsky's centennial year).<sup>350</sup> There are heavy-duty academic analytical studies by Allen Forte (1978) and Pieter van den Toorn (1987).<sup>351</sup> There is a deluxe facsimile edition of Stravinsky's sketches, with detailed annotations by his assistant, Robert Craft, and an even more deluxe facsimile of the full autograph score, plus the piano four-hands arrangement, published for the current centennial along with a large collection of essays.<sup>352</sup> An even more lavish commemorative collection was issued by the Moscow Bolshoi Theater.<sup>353</sup> There is a copious compilation of facsimile reviews in several languages from Russian to Catalan, which seems to have become a bibliographical rarity: the single copy offered for sale at Amazon.com the day I looked was priced at \$2500.<sup>354</sup> (Hang on to your copies!) There is even a book about *The Rite of Spring*'s tympani part—just a pamphlet, really, at 35 pages, and self-published, but a bound volume nonetheless.<sup>355</sup> And there is a little book called *Le Sacre du printemps: Le tradizioni russe, la sintesi di Stravinsky*, which turns out to be a translation of the twelfth chapter of my monograph of

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<sup>350</sup> Peter Hill. 2000. *Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring*. Cambridge Music Handbooks. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Volker Scherliess. 1982. *Igor Strawinsky, Le sacre du printemps*. Meisterwerke der Musik. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.

<sup>351</sup> Allen Forte. 1978. *The Harmonic Organization of The Rite of Spring*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Peter C. van den Toorn. 1987. *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring: The Beginnings of a Musical Language*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

<sup>352</sup> Igor Stravinsky. 1969. *The Rite of Spring (Le Sacre du Printemps) Sketches 1911-1913*. London: Boosey & Hawkes; *Idem*. 2013. *The Rite of Spring, Facsimile of the Autograph Full Score*, ed. Ulrich Mosch. Basel: Paul Sacher Stiftung and London: Boosey & Hawkes. *Idem*. 2013. *The Rite of Spring, Facsimile of the Version for Piano Four-Hands*, ed. Felix Meyer. Basel: Paul Sacher Stiftung and London: Boosey & Hawkes; Hermann Danuser and Heidy Zimmermann, eds. 2013. *Avatar of Modernity: The Rite of Spring Reconsidered (Essays)*. Basel: Paul Sacher Stiftung and London: Boosey & Hawkes.

<sup>353</sup> Pavel Gershenzon and Olga Manulkina, eds. 2013. *1913/2013: Vek Vesni svyashchennoy—vek modernizma*. Moscow: Bolshoi Theater.

<sup>354</sup> François Lesure, ed. 1980. *Le Sacre du Printemps: Dossier de presse*. Geneva: Minkoff.

<sup>355</sup> Charles Lafayette White. 1965. *Tympani instructions for playing Igor Stravinsky's "Sacre du printemps"*. Los Angeles: C. L. White.

1996, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*.<sup>356</sup> Its Italian publication was an act of pure piracy, suggested, according to the preface, by Luciano Berio, who I'm sure intended me no harm. I mention it not (or not only) out of immodesty, but also so that, if these words should ever come to the attention of the publishers, they might be shamed into coughing up some royalties.

But there are almost an equal number of books devoted to *The Rite* as dance, beginning with surveys by Shelley Berg and Ada D'Adamo (the latter a veritable coffee-table book).<sup>357</sup> Three volumes have been devoted to individual choreographies, two of which address the original one by Nijinsky: one a booklet by the prolific theatre historian Etienne Souriau and the other being Millicent Hodson's magnificently illustrated account of her painstaking reconstructive work for the Joffrey Ballet, laid out measure by measure against Stravinsky's piano score.<sup>358</sup>

Last, and far from least, there is Truman C. Bullard's imposing dissertation on *The Rite's* first night, which reminds us that *The Rite* was not just a score, and not just a ballet. *The Rite* was an event—perhaps the most notorious event in the history of twentieth-century art, and one that links up momentarily, or at least suggestively, with other notorious events in other histories.<sup>359</sup> Bullard set it as his task to get to the bottom of the event and determine who or what was responsible for it, and, like any other writer in his wake, I will be mining his wonderful documentary compendium in this essay. But there was never any doubt who its protagonist was. The leading role in *The-Rite-as-event* was played neither by Stravinsky nor by Nijinsky, nor by Nikolai Roerich, the scenarist and designer. Nor was it played by the orchestra or by its conductor, Pierre Monteux. Nor was it even played by Sergey Diaghilev, the Man Behind the Curtain, the puppetmaster who set it all in motion. Nor by Gabriel Astruc, the manager of the brand-new Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, who (as Bullard revealed for the first time) also had a major hand in the run-up to the event.<sup>360</sup> It was none of these.

<sup>356</sup> Richard Taruskin. 2002. *Le Sacre du Printemps: le tradizioni russe, la sintesi di Stravinsky*, trans. Daniele Torelli. Milano: Ricordi; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Universal MGB, 2011; cf. Richard Taruskin 1996. *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 849-966.

<sup>357</sup> Shelley Berg. 1988. *Le sacre du printemps: Seven productions from Nijinsky to Martha Graham*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. Ada D'Adamo. 1999. *Danzare il rito: Le sacre du printemps attraverso il Novecento*. Biblioteca teatrale. Rome: Bulzano.

<sup>358</sup> Étienne Souriau. 1990. *Le Sacre du Printemps de Nijinsky*. Paris: Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Millicent Hodson. 1996. *Nijinsky's Crime against Grace: Reconstruction Score of the Original Choreography for Le Sacre Du Printemps*. Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press.

<sup>359</sup> Truman C. Bullard. 1971. *The First Performance of Igor Stravinsky's Sacre du printemps*. 3 vols. PhD diss. Eastman School of Music.

<sup>360</sup> On Astruc and his role, see most recently Nathalie Sergent et al. ed. 2013. *Théâtre, Comédie et*

As those who know the story will recall, the protagonist of *The Rite*-as-event was the audience, whose outraged and outrageous resistance to the work took everyone by surprise, even if (as always) various parties claimed later to have foreseen or even engineered it (Jean Cocteau supposedly writing that the audience had played the part written for it; or Diaghilev saying, according to Stravinsky, that it was “exactly what I wanted”).<sup>361</sup> The first night of *The Rite*, when, as Stravinsky laconically reported in a letter home, *delo dokhodilo do draki* (“things got as far as fighting”)<sup>362</sup> was indeed a fiasco, a rejection that would not be redeemed for many years. It left everyone, whatever their later contentions, with a sense of failure and letdown. If *The Rites*’s reception had indeed been a *succès de scandale*, it would have generated the kind of publicity that guaranteed full houses and revivals. But that is not what happened.

The Ballets Russes presented *The Rite* three more times in Paris in June of 1913, as scheduled, then took it to London for another three showings in July. These performances went off without incident, but neither did they generate any special enthusiasm or interest. London critics expressed a bit of self-satisfaction at the placidity with which their countrymen received what had so antagonized the Parisians a month before. “We are either surprisingly quick or surprisingly careless in accommodating ourselves to new forms of art,” said *The Times*.<sup>363</sup> Nijinsky gave an interview to the *Daily Mail* in which he “cordially sa[id] thanks and ‘Bravo!’ to the English public for their serious interest and attention in *The Festival of Spring*. There was no ridicule . . . and there was great applause.”<sup>364</sup>

And yet after this London run Diaghilev decided not to revive *The Rite*, whereas *Firebird* and *Petrushka* had become, and would remain, Ballet Russes perennials. The usual explanation for this is the break between Diaghilev and Nijinsky over Nijinsky’s decision to marry. But that was more a pretext than a reason. *The Rite* was expensive. It required nineteen more musicians than any other score in the Ballet Russes repertory, and many extra rehearsals. Canceling it seemed an inevitable commercial decision. Diaghilev knew enough to accompany *The Rite* on every showing (including the stormy prem-

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*Studio des Champs-Élysées: Trois scènes et une formidable aventure*. Paris: Verlhac Éditions.

<sup>361</sup> Jean Cocteau. *A Call to Order*, paraphrased in Richard Buckle. 1979. *Diaghilev*. New York: Athaneum: 253; Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1959. *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*. Garden City: Doubleday: 48.

<sup>362</sup> Letterto Maximilian Steinberg, 20 June/3 July 1913; ed. Igor Blazhkov in “Pis’ma I. F. Stravinskogo,” in Lyudmila Sergeevna Dyachkova and Boris Mikhailovich Yarustovsky, ed. 1973. *I. F. Stravinskiy: Stat’i i material’i*. Moscow: Sovetskiy Kompozitor: 474; ed. Viktor Varunts in I. F. Stravinsky, *Perepiska s russkimi korrespondentami*, II (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2000) : 99.

<sup>363</sup> *Times* of London, 26 July 1913; quoted in Nesta MacDonald. 1975. *Diaghilev Observed*. New York: Dance Horizons: 104.

<sup>364</sup> *Daily Mail*, 12 July 1913; quoted in MacDonald 1975: 99.

ière) with his most dependable crowd-pleasers: *Les Sylphides*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, and the *Danses Polovtsiennes du "Prince Igor."* That kept the houses full enough. But Stravinsky's third ballet had proved a bad investment, and Diaghilev seems to have told Stravinsky as much. In an all but uniquely self-revealing letter he sent four months later to Alexandre Benois, his collaborator on *Petrushka*, Stravinsky gave vent to the anxieties he was feeling in the wake of *The Rite*. *Akh, dorogoy!* Stravinsky wrote, *Ah, my dear—*

*even now this last offspring of mine won't give me a moment's peace. What an incredible storm of teeth-gnashing rages about it! Seryozha [Diaghilev] gives me horrible news about how people who were full of enthusiasm and unwavering sympathy for my earlier works have turned against this one. So what, say I, or rather think I—that's how it ought to be. But what has made Seryozha himself seem to waver toward *Le Sacre*, a work he never listened to in rehearsals without exclaiming, "Divine!"? He has even said (something that by rights ought to be taken as a compliment) that this piece ought to ripen a while after completion, since the public is not yet ready for it—but why then did he never before bring up such a course of action? . . . To put it as simply as possible, I'm afraid that he has fallen under bad influences—strong not so much from the moral as from the material point of view (and very strong). To tell the truth, reviewing my impressions of his attitude toward *Le Sacre*, I am coming to the conclusion that he will not encourage me in this direction. This means that I am deprived of my single and truest support when it comes to propagating my artistic ideas. You will agree that this knocks me completely off my feet, for I cannot, I simply cannot write what they want from me—that is, repeat myself—repeat anyone else you like, only not yourself!—for that is how people write themselves out. But enough about *Le Sacre*. It makes me miserable.*<sup>365</sup>

What rescued *The Rite* was the first Parisian concert performance of the score, led by Pierre Monteux, who had conducted the all-but-drowned-out première, and who in later life confirmed his first impression of *The Rite*: "I decided then and there that the symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms were the only music for me, not the music of this crazy Russian!"<sup>366</sup> But he gave the crazy Russian the night of his life, leading an "ideal" performance, as the composer gratefully recalled it half a century later, and allowed him to experience what he called (thinking perhaps of Nijinsky's curtain calls) "a triumph such as few composers can have known the like of."<sup>367</sup> *The Rite* now began to make its way,

<sup>365</sup> Letter of 20 September/3 October 1913; Dyachkova and Yarustovsky. ed. 1973. *I. F. Stravinskiy: stat'i i material'i*: 477-78.

<sup>366</sup> Doris G. Monteux. 1965. *It's All in the Music: The Life and Work of Pierre Monteux*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux: 91.

<sup>367</sup> Igor Stravinsky. 1959. 'Apropos 'Le Sacre du Printemps.' *Saturday Review*, 26 December: 30; the wording was improved (" . . . such as few composers have enjoyed") when the text was reprinted

until it achieved the colossal iconic status that it has today. It is an unequalled status (but for the single possible exception with which I continue to tantalize you, dear reader); but what possesses that status is just the score, the artifact—or the experience—that was vindicated by Pierre Monteux on 5 April 1914, not the *Gesamtkunstwerk* that went down in flames on 29 May 1913. That night in May is the date that shimmers in history,<sup>368</sup> but the permanence of *The Rite* was assured on that later night in April. It is from then that the unbroken tradition of the piece—that is, of the score—in performance dates.

That artifact, the *Sacre* score, has a rare distinction among twentieth-century “concert” or “classical” compositions as a central constituent of both the academic canon and the performing repertory. The gulf that opened up in the twentieth century between the canon (that is, the works praised, or at least parsed, in the classroom) and the repertory (that is, the works applauded by paying customers in the concert hall) may embarrass us now, but it was an accepted fact of life when I was a student half a century ago. You would almost never hear tell of Rachmaninoff or Shostakovich or Respighi or Vaughan Williams in the classroom or in textbooks and you would almost never hear Schoenberg or Webern, and only rarely hear Bartók or Berg, in the concert hall. Some twentieth-century composers inhabited both the canon and the repertory, but only by dint of compartmentalization. Richard Strauss crossed over from canon to repertory between *Elektra* and *Rosenkavalier*. Aaron Copland deliberately wrote some of his pieces for the one and others for the other. But by the 1950s, *The Rite of Spring* had become indispensable to both. Both as a work and an event it is reported in every textbook on music history, and heard in every music history course. Countless graduate seminars have worried its every note to death. But it is also universally heard and studied in music appreciation courses and books, which aim to popularize the repertory rather than maintain the canon; and it is in the active repertoire of every professional orchestra (but very few ballet companies; Balanchine, for one, never went near it). So, while the canonic status of *The Rite* could not be higher, as witness the list of serious scholarly monographs reeled off above, you will also find *The Rite* in any list of the favorite fifty pieces and in any consumer guide to recordings, and there are many dozens of recordings to choose from.

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in Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1962. *Expositions and Developments*. Garden City: Doubleday: 164 (italics original both times).

<sup>368</sup> And not just for musicians. Pauline Kael began her legendarily hyperbolic review of Bernardo Bertolucci’s *Last Tango in Paris* (now usually cited as her greatest blunder) by declaring that its opening night “should become a landmark in movie history comparable to May 29, 1913—the night *Le Sacre du Printemps* was first performed—in music history” (Tango. *The New Yorker*, 28 October 1972; rpt. in Pauline Kael. 1976. *Reeling*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press/Little, Brown: 171.

The whole story of its absorption into the repertoire is encapsulated in a comment that Louis Speyer, the veteran Boston Symphony oboist and English horn player, who had played in the orchestra at the première under Monteux (who had brought him to Boston), made to Truman Bullard, who was interviewing him for his dissertation. Describing the first sectional rehearsal of the winds and brass, Speyer recalled that “already the introduction was a surprise, a bassoon in that register, we all looked and even some composers present asked if it was a saxophone.” (Later, as you may recall, this story was morphed apocryphally into an anecdote about the aged Saint-Saëns at the première.<sup>369</sup>) Speyer then continued, referring to the bassoonist Abdou Laus (1888-1945), who also went on to play under Monteux in Boston, that he “was the first to attack this difficult solo; he had to find fingerings which was a terrible experience. Today any good player knows this solo.”<sup>370</sup> And not only good players; all conservatory students study their parts for *Le Sacre* because they know they will be asked to play them at auditions. Programming the piece is no longer a special event; audiences expect it alongside the Beethoven symphonies and the Tchaikovsky concertos. Since the 1980s, when musicology developed a conscience—or, at least, became self-conscious—the canon and its formation have been the object of skeptical sociological study. But while consciousness of the social practices that have informed the construction of canon and repertoire alike has softened their borders somewhat, it has not effaced the distinction, or the invidious judgments that follow from it.

The invidiousness works in both directions. Stravinsky lived to see his early works achieve standard repertoire status, and it made him nervous. In the late 1950s, finally succumbing to Robert Craft’s importuning and dictating some memoirs about his three pre-war ballets—something he had refused to do for their first collaboration, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (1959)—for use in various publicity releases before they were consolidated and revised for *Expositions and Developments* (1962), he remarked that “*Petroushka* [sic], like

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<sup>369</sup> It surfaces most dependably in promotional hype, especially in France, as in the following passage from a French ad for a San Francisco Symphony DVD: *Premier basson de l'orchestre de San Francisco, Stephen Poulson, à qui échoit le rude honneur d'entonner à découvert les six premières mesures de l'oeuvre, rapporte que le vénérable Saint-Saëns, 78 printemps à la création du Sacre, se récriait: «Si ça, c'est de la musique, moi je suis un babouin!»*

(The principal bassoonist of the San Francisco Symphony, Stephen Poulson, to whom falls the tough honor of intoning the first six measures of the work, reports that the venerable Saint-Saëns, a man of 78 springs at the time of the *Rite* première, protested, « If that’s music, I’m a baboon ! ») [<http://www.telerama.fr/musiques/le-sacre-du-printemps-san-francisco-symphony-orchestra-dir-michael-tilson-thomas,16663.php>] Stravinsky claimed in a late memoir that Saint-Saëns (“a sharp little man—I had a good view of him”) came not to the première but to the triumphant 1914 concert performance (A propos ‘Le Sacre du Printemps.’ *Saturday Review*, 26, December 1959: 30; rpt. *Expositions and Developments*: 164).

<sup>370</sup> Truman C. Bullard. 1971. *The First Performance of Igor Stravinsky’s Le Sacre du Printemps*, Ph.D dissertation. University of Rochester, I:99.

*The Firebird* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*, has already survived a half-century of destructive popularity, and if it does not sound as fresh today as, for example, Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra* and Webern's six, the reason is partly that the Viennese pieces have been protected by fifty years of neglect."<sup>371</sup> His nervousness was understandable given the puritanical strictures, as common in those days as they were authoritative, against modern music that audiences liked: a verdict pronounced not only by Adorno, whose *Philosophie der neuen Musik* Stravinsky seems (by Robert Craft's avowal) never to have read, but also, and even more ominously by those, like René Leibowitz, who accused composers of audience-pleasing music—most notably Bartók, whose late works crossed over, like Strauss's operas, from canon to repertory—of “compromise,” a baleful term with ruinous implications in the aftermath of World War II, especially for someone like Stravinsky, who had an interwar flirtation with Fascism to live down.

But of course Carolina Performing Arts would not have hosted the year-long bacchanalia of tribute that provided this essay with its pretext in honor of Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra* or Webern's six. Nor did we have one in 2010 in honor of *The Firebird*, or in 2011 in honor of *Petrushka*. Severine Neff, the Schoenberg specialist to whose initiative we owed said bacchanalia, and to whom we participants have all expressed heartfelt gratitude for giving us our forum, knows this better than anyone. Inasmuch as she let it be known in Carolina Performing Arts's publicity materials, I feel it permissible to mention here that she had originally proposed honoring the centennial not of *The Rite* but of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*, and was overruled. From all these stories and testimonies we can conclude that neither a piece belonging only to the canon, like *Pierrot*, nor a piece belonging only to the repertory, like *Firebird*, could have given rise to such an orgy of commemoration. You have to have the dual status that seems to be *The Rite*'s alone, among twentieth-century masterpieces. And the relevant question is not how did it happen that a piece of modernist music managed, unlike Schoenberg's or Webern's, to join the standard repertory, but rather how did it happen that in its crossing over to the repertory *The Rite* did not lose its commanding place in the academic canon?

The answer (rather obviously, I think) lies in the relationship between *The Rite* as an artifact and *The Rite* as an event. It was the furious resistance the work encountered on its first exposure that prevented its later popularity from becoming “destructive” of its reputation. Its equal fame as artifact and as event combined to give it an even higher status—the status of myth. And now it is time to name the work I have been adumbrating as *The Rite*'s only possible rival in iconic or mythic stature—and that work, as you have probably already

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<sup>371</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1981 [1962]. *Expositions and Developments*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 137.

guessed by now (especially if you are familiar with books by Thomas Kelly), is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, another work that lives as an epoch-making feat of composition, but that also had a legendary first night.<sup>372</sup> The legend of the Ninth also entails audience incomprehension, if not violent resistance. Beethoven was the first composer, in fact, whose legend was fed by the myth of resistance. Audience resistance to artistic greatness was part of the myth of romanticism, according to which creative genius is socially alienating and isolating. The artist, no longer an especially skilled craftsman but an especially endowed spirit—that is, a genius—is by that gift or curse estranged from the rest of mankind, cast into a vanguard that inspires both awe and resentment from the mass of ordinary men, who are made to feel and acknowledge their ordinariness in his presence.<sup>373</sup> Beethoven's socially alienating deafness certainly played into this myth, and sure enough, the most famous story involving Beethoven's deafness pertains to the Ninth's première, when Caroline Unger, the alto soloist, had to turn Beethoven around after the Scherzo to acknowledge applause that he could not hear.

So the story of the Ninth is a story of *Kampf und Sieg*, struggle against and victory over adversity, with the deaf genius Beethoven the hero. Its content symbolized the humanistic values of the Enlightenment, freedom and brotherhood, brought to a transcendent level by Romantic genius, despite the social alienation that genius entails (so: chalk up another struggle and victory). Its vibes were all good, and the import of its myth was entirely positive. *The Rite* stood for something else—something that challenged those good enlightened vibes, something that its original audiences, whether or not they actively resisted, recognized as spectacularly ugly. Even the most favorable reviewers saw it that way. The one writing for the London *Evening Standard* expressed the opinion that “everyone should go and see *Le Sacre du Printemps*, if only on account of its bizarrerie and astonishing ugliness—ugliness on the stage and in the orchestra. The thoroughness with which it is pursued in every department is extraordinary, scenic artist, composer, and dancer combining together with marvelous success in accomplishing the general purpose.”<sup>374</sup> That reviewer was reacting to *The Rite's* aesthetic ugliness. But the moral ugliness of the ballet was also recognized, and even praised, especially by the awestruck critic who now looms in retrospect as the most prescient reviewer of the

<sup>372</sup> See Thomas Forrest Kelly. 2000. *First Nights: Five Musical Premières*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, in which *The Ninth* and *The Rite* are each accorded chapters (along with Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*).

<sup>373</sup> For the even more extreme version of this myth associated with modernism, see José Ortega y Gasset. 1925. *La Deshumanización del arte*, trans. Helene Weyl in Ortega. 1968. *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, esp. 6-8.

<sup>374</sup> *The Standard*, 12 or 13 July 1913; MacDonald 1975: 98.

première: Jacques Rivière, the editor of the *Nouvelle revue française*. *C'est un ballet sociologique*, he exclaimed:

*This is a sociological ballet . . . We witness the movements of man at a time when he did not yet exist as an individual. . . . At no time during her dance does the Chosen Maiden betray the personal terror that ought to fill her soul. She accomplishes a rite; she is absorbed by a social function and, without giving any sign of comprehension or interpretation, she acts according to the will and the convulsions of a being more vast than she, a monster full of ignorance and appetites, cruelty and gloom*

And even more frightening, *Ce ballet est un ballet biologique*. “This ballet is a biological ballet. Not only is the dance of the most primitive man, it is the dance before there was such a thing as man.”<sup>375</sup>

These perceptions of Rivière’s jibe clairvoyantly with Nijinsky’s own view of his choreographic creation. Nijinsky told a London reporter that *The Rite* “is really the soul of nature expressed by movement to music. It is the life of the stones and the trees. There are no human beings in it.”<sup>376</sup> This chilling dehumanized vision and its angry rejection on at first sight contributed mightily to the romantic myth of *The Rite*; and as modernism, in Leonard Meyer’s wonderful phrase, was “late, late Romanticism,” so *The Rite* was the *ne plus ultra* of the Romantic myth of the alienated artist, adapted to the bleak vision of early modernism.<sup>377</sup> That is what gained *The Rite* its spectacular place, unrivalled by any other musical work, in the cultural history of the early twentieth century, epitomized by Modris Eksteins’s now celebrated book, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, whose title, and whose very thesis, is a tribute to the myth. The first chapter of the book, which is otherwise devoted to real war and mayhem, is a description of *The Rite*’s tempestuous première, cast as if it were a rehearsal for the devastating war unleashed the next year. That is mythmaking with a vengeance. A sample:

*The Rite of Spring, which was first performed in Paris in May 1913, a year before the outbreak of war, is, with its rebellious energy and its celebration of life through sacrificial death, perhaps the emblematic oeuvre of a twentieth-century world that, in its pursuit of life, has killed off millions of its best human beings. Stravinsky intended initially to entitle his score The Victim.*

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<sup>375</sup> Jacques Rivière. 1913. *Le Sacre du Printemps*. *La Nouvelle Revue Française*. 1 November; rpt. in Rivière. 1947. *Novelles Études*. Paris: Gallimard: 95.

<sup>376</sup> Quoted in MacDonald 1975: 97.

<sup>377</sup> Leonard B. Meyer. 1991. A Pride of Prejudices; or, Delight in Diversity. *Music Theory Spectrum*, XIII/2 (Autumn) : 241.

And, a little later

*Most history of warfare has been written with a narrow focus on strategy, weaponry and organization, on generals, tanks, and politicians. Relatively little attention has been paid to the morale and motivation of common soldiers in an attempt to assess, in broad and comparative terms, the relationship of war and culture. The unknown soldier stands front and center in our story. He is Stravinsky's victim.*<sup>378</sup>

Thus, when contemplating the “Danse sacrale” at the end of *The Rite*, Eksteins would have us think, say, of the furious Abram in Wilfred Owen’s harrowing, posthumously published poem “The Parable of the Old Man and the Young” (1920; familiar to musicians from its setting in Britten’s *War Requiem*), who refused to stay his hand when the Angel bade him spare Isaac, “but slew his son, / And half the seed of Europe, one by one.” It is a gripping thought; and anything that adds intensity to the experience of *The Rite* is welcome. But although Stravinsky and Nicholas Roerich, the artist and archeologist to whom he turned for a scenario, did initially call their project *Velikaya zhertva*, and while *zhertva*, in Russian, can mean “victim,” Eksteins’s parallel is somewhat strained. *Velikaya*, the other word in the working title, means “great”; and with that word in front of it, *zhertva* has to revert to its other meaning, *sacrifice*. Thus the ballet was originally conceived, in accordance with Stravinsky’s originating vision, as *The Great Sacrifice* (now the subtitle to Part II), the title evoking the action rather than the victim—whence the title finally adopted, coined (originally in the plural, as “Les Sacres du printemps”) by the painter Lev Bakst. Ekstein’s conceit was fertile. The book it brought forth, on the carnage of World War I and its lasting cultural aftermath, is justly fêted. But while recommending it heartily, I nevertheless resist the romantic urge to elevate our artists into prophets.

Like any myth, the myth of *The Rite* coexists uneasily with the facts. For some, the appropriate rejoinder will be “What price facts, then?” But while share the aversion to what I fear I may have started to resemble—namely, the sort of academic pest who is forever toting a pail of cold water with which to douse all fertile conceits—I do think that the myth of *The Rite* could use, and will survive, a fresh, cold look.

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<sup>378</sup> Modris Eksteins. 1989. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin: xiv-xv.

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As *The Rite* made its way with the assistance of its myth, a contradiction very swiftly developed and grew. As we have seen, the progress of *The Rite* was, at least at first, the progress of the score, not the whole ballet. That score has never suffered the resistance that was shown the ballet on its legendary first night. Indeed, the music of *The Rite* as such has never attracted that sort of protest. That first night a lot of it went unheard beneath the whistling and hooting. One of the reviewers, Louis Vuillemin, writing in the theatrical journal *Comœdia*, stated outright that “at the end of the prelude [that is, when the curtain went up on what Stravinsky in later life (inaccurately) called Niinsky’s “group of knock-kneed and long-braided Lolitas jumping up and down”]<sup>379</sup> the crowd simply stopped listening to the music so that they might better amuse themselves with the choreography,”<sup>380</sup> and his remark is, as it were, negatively corroborated by the many reviews that neglect Stravinsky’s contribution altogether beyond merely naming him as composer.

But blaming the fiasco on Nijinsky and his “crime against grace” also appears to be an inadequate explanation, for the same review by Vuillemin has a passage that suggests the audience had been antagonized in advance, and was ready to protest no matter what it saw or heard (thus partially substantiating the famous surmises of Cocteau that have become so familiar a part of *The Rite*’s lore).

*Some people, invited to a few final rehearsals, went back out into [the streets of] Paris wild-eyed and convinced they had reason to be. They were of two kinds; both wild and both convinced. “Marvelous, magnificent, splendid, definitive!” cried some to everyone who would listen for a moment. “Abominable, hateful, ridiculous, pretentious!” screamed the others even to those who did not have time to listen. I leave it to you to surmise the kind of damage brought about by such passion. It spread through the entire public like wild-fire thirty-six hours before the curtain rose. “Just you wait,” those convinced said, “we are about to witness the great musical revolution. This evening is the appointed time for the symphony of the future!” “Watch out,” warned the skeptics, “They are out to make fun of us. They take us for fools. We must defend ourselves!” Result: the curtain goes up—I should say even before the curtain went up—you could hear “OH!” and then they all began to sing, to hiss, to whistle. Some clapped, some cried “Bravo!” some shrieked, some cheered. Some hooted, some extolled. And there you*

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<sup>379</sup> Stravinsky and Craft 1981. UC Press reprint: 143. In Nijinsky’s choreography the curtain actually goes up on the male corps de ballet, plus one soloists portraying a 300-year-old crone; the knock-kneed Lolitas enter later.

<sup>380</sup> Quoted from Bullard 1971: II:49.

*have the première of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. You can well imagine how that half-dozen people who were not fanatics were prevented from getting a clear idea of the work or forming a logical and rational opinion.*<sup>381</sup>

We can supplement Vuillemin's semi-satirical description of a house divided in advance against itself and armed to the teeth (quite literally so, many having come with whistles in their pockets)<sup>382</sup> with a couple more documents from Bullard's incomparable dossier plus one that I discovered serendipitously while researching this essay. Bullard's very first exhibit is a press release from the management of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, published the morning of the première in all the main Paris newspapers. "*Le Sacre du Printemps*," it averred,

*which the Russian Ballet will perform for the first time this evening at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, is the most amazing creation ever attempted by M. Serge de Diaghilev's admirable company. It evokes the primitive gestures of pagan Russia as conceived by the triple vision of Stravinsky, poet and composer, of Nicholas Roerich, poet and painter, and of Nijinsky, poet and choreographer.*

*Here we see powerfully portrayed the characteristic attitudes of the Slavic race in its response to beauty in the prehistoric era.*

*Only the wonderful Russian dancers could portray these first stammered gestures of a half-savage humanity; only they could represent these frenzied mobs of people who stamp out untiringly the most startling polyrhythms ever produced by the brain of a musician. Here is truly a new sensation which will undoubtedly provoke heated discussions, but will leave every spectator with an unforgettable memory of the artists.*<sup>383</sup>

That is heavy hype. It is a bizarre pitch, actually: the oxymoronic image of half-savage humanity reproducing the most startling polyrhythms ever produced by the brain of a musician recalls Debussy's immortal sally—made the very same day, hence possibly in response—that *The Rite* was "primitive music with all modern conveniences."<sup>384</sup> The prediction of heated discussions helped produce them.

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<sup>381</sup> Bullard 1971: II:48.

<sup>382</sup> As reported by Victor Debay in his review, "Les Ballets russes au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées," *Le Courier musicale* (June 15); quoted in Bullard 1971: I:146.

<sup>383</sup> Quoted from *Le Figaro*, 29 May 1913: 6, in Bullard 1971: II: 1-2. (Translation adapted.)

<sup>384</sup> Letter to André Caplet, 29 May 1913; François Lesure and Roger Nichols, ed. 1987. *Debussy Letters*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 270.

The extent to which the publicity surrounding the ballet was held responsible for the hostilities in the theater can be judged from a front-page editorial that appeared four days later in *Le Figaro*, signed by Alfred Capus (1858-1922), not a critic of the arts but the paper's senior foreign-affairs correspondent, who the next year would become the paper's very jingoistic wartime editor. You may be sure that this article (whose author gives no sign of having actually attended the première) did not escape the notice of Modris Eksteins, who discovered it, as I did, in Bullard's dissertation. Seizing upon the coincidence that the Treaty of London, ending the war between the Balkan League and the Ottoman Empire, had been signed the day after the *Rite* première, Capus wrote that

*Although peace has been signed in the Balkans there remain nevertheless a number of international issues that still have to be settled. Among these I have no hesitation in placing in the front rank the question of the relationship of Paris with the Russian dancers, which has reached a point of tension where anything can happen. It has already produced the other night a border incident whose gravity the government should not underestimate.*<sup>385</sup>

Under the command of Nijinsky, "a sort of Attila of the dance," Capus reported, the Russian dancers had "seized the small section of the eighth arrondissement [that is, the block on which the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées was located] after a fierce battle with the city of Paris, and today they form a little independent state there."<sup>386</sup> At the end of the article Capus proposes a treaty with the Russians:

*Nijinsky would have to agree not to stage any more ballets that aspire to a level of beauty inaccessible to our feeble minds, and not to produce any more three-hundred-year-old "modern" women, or little boys feeding at breasts, or, for that matter, even breasts. In return for these concessions we would continue to assure him that he is the greatest dancer in the world, the most handsome of men, and we would convince him that we mean it. We should then be at peace.*<sup>387</sup>

Between these opening and closing sallies Capus lodged a more serious and pointed complaint, thanks to which the *Rite* première was covered by the *New York Times*. This was the discovery that surprised me as I was trawling the *Times* online archive in preparation for this talk. I had not heard that *The Times* had a correspondent in attendance at the *Rite* première—and in fact they did not have one. But their Paris correspondent noticed the Capus piece

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<sup>385</sup> Alfred Capus. 1913. *Courrier de Paris. Le Figaro*, 2 June: 1; Translation adapted from Modris Eksteins. *Rites of Spring*: 53.

<sup>386</sup> Bullard 1971: II: 77-78.

<sup>387</sup> Adapted from Eksteins 1989: 53.

owing to its prominent front-page placement in the French capital's premier political newspaper, and on 7 June 1913 filed a report on it, which the *Times* ran the next day under the headline "Parisians Hiss New Ballet," followed by a trio of banners:

*"Russian Dancer's Latest Offering, 'The Consecration of Spring,' a Failure."*

*"Has to Turn Up Lights"*

*"Manager of Theatre Takes This Means to Stop Hostile Demonstrations as Dance Goes On."*

Here is how the *Times* reported Capus's complaint, and the event that inspired it:

*"Bluffing the idle rich of Paris through appeals to their snobbery is a delightfully simple matter," says Alfred Capus in Le Figaro this week. "The only condition precedent thereto is that they be gorged with publicity."*

*"Having entertained the public with brilliant dances," he adds, "the Russian ballet and Nijinsky now think that the time is ripe to sacrifice fashionable snobs on art's altar. The process works out as follows:*

*"Take the best society possible, composed of rich, simple-minded, idle people. Then submit them to an intense régime of publicity. By booklets, newspaper articles, lectures, personal visits and all other appeals to their snobbery, persuade them that hitherto they have seen only vulgar spectacles, and are at last to know what is art and beauty.*

*"Impress them with cabalistic formulae. They have not the slightest notion of music, literature, painting, and dancing: still, they have heretofore seen under these names only a rude imitation of the real thing. Finally, assure them that they are about to see real dancing and hear real music.*

*"It will then be necessary to double the prices at the theatre, so great will be the rush of shallow worshippers at this false shrine.*

*"This," observes M. Capus, "is what the Russian dancers have been doing to Paris. The other night, however, the plan miscarried. The piece was 'The Consecration of Spring,' and the stage represented humanity. On the right are strong young persons picking flowers, while a woman, 300 years old, dances frenziedly. On the left an old man studies the stars, while here and there sacrifices are made to the God of Light.*

*"The public could not swallow this. They promptly hissed the piece. A few days ago they might have applauded it. The Russians, who are not entirely acquainted with the manners and customs of the countries they visit, did not know that the French people protested readily enough when the last degree of stupidity was reached."*

At this point the *Times* correspondent turned from Capus's article to an interview with Gabriel Astruc, the theater manager:

*"The Consecration of Spring" was received with a storm of hissing. The manager, M. Astruc, however, has devised a novel method for silencing a demonstration. When hisses are mingled with counter-cheers, as they were the other night, M. Astruc orders the lights turned up. Instantly the booing and hissing stop. Well-known people who are hostile to the ballet do not desire to appear in an undignified rôle.*

(So according to the *Times* reporter who interviewed him, it was Astruc rather than Diaghilev, who often gets the credit, who resorted to this method of crowd control.) And only now is the composer named, as the *Times* correspondent moves on to report an interview with the composer that had appeared on the front page of *Gil Blas* on 4 June.<sup>388</sup>

*Igor Stravinsky, who wrote the music of "The Consecration of Spring," says that the demonstrations are a bitter blow to the amour propre of the Russian ballet dancers, who are sensitive to such displays of feigning and fear they may be unable to continue the performances of the piece.*

*"And that is all we get," added M. Stravinsky, "after a hundred rehearsals and one year's hard work."*

*The composer, however, is not altogether pessimistic, for, he adds: "No doubt it will be understood one day that I sprang a surprise on Paris, and Paris was disconcerted. But it will soon forget its bad temper."*<sup>389</sup>

The cause of the bad temper, it would appear, was neither the music nor the dancing, but rather the hype, which outsnobbed the snobs, and the insult it thus administered to French taste. When in 1909 the Russian dancers first exported back to the French an imitation of the ballet they had previously imported from France, at a level of accomplishment the French themselves could no longer equal, the French had been flattered and captivated. But when four years later the Russians presumed to go beyond their hosts in aesthetic discrimination, they committed an unforgivable *faux pas* that required punishment.

*The Rite's* reception in London the next month was, as we have seen, far more reserved. But the same sort of social resentment can be detected in the measured but skeptical reviews. The terms of British resistance are effectively summarized in a notice that appeared in the magazine *The Lady* about a week

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<sup>388</sup> Henri Postel du Mas. 1913. Un Entretien avec M. Stravinsky. *Gil Blas*, 4 June: 1. (Bullard 1971: III: 87-89.)

<sup>389</sup> Parisians Hiss New Ballet. *New York Times*, 8 June 1913.

after the London première. The anonymous writer was clearly speaking up not on behalf of Philistines, but rather in defense of the local connoisseurs:

*Report said before the curtain rose . . . that all previous efforts of Diaghilev ballets were going to be eclipsed. With such stupendous seriousness was the novelty taken up by its creators that Mr. Edwin Evans<sup>390</sup> was sent before the curtain to explain beforehand what it really meant. . . All this did not inspire confidence, for a beautiful work of art ought to be able to reveal itself. If we are allowed to take *Sacre* on its merits, we may accept it and even enjoy it, but all attempts to represent it as inspired truth about the movements of the youth of mankind are likely to alienate us . . . I found [the ballet] very interesting. There were some charming patterns made by the permutations and combinations of different groups of dancers. There were ideas in profusion. But as a whole I am afraid that it appeals to all that is pretentious in human nature, and so I condemn it as the evocation of a principle. It may be quaint and delightful to see people crawling on all fours, but it is irritating to be told that in that posture they are more 'original' than when walking on foot. It is quite possible to be original in erect motion.<sup>391</sup>*

The same reviewer had taken similarly stern positions on the other novelties the Ballets Russes had brought to London that season. Before *The Rite*, Londoners had been shown Debussy's *Jeux* and Florent Schmitt's *La Tragédie de Salomé*. Reviewing the latter, *The Lady's man* expressed by now familiar suspicions of charlatanism, and adapted the national resistance of the French to a British standard. "There are some people," he wrote—

*who appear to swallow the Russian Ballet and all its works with open-mouthed and closed-eyed enthusiasm. I have often been enthusiastic . . . but one must discriminate. *Salomé*, the novelty of last week, is worse than *Jeux*, the novelty of the week before. It strikes me, not for the first time, that Paris is not exerting an altogether wholesome influence on the Russian Ballet.<sup>392</sup>*

*The Lady's man* had a point. Paris was more than a venue for *The Rite*. Paris helped shape both the ballet's conception and the discourse that surrounded it; and it was to the discourse that the London reviewer, like the French reviewers quoted earlier, was reacting—and resisting. The neoprimitivist impulse, of which *The Rite* now looms in retrospect as the supreme embodiment (or at least the supreme remnant in active repertory), had a legitimate Russian pedigree. Under the name *skifstvo*, or Scythianism, it had become of a craze in

<sup>390</sup> Evans (1874-1945) was then the music critic of the *Pall Mall Gazette*; co-opted by Diaghilev as a publicist, he was the author of some early handbooks about Stravinsky's ballets.

<sup>391</sup> *The Lady*, 17 July 1913; quoted in MacDonald 1975: 100.

<sup>392</sup> *The Lady*, 10 July 1913; quoted in MacDonald 1975: 96.

the Russia of the late Silver Age. “Poets wore themselves out trying to roar like wild animals,” Korney Chukovsky recalled in 1922. “The craze for the savage, the primitive, and the beast of the forest,” he wrote, “became the outstanding feature of the epoch.”<sup>393</sup> A book by one such poet, Sergey Gorodetsky, called *Yar’*, from which Stravinsky had set two poems in 1906, contained another, “Yarila,” which described a virgin sacrifice to the God Yarilo: exactly the culminating “vision” or “dream” of the future *Rite* that, according to the familiar story, Stravinsky imagined in 1910 as he was finishing *Firebird*. These neat correspondences prompted me to remark—overly archly, perhaps—in my book about Stravinsky, that his “was by no means an unusual sort of dream for a creative artist to have in St. Petersburg in 1910. In that environment, one could even call it conventional.”<sup>394</sup>

But behind all modern primitivist movements lurked an old-fashioned colonialist exoticism, much of it of French inspiration.<sup>395</sup> Everyone recognized the shadow of Paul Gauguin behind the work of Nicholas Roerich. Behind Stravinsky’s primitivism there lay a cognate Russian orientalism that, when presented to the French, cast the native in auto-exoticized terms.<sup>396</sup> That parallel between the French and Russian orientalist strains vouchsafed Diaghilev’s Parisian triumphs, for he knew that the Russia the French wanted to see was a Frenchified, exoticized, orientalized, racialized, one almost wants to say Negrified Russia. *Firebird* had followed directly on, and brought to a new plateau, the repertory of the first Russian seasons: *Shéhérazade*, *Cléopâtre*, *Danses polovtsiennes*, *Danses persanes*; even as *The Rite* followed directly upon *Firebird*, and brought it to a new plateau in every way from radicalized (and racialized) style to pretentious publicity—for everyone sat at the feet of the French to learn the art of *faire réclame*, and to exploit the *prestige*-making *cachet* of the *avant-garde* (also not-by-accident French terms). In lumping together and resisting *tout d’un coup* all the novelties of the 1913 season—Debussy’s *Jeux*, Schmitt’s *Salomé*, and Stravinsky’s *Sacre*—the London critic was resisting France, not Russia, and by his lights he was indeed perceptive. The Russian dancers were bringing the news to London not directly from their barbaric, chthonous homeland, but from effete and decadent, overcivilized Paris.

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<sup>393</sup> Korney Chukovsky, *Futuristī* (1922), quoted in Izrael V. Nestyev. 1960. *Prokofiev*. Stanford: Stanford University Press: 91.

<sup>394</sup> Taruskin 1996: 860.

<sup>395</sup> See Ralph P. Locke. 1998-99. Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East. *19th-Century Music* XXII: 20-53.

<sup>396</sup> See Richard Taruskin. 1997. Entailing the Falconet: Russian Musical Orientalism in Context, in *Defining Russia Musically*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: 152-85.

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That is among the reasons why as a score *The Rite* inspired so much less resistance than it had as a ballet. Audiences received it without protest, and it soon eclipsed the ballet in fame. The earliest concert performances took place in Russia under Koussevitzky (one each in Moscow and St. Petersburg early in 1914), and they were well enough received to disgust 79-year-old César Cui, the lone survivor from the Mighty Kuchka, who, after describing it as “a treasure chest in which Stravinsky has lovingly collected all sorts of musical filth and refuse,” went on to observe that “this *Rite* has been booed everywhere abroad, but among us it has found some applauders—proof that we are ahead of Europe on the path of musical progress.”<sup>397</sup>

And then came the triumph under Monteux, which set the score on its inexorable path of conquest. And why not? While it was at first a sore test for orchestra and conductor, and while it took fully half a century before music analysts caught up with it,<sup>398</sup> *The Rite* has never been a difficult piece for the audience. Stravinsky, who had already experienced two huge audience successes, had every reason to expect a third, and looked forward to the première with confidence, writing to Roerich that “from all indications I can see that this piece is bound to ‘emerge’ in a way that rarely happens.”<sup>399</sup> It is not, after all, a complex score. Its textures are simple, though very artfully and colorfully elaborated. What there is in it of counterpoint (beyond the prelude preceding the action) is uncomplicated. Its ostinato-driven forms are downright rudimentary, as is only right given the subject and setting. Its dissonances are indeed harsh and grating, but never mystifying (except to analysts), and neither are the irregular percussive rhythms. They all have obvious topical correlates in the argument and action, and that argument and action are sufficiently conveyed by the title. Nobody ever wonders why Stravinsky wrote the piece the way he did—that is (as he once put it to Vladimir Ussachevsky), “with an axe.”<sup>400</sup> The sounds of the music make a direct and compelling appeal to the listener’s imagination, and the listener’s body. In conjunction with Stravinsky’s peerless handling of the immense orchestra they have a visceral, cathartic impact. They leave—and to judge from the history of the score’s re-

<sup>397</sup> Letter to M. S. Kerzina, 16 February/1 March 1914, in Cesar Antonovich Cui. 1955. *Izbrannīye pis'ma*. Leningrad: Muzgiz: 446.

<sup>398</sup> The breakthrough came in 1963 with Arthur Berger’s seminal article. Problems of Pitch Organization in Stravinsky. *Perspectives of New Music*, II/1 (Autumn - Winter, 1963) : 11-42.

<sup>399</sup> Letter of 1/14 December 1912; Irina Yakovlevna Verzhinina, ed. 1966. *Pis'ma Stravinskogo Rerikh*. *Sovetskaya muzika*, no. 8: 62.

<sup>400</sup> Vladimir Ussachevsky. 1971. My Saint Stravinsky. *Perspectives of New Music*, IX/2-X/1: 37.

ception, have always left—most listeners feeling exhilarated. It is only the mythology of *The Rite* that would suggest anything else.

The path of conquest was sure, but it was not rapid, and not only because few orchestras were capable of tackling the piece at first. The progress of *The Rite* as an orchestral score was retarded in the first place by the war that broke out almost immediately after its first concert performances, which put an end to performances in the immediate future, and delayed publication until 1921. During the decade of the twenties, performances were rare, but their very rarity made them big events, always enhanced by repetitions of the legend of the original event. The fact that it was always preceded by its reputation—a reputation founded on the opening-night scandal, in which the score as such had played practically no part—actually smoothed the path of conquest; for in light of the legend, the music always came as a pleasant surprise. And the myth took hold, according to which the scandal itself was evidence of the music's greatness and originality—an originality the music theory establishment works very hard to defend against historical contextualizers like me.<sup>401</sup> And so the myth lives on. The review of the New York concert première in January 1924, by Olin Downes, then fresh from Boston and just starting his long tenure at the *New York Times*, can serve to illustrate its early stages:

*To Pierre Monteux and the Boston Symphony Orchestra fell the task, superbly executed, of introducing to the public of this city Igor Strawinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps," as the work is most commonly known, last night in Carnegie Hall. This work, which created a riot when it was first performed, by Mr. Monteux and the Russian Ballet in Paris in 1913, has been more discussed than any other composition of Strawinsky.*

*The audience, knowing this and fearing more through the many articles of a descriptive kind which had appeared in the daily press, came prepared for the worst, to listen to the new music. After the first part of the score had come to an end there were a few hisses—whether in indignation or to suppress premature applause was not easy to tell. After the second part it was apparent that a majority had enjoyed themselves. The applause of this majority was long and loud, and to all appearances most sincere. Two false impressions had been spread abroad, concerning this music, first, that it was unequaled in ugliness and fearfulness generally, and secondly, that it was completely unprecedented among Strawinsky's compositions. Both these reports, as Mark Twain would have said, seem greatly exaggerated. The music, filled as it is with a primitive and at times vertiginous energy, has pages of a rare and highly individual beauty. The score is obviously a logical evolution of the style of Strawinsky, following naturally from indica-*

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<sup>401</sup> See Richard Taruskin. 2011. Catching up with Rimsky-Korsakov. *Music Theory Spectrum*, XXXIII/2: 169-85, followed by seven rebuttals (186-228) and a response (229).

tions contained in “*The Fire-Bird*” and “*Petrouchka*.” There are a number of passages in “*Sacre du Printemps*” which could come straight from both these earlier works. . . . The expression, however, is greatly intensified. It is done principally by the force and individuality of the counterpoint, and also by rhythms that have an at times all but hysterical shock and fury. There is the effect of the complete abandon of mood and manner in this music. We believe that it is written with the most exact precision, with enormous power and with an uncanny knowledge—prescience—of the capacities of a greatly extended orchestra.<sup>402</sup>

What’s the problem? Downes seemed to be asking. So safe was the reputation of the score after the triumph under Monteux, that when Diaghilev revived the ballet in 1920, freshly choreographed by Leonid Massine and warmly received in Paris as if in atonement for the 1913 fiasco, he took out a sort of insurance policy on its success, before having it danced in London, by sponsoring a concert performance under Eugène Goossens in June 1921, so that London audiences, too, could be won over by the music in conjunction with—or in contrast to—the legend. As Nesta MacDonald, the chronicler of Diaghilev’s London exploits, averred, this was a “masterstroke” and a “resounding success,” and won for the ballet, now titled in English the way we know it today, a lasting *succès d’estime* that finally disarmed critical resistance. Percy Scholes, writing in the London *Observer*, elicited a quote from Bernard Shaw, so as “to give,” he said, “*Observer* readers the view of our oldest music critic, and he replied: ‘Mind, I’m not to be understood as condemning it, but—if it had been by Rossini people would have said there was too much rum-tum-tum in it!’”<sup>403</sup>

By 1929, the last year of the Diaghilev enterprise, the impresario could exult, in a letter from London to Igor Markevitch, posted about a month before Diaghilev’s untimely and unexpected death, that *The Rite*, in what turned out to be its last performance by the Ballets Russes, “had a real triumph last night. The idiots have caught on to it. *The Times* says that *Sacre* is for the twentieth century the same as Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony was for the nineteenth! At last!”<sup>404</sup>

It would seem that resistance was at an end. In fact it was only entering a new phase, one that has lasted up to our own time. And of course Diaghilev knew that perfectly well. The master of spin was still spinning, even in a letter to one of his intimates, egregiously misrepresenting the snarky way the anonymous commentator for the London *Times* had reacted to what was evidently a bit of overheard (and no doubt oversold) partisan scuttlebutt, quite likely

<sup>402</sup> Olin Downes. 1924. Music: ‘Sacre du Printemps’ Played. *New York Times*, 1 February.

<sup>403</sup> MacDonald 1975: 264.

<sup>404</sup> Letter of 23 July 1929; Ilya Samoylovich Zil’bershteyn and Vladimir Alekseyevich Samkov. 1982. *Sergey Dyagilev i russkoye iskusstvo*. Moscow: Izobratitel’noye iskusstvo, II:148.

planted by Diaghilev himself. “Le Sacre,” he wrote, “is ‘absolute’ ballet, and we are assured that it will come to be regarded as having a significance for the 20th century equal to that of Beethoven’s choral symphony in the 19th. Well, perhaps; meanwhile there was a rather thin attendance in stalls and boxes last night, but the lovers of true art in the gallery applauded to the echo.” Clearly the good grey *Times* found the comparison absurd.

But it has been resilient, for it does point up that unique status that *The Rite* shares with the Ninth. Both are emblematic bulwarks of canon and repertory alike; both possess that magic combination of a cherished and prestigious score with an unshakable reputation for innovation, plus a hardy first-night legend that makes them “historic.” They are executed on what seems an equally monumental scale—which is an extra tribute to *The Rite*, because it is only half the length of The Ninth. But what it lacks in length it makes up in weight of sound—and then some. Both have accordingly cast enormous shadows, and wielded enormous influence. As my old colleague Joseph Kerman once observed, “We live in the valley of the Ninth Symphony—that we cannot help.”<sup>405</sup> Robert Craft was a bit more sanguine about *The Rite*, calling it “the prize bull that inseminated the whole modern movement”—a lovely metaphor for a work that is all about fertility.<sup>406</sup> Many composers have testified to the justice of Craft’s metaphor—most famously, perhaps, Elliott Carter, who often said that he decided he wanted to be a composer when he heard the New York première of *The Rite* (as a concert piece, of course) with the Boston Symphony under Monteux in 1924, the very performance of which we have already sampled the *New York Times* review.<sup>407</sup>

In other ways, though, *The Rite* and the Ninth can look like opposites. When Pablo Casals, the great cellist, was asked by his Boswell, José Maria Corredor, to comment on the comparison, attributed on this occasion to Francis Poulenc, whom Corredor quoted as saying that “What the Ninth Symphony did to stir up the people of the XIXth century, *The Sacre du Printemps* does already for those of the XXth century.” Casals retorted, “This time I completely disagree with my friend Poulenc. . . . Although I acknowledge the talent of Stravinsky and the interest of the *Sacre du Printemps*, I think that to compare these two works is nothing short of blasphemy.”<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Joseph Kerman. 1979. *The Beethoven Quartets*. New York: W. W. Norton: 194.

<sup>406</sup> Robert Craft. “The Rite of Spring’: Genesis of a Masterpiece. Introduction to Igor Stravinsky. *The Rite of Spring: Sketches 1911-1913*: xv.

<sup>407</sup> See, for example, Daniel Wakin. 2008. Turning 100 at Carnegie Hall, with New Notes. *New York Times*, 11 December.

<sup>408</sup> J. Ma. Corredor. 1956. *Conversations with Casals*, trans. André Mangeot. New York: E. P. Dutton: 174.

*Blasphemy*—a violation of holiness. The Ninth has that aura. It gives compelling voice to the highest humanitarian ideals—the very ideals for which Pablo Casals, as famous in the mid-twentieth century for his anti-Fascist stance as he was for his cello playing, had become a spokesman and an emblem in his turn. He too had an aura of sanctity, and that could only make him allergic to *The Rite*—hardly a herald of universal fellowship, and certainly no Ode to Joy. One could hardly imagine devout or ceremonial performances of *The Rite* at occasions like the breaching of the Berlin Wall, such as the one Leonard Bernstein so memorably led of the Ninth in 1989. But neither could one imagine *The Rite* being ritually performed before an assemblage of the Nazi elite on Hitler’s fifty-third birthday, as Wilhelm Furtwängler did the Ninth in 1942, and as we can still see him doing online.<sup>409</sup>

That 1942 performance is a painful thing to witness now, especially the handshake between Dr. Furtwängler and Dr. Goebbels at the end. Such a reminder of the transitivity or relativity of noble aspirations (for, make no mistake, the Nazis certainly thought of their cause as holy) can cast a countershadow over The Ninth, as it has compromised the pretensions of high art to the moral high ground generally—and that probably accounts in part for Joseph Kerman’s gloom at having to dwell in its valley. From many, by now, The Ninth now attracts derision the way a cartoon millionaire’s top hat attracts snowballs. Ned Rorem, the American composer, has made spreading contempt for The Ninth one of his life’s missions, insulting it repeatedly in print (“the first piece of junk in the grand style”)<sup>410</sup> and in public speech, as I heard once at Columbia University nearly thirty years ago, where he called it “utter trash” in a lecture to student composers.

Stravinsky took some whacks of his own at the Ninth—at Casals, too—in “his” very late interviews that were published long after he could have actually given them in the *New York Review of Books*. So with all appropriate caveats in place: here, dated September 1970, is the ultimate aestheticist critique of Beethoven’s magnum opus. If Oscar Wilde had known more about music, he could have written it:

*Concerning the great-untouchable finale, however, one hardly dares tell the truth, [which] is that some of the music is very banal—the last Prestissimo, for one passage, and, for another, the first full-orchestra version of the theme, which is German-band music about in the class of Wagner’s Kaiser marsch. . . . Still more of the truth is that the voices and orchestra do not mix. The imbalances are a symptom. I have not heard a live performance since 1958, when I conducted a piece of my own on a programme*

<sup>409</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzXgZjVf8GY>

<sup>410</sup> Ned Rorem. 1987. *The Nantucket Diary of Ned Rorem 1973-1985*. San Francisco: North Point Press: 8.

with it; but I have never heard a balanced one. The ‘wrong’ notes stick out wrongly in the ‘apocalyptic’ opening chord, despite recording engineers, nor can all of their periphonic faking pick up the string figuration in the “*Seid um schlängen [sic], Millionen!*” the failure being not electronic but musical. Yet the greatest failure is in the “message,” hence, if you will pardon the expression, in the “medium.” For the message of the voices is a finitude greatly diminishing the message of the wordless music. And the first entrance of the voice is a shocking intrusion. The singer is as out of place as if he had strayed in from the prologue to *Pagliacci*.<sup>411</sup>

So that is another thing *The Ninth* shares with *The Rite*: Both have “extramusical” baggage that has caused embarrassment and aroused resistance. Leonard Bernstein changed the words of the Ninth at that Berlin-wall performance, substituting *Freiheit* for *Freude* in the finale, and justified the change the way one always justifies such interventions, by claiming that it was Schiller’s true intention. And while nobody has ever proposed that the text of the Ninth be ditched altogether, turning the symphony back into an instrumental piece—nobody except Brahms, anyway, who came up with a pointedly instrumental, or de-vocalized Ode to Joy when he wrote “Beethoven’s Tenth”—there has been a strong move to divest *The Rite* of its troubling subject matter ever since 1920, and the original divestors—which is to say the leaders of the new resistance—were Diaghilev and Stravinsky themselves.

The vindication *The Rite* enjoyed as a score at the hands of Monteux induced Diaghilev to take another chance on the ballet when that became possible after the war, thanks in the first instance to an anonymous gift of money from Coco Chanel. The company he led, however, though still called Les Ballets Russes, was no longer in the same sense the Russian Ballet—that is, a troupe of Russian dancers performing abroad. By 1920 it had become a troupe of post-revolutionary Russian émigrés, now augmented by non-Russian dancers with Russian stage names, like Lydia Sokolova (née Hilda Tansley Munnings in Wanstead, England), who danced the role of the Chosen One in the revival to the new choreography Diaghilev had commissioned from Leonid Massine. Roerich’s costumes and one of his backdrops were kept, as an economizing measure, but the scenario was effectively scrapped. The program no longer included a synopsis about the great sacrifice to “Iarilo, le magnifique, le flamboyant.”<sup>412</sup> Instead, there was a paragraph that described *The Rite* as “a spectacle of pagan Russia,” adding only that “the work is in two parts and involves

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<sup>411</sup> Igor Stravinsky. 1982. *Themes and Conclusions*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 168-69. For his animadversions see “An Interview with Igor Stravinsky.” *The New York Review of Books*, 3 June 1965; or (somewhat reined in), Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. 1966. *Themes and Episodes*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf: 101-2.

<sup>412</sup> Facsimile in Bullard 1971: I:241.

no subject. It is choreography freely constructed on the music.”<sup>413</sup> That rhetoric is what the London *Times* critic had in mind when he wrote with ironic scare-quotes that *The Rite* was being touted as “‘absolute’ ballet.” Critics who had seen Nijinsky’s version almost unanimously deplored the elimination from the new choreography of all historical and ethnological references. “I am not quarreling with this,” wrote André Levinson, who was obviously quarreling:

*The theater is not a museum. But the void is filled with a succession of movements without logic, with a collection of exercises devoid of expression. Nijinsky’s dancers were tormented by the rhythm. Here, they must simply keep time.*<sup>414</sup>

When Leopold Stokowski collaborated with Massine on a performance of *The Rite* for the League of Composers in 1930 with Martha Graham cast as the Chosen One—the American première of the ballet as such—he announced that “we are not aiming to make this production of the work essentially Russian because we felt that the ideas and feelings it expresses are universal.”<sup>415</sup> And he got Nicholas Roerich, the author of the original scenario, now living in the United States and already at the center of what we would today call a New Age cult, to in effect revoke the scenario in a talk he gave at the Wanamaker Auditorium in Philadelphia, in which he, as it were, bequeathed *The Rite* to America. “So many beautiful things,” he wrote:

*are possible if we can keep our positive attitude and open-mindedness. We can feel how the primal energy is electrified in this country; and through this energy in the easiest way you can reach the inner constructive feeling of the nation. This constructive striving of spirit, this joy before the beautiful laws of nature and heroic sacrifice, certainly are the essential feelings of “Sacre du Printemps.” We cannot consider “Sacre” as Russian, nor even Slavic—it is more ancient and pan-human. This is the natural festival of the soul. This is the joy of love and self-sacrifice, not under the knife of crude conventionality, but in exuberance of spirit, in connecting our earthly existence with a Supreme.*<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Théâtre des Champs-Élysées program, quoted in Berg 1988: 67.

<sup>414</sup> André Levinson. 1922. *Les Deux Sacres*. *La Revue musicale*, 4 (1 June); trans. Shelly Berg in Berg 1988: 71-72.

<sup>415</sup> Oliver Daniel. 1982. *Stokowski: A Counterpoint of View*. New York: Dodd, Mead: 225; quoted in Berg 1988: 77.

<sup>416</sup> Nicholas Roerich. 1930. *Sacre* (Address at the Wanamaker Auditorium, under the Auspices of the League of Composers), rpt. in Nicholas Roerich. 1931. *Realm of Light*. New York: Roerich Museum Press: 185-86.

For Roerich, then, *The Rite* had become the American dream, or rather, his dream of America. For the rest, surrounded by epithets like “absolute” and “universal” and even “devoid of expression,” *The Rite* had been pressed into the service of the postwar “dehumanized” esthetic, later to be dubbed “neo-classical”; and Stravinsky’s voice was the loudest and most insistent of all in repositioning it—indeed, in rewriting its history and revising its meaning, all the while refusing to acknowledge that he was doing anything of the sort. Four decades later, dictating a memoir to Robert Craft, he was more candid, explaining simply that by the time Diaghilev revived *The Rite*, he (Stravinsky) “realized that I prefer *Le Sacre* as a concert piece.”<sup>417</sup> Of course he did. When performed that way it was unencumbered by those aspects of the work that (he must have thought) had been the greatest obstacles to its success in 1913, and besides, he could take all the credit for it as a concert piece.

But that is not what he told a Paris reporter in 1920. Asked which choreography he preferred, he did as Diaghilev would certainly have wished him to do, perhaps as Diaghilev had told him to do, and chose Massine over Nijinsky as more faithful to what he now touted as his original conception. “I composed this work after *Petrouchka*,” he told the reporter, Michel Georges-Michel, who was interviewing him for *Comoedia*, as always the Paris organ friendliest to the Diaghilev ballet:

*The germinal idea of it is a theme which came to me when I had finished Firebird. Because this theme and those which grew out of it were conceived in a rough and brutal manner, I chose as a pretext for developing their implications the prehistoric epoch of Russia, since I am a Russian. But note well that this idea came from the music and not the music from the idea. I have written an architectonic work, not an anecdotal one. And it was a mistake to treat it anecdotally, which goes against the whole thrust of the piece.*<sup>418</sup>

This is completely at variance with all other accounts Stravinsky gave of *The Rite*’s moment of conception, which took place in his mind’s eye, not his mind’s ear. The music did indeed come from a visual “idea,” and not, moreover, until the idea had been elaborated into a detailed and (but for the originating sacrificial vision) an ethnographically quite accurate scenario with Roerich’s help. Stravinsky here assumed the role he would play to the end of his days: one could say with little exaggeration that he spent the second half of his life telling lies about the first half. And until the 1980s his lies possessed unchallengeable authority.

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<sup>417</sup> Stravinsky and Craft 1981: 144.

<sup>418</sup> Michel Georges-Michel. 1920. *Les Deux Sacre du Printemps*. *Comoedia*, 11 December; adapted from the translation in Bullard, *First Performance*, I:2.

Stravinsky's resistance to the scenario, and his propaganda on behalf of the score as an abstract concert piece succeeded in changing the "whole thrust of the piece" for generations of listeners and critics. Pieter van den Toorn was unquestionably correct in announcing, at the very outset of his book-length treatise on *The Rite*, that "[f]or the greater part of this century [i.e., the twentieth] our knowledge and appreciation of *The Rite of Spring* have come from the concert hall and from recordings."<sup>419</sup> Whether he was as obviously right in further asserting that the scenario and the choreography and what he calls "the close 'interdisciplinary' conditions under which the music is now known to have been composed" were "matters which, after the 1913 première, quickly passed from consciousness," is less clear, at least to me. "Like pieces of a scaffolding," he wrote, "they were abandoned in favor of the edifice itself and relegated to the 'extra-musical.'" And hence, "[t]hey became history, as opposed to living art."<sup>420</sup> As he often does in writing about Stravinsky's music, Van den Toorn relies on the passive voice to create the impression that the processes he describes were inevitable and impersonal. But they had their agents—powerful ones, like the impresario, the scenarist, the new choreographer and above all the composer, who used the press quite actively to repress consciousness of those old "interdisciplinary" conditions and just as actively to assert a new line.

Among the first to swallow the new line—and not just the line, but the hook and sinker as well—was Olin Downes, in his *New York Times* review of the 1924 New York première. Defending *The Rite* against its reputation as a shocker mainly notable for its grisly action, Downes wrote of the score that

*It is music, not mere sound to accentuate or accompany something done in the theatre. This should be emphasized, as Strawinsky has emphasized in various statements. "Sacre du Printemps" is not an accompaniment for a ballet. It is the other way round. The ballet was the accompaniment for the representation, after the conception, of the music.*

Lest there be any doubt as to the source of these assertions, Mr. Downes went on to paraphrase the *Comoedia* interview: "Long before the scenario of the ballet existed, as Strawinsky told Michel Georges-Michel, he had conceived the 'embryo-theme' of the score." And then a direct quotation, in Downes's translation, ending with the famous insistence that "My work is architectonic, not anecdotal; objective, not descriptive construction."

"That is the story," Downes concluded, "and, we believe, the sincere story of the musical evolution of this extremely interesting and exciting creation."<sup>421</sup>

<sup>419</sup> Pieter C. Van den Toorn. 1987. *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring: The Beginnings of a Musical Language*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 1.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.* 2.

<sup>421</sup> Olin Downes. 1924. "Music: 'Sacre du Printemps' Played. *New York Times*, 1 February.

Stravinsky was exploiting the media to control the reception of his work, as he had learned to do from Diaghilev, the manipulator of all manipulators, and as he would continue to do until the end of his life. In this case the press was cooperating in Stravinsky's own resistance to *The Rite*, which demanded the rejection of the scenario as an "extramusical" appendage. That resistance is still going strong—most obviously in much of the academic writing on the piece, which still insists on decontextualizing it, decontextualization being the indispensable price of understanding it within the terms set by the conventions of the discipline, which adamantly confine the purview of scholarly interest and discussion to the making of the object.<sup>422</sup> "It may indeed be the case," Arnold Whittall wrote, in what amounted to the keynote article in the maiden issue of the British journal *Music Analysis*:

*that the 'rules' of the game can only be discovered if the discords are 'translated' into some other medium [he was speaking of Allen Forte's "pitch-class sets"], in which they can be examined without the psychological burden of their true character and quality. For Le Sacre remains an explosive work, and analysis may be impossible unless the score is first defused.*<sup>423</sup>

That is a fine description of active resistance and repression. And that resistance has drastically affected performance as well. Even without jettisoning the subject *in toto*, the message of *The Rite* has been relentlessly muted over the years by its performers. Beginning with Massine's, staged versions of the ballet have recoiled from or toned down the "sociological" or "biological" action that so impressed Jacques Rivière with its remorselessness. In keeping with the new view of the work as "absolute" and "objective construction," Massine favored geometrical designs and what he called dance counterpoint over the folkloric or ceremonial dances that could still be detected in Nijinsky's version. Stravinsky assisted him in soft-pedaling the folkloric basis of the work by flatly denying the presence of nearly a dozen folk melodies in his score, admitting only that the opening bassoon solo in the prelude had come from an anthology of Lithuanian wedding songs.<sup>424</sup> He even gave his first biographer, André Schaeffner, the exact page reference, evidently in the hope

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<sup>422</sup> See Richard Taruskin. 2004. The Poietic Fallacy. *Musical Times*, vol. CXLV, no. 1886: 7-34; rpt. in Richard Taruskin. 2009. *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 301-29.

<sup>423</sup> Arnold Whittall. 1982. Music Analysis as Human Science? *Le Sacre du Printemps* in Theory and Practice. *Music Analysis*, I, no. 1: 50. For pitch-class sets see Allen Forte. 1973. *The Structure of Atonal Music*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Allen Forte. 1978. *The Harmonic Organization of The Rite of Spring*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

<sup>424</sup> Anton Juszkiewicz. 1900. *Melodje ludowe litewskie*. Cracow: Wydawnictwo Akademji Umiejtnosci.

that his show of candor would forestall investigation of the claim.<sup>425</sup> The ruse worked for nearly fifty years, until Stravinsky's Los Angeles friend Lawrence Morton decided one day, seven years after Stravinsky's death, to reopen the Lithuanian anthology and browse for other tunes.<sup>426</sup> Morton once told me, as I was starting my own investigations of Stravinsky and his works, that I was lucky I had not known the man. He was thinking of the inhibitions, born of personal loyalty, that had prevented him from making the most elementary tests of Stravinsky's many spurious assertions and denials until the Old Man had left the scene.

Many of the more recent choreographies of *The Rite*, perhaps most famously Maurice Béjart's, have replaced the grim sacrifice with another sort of fertility rite, turning the work into a joyously orgiastic celebration of human sexuality—"very positive, very youthful and very strong," in Béjart's own description, which unwittingly echoed Roerich's introduction of the piece to American audiences.<sup>427</sup>

The clumsiest attempt at resistance in performance that I've seen was the first Soviet production of the ballet, choreographed for the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow by Natalia Kasatkina and Vladimir Vasilyov in 1965. I caught it in 1972 and will never forget how it startled me. Although the composer had become *persona grata* by then in the homeland on which he had turned his back so long ago, and was touted, especially since his death, as *russkaya klassika*, "a Russian classic," the ballet scenario was still a problem, which the Soviet choreographers solved by having a young man, identified in the program as "the shepherd," leap out of the corps de ballet during the little flute scale that comes right before the final fatal crashing chord, sweep the Chosen One off her feet and into safety, and (coinciding with that final chord) plunge a dagger into the idol of Yarilo, the sun god before whom she was doing her fatal dance (rechristened Dazh'-bog for the occasion, in accordance with the eleventh-century Russian *Primary Chronicle*).

Even Millicent Hodson's now much-travelled version for the Joffrey Ballet, which purported faithfully (and, for many, convincingly) to reconstruct Nijinsky's harsh original to the extent that it could be reassembled from the available evidence, may have flinched a bit, allowing a hint of humanitarian sentiment to creep into the pitiless "Danse sacrée," when the Chosen One, a look of terror on her face, tries repeatedly to break out of the circle of tribal elders that surrounds and confines her as she performs her lethal leaps. The evi-

<sup>425</sup> See André Schaeffner. 1931. *Stravinsky*. Paris: Éditions Rieder, 43 n 1; also Table des planches (217), pl. 21.

<sup>426</sup> See Lawrence Morton. 1979. Footnotes to Stravinsky Studies: *Le Sacre du Printemps*. *Tempo*, 128 (March 1979): 9-16.

<sup>427</sup> Interview with Shelly C. Berg, quoted in Berg 1988: 93.

dence on which Hodson based this episode<sup>428</sup> consists of two items. The first is a notation, evidently in the hand of Marie Rambert, the eurythmics coach, on the piano four-hands score that guided Nijinsky in fashioning the choreography. The second is a passage in the memoirs of Bronislava Nijinska, the choreographer's sister, whose testimony carried authority because until she became inopportunistically pregnant, Nijinska had been the intended performer of the role of Chosen One, and it was on her body that Nijinsky had created the original steps. (Her recollections had been incorporated by Vera Krasovskaya, the great Soviet dance historian, in her monograph on Nijinsky.)

Rambert's actual words as inscribed in the four-hands rehearsal score indicate that the Chosen One "runs across clutching her head" (*perebegayet khvatayas' za golovu*); it is Hodson, not Rambert, who interprets the gesture as a "foiled escape attempt."<sup>429</sup> Nor does Krasovskaya's text corroborate this interpretation directly. She quotes Nijinska, in language also quoted by Hodson, likening the Chosen One to "the image of a prehistoric bird . . . conjured up by the force of the music and by the mad scramble of jumps." But then Nijinska adds (only now not in direct discourse but in Krasovskaya's paraphrase), "it was a bird" whose "wings were attempting to raise its clumsy body not yet ready for flight."<sup>430</sup> Given this ambiguous evidence, I believe it is fair to describe thoughts of escape as an interpolation by Hodson.

It was later strongly endorsed by Tamara Levitz in an article proposing that, whatever the implications of Stravinsky's music or the explicit assertion of Roerich's scenario, Nijinsky's "Chosen One may not have been a passive victim who succumbed to her community without conflict, . . . but rather a subject who experienced deep animosity toward her peers." In that case, Levitz argues, "the 'Danse sacrale' becomes less an essay in inhumane musical form than a physical expression of a critical spirit of opposition."<sup>431</sup> I do not find any support for this thesis in the work, in the documents pertaining to its genesis, or in the discourse surrounding it at the time of its unveiling. Like Bé-

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<sup>428</sup> So identified by her in an oral exchange with me following my keynote address at the conference, "The Rite of Spring at One Hundred," organized by Carolina Performing Arts at the Chapel Hill campus of the University of North Carolina on October 25, 2012.

<sup>429</sup> Hodson 1996: 172, 174.

<sup>430</sup> Vera Krasovskaya. 1979. *Nijinsky*, trans. John A. Bowlit. New York: Schirmer Books: 267 (Bowlit has "still not ready" for "not yet ready"; this is a common error in translations into English from Russian, in which the word *yeshcho* can be translated as both "still" and "yet."). Compare Hodson, *Nijinsky's Crime*: 174 (which purports to represent Nijinska's text in faithful translation rather than paraphrase): "Leaning to the ground, the Chosen One sits (in *plié*) such that the hand that is down hangs to the earth, and just then her legs begin to stamp and her hands beat against her bent knees—like a large bird choosing and setting up a nest."

<sup>431</sup> Tamara Levitz. 2004. The Chosen One's Choice. In Andrew Dell'Antonio, ed. *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 72.

part's and other revisionary choreographies such as Mary Wigman's or Pina Bausch's, Prof. Levitz's interpretation seems to me an attempt to salvage something "positive" from *The Rite* according to our contemporary standards. This is what we are always tempted to do with works we want to keep current, and it is a reasonable and justifiable endeavor. The only part I object to is the attempt to usurp Nijinsky's authority by attributing the revisionary reading to him.

Nijinsky's contribution to *The Rite*, unhappily, is no longer available for inspection. It was never filmed, and Millicent Hodson, by her own admirably frank admission, had to do a great deal of speculative supplementing in order to turn the evidence she had—chiefly verbal descriptions and still drawings and photos—into actual *plastique animée*, the realization of movement in space and time. It is from Hodson's supplements, further supplemented, I would venture to say, by her own strong moral convictions, that Prof. Levitz derived her argument that Nijinsky's Chosen One "expressed her opposition to the people who had chosen her to die."<sup>432</sup> "From all accounts," she claims, "the dominant emotion [of the *Danse sacrée*] seems to have been . . . fear and a deep antagonism between the Chosen One and her surroundings."<sup>433</sup> I know of no such accounts. None of the witnesses Levitz cites—to "fear and grief," to "tragedy," or to the Chosen One's "subjective will," her "defiant expression," her "attempts to flee"<sup>434</sup>—had actually seen Nijinsky's version of the *Danse sacrée*; and those who did see it, especially those few who described it sympathetically and in detail, contradict her contentions. Andrey Levinson, in what seems to me a masterpiece of pithy accuracy of observation, wrote of the Chosen One in her moment of glorious agony:

*To the sound of ferocious rhythmic pounding, deafened by the piercing tonalities of the orchestra, she crumples and writhes in an ecstatic angular dance. And once again the icy comedy of this primeval hysteria excites the spectator with its unprecedented impression of tortured grotesquery.*<sup>435</sup>

And Jacques Rivière, whose account Levitz praises as "remarkably insightful,"<sup>436</sup> wrote that the Chosen One "accomplishes a rite, absorbed by a social function, and without giving the slightest sign of comprehension or of interpretation, she acts according to the will and the convulsions of a being more vast than she." Her fate is shown not as horrible but as inevitable and, by the lights of the tribe for whom she dies, beneficent. In the ballet's final gesture,

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.* 85.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.* 85-86.

<sup>434</sup> *Ibid.* 86, 96-97.

<sup>435</sup> Andrey Yakovlevich Levinson. 1913. *Russkiy balet v Parizhe. Rech*, 3 June.

<sup>436</sup> Levitz 2004: 96.

when the elders bear her aloft, her death is celebrated, not deplored—and that, of course, is what to us is horrible.

*An icy comedy of primeval hysteria. Convulsions of a will more vast.* We don't get, because we don't want, such messages from *The Rite* any more. In the ballet theater it has become a humane indictment of oppression or else a revelry of procreative sex. There were intimations of both of these, it seemed to me, in the latest new choreography, by Sasha Waltz, which was given its première performance in a double bill with Hodson's reconstructed Nijinsky at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on the actual anniversary date, 29 May 2013. In the concert hall (as opposed to the theater), amnesia has been complete, and *The Rite* has become Olympic fun and games, a showpiece for instrumental virtuosity. These are all resistances to *The Rite*—both to the shocking object unveiled on May 29, 1913, and to the disorderly reaction that it incited.

But do not think that I am deploring these transformations. Change is concomitant in all artistic reception, and in all traditions. It can be celebrated or opposed, but never stopped. It is what keeps beloved works alive, or (in Pieter van den Toorn's language), maintains their status as "living art." It is precisely because *The Rite* has changed enormously, both in sound and in significance, over the century of its existence, that we can celebrate it today with such enthusiasm. To assess and account for these changes is perhaps the most fascinating task of the art or music or ballet historian confronting *The Rite*, and certainly the most pressing one. So in conclusion, I offer a few vignettes to illustrate the way in which *The Rite* has been resisted in concert performance. As before, the chief resister turns out to be the composer himself, which is what has made resistance so irresistible.

The earliest recordings, by Monteux and by Stravinsky, date from 1929, the year of the last Ballets Russes performances.<sup>437</sup> They show the work to have been an almost unplayable ordeal at the time—and literally unplayable when it came to maintaining the marked tempos. The performances are arduous and sloppy, and in the *Danse sacrée*, the hardest part of all, they convey something of the crushing force and tension that drive the Chosen One to her doom. You can still hear a little of that arduousness and tension in Stravinsky's much faster 1940 recording with the New York Philharmonic.<sup>438</sup> The *Danse sacrée* is still a mess, and, like the doomed dancer, it totters more and more inelegantly as it nears the end—this despite the presence of Saul Goodman, perhaps the greatest kettledrummer of all time, in what is surely the

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<sup>437</sup> Both have been reissued on Pearl CDs: GEMM 9334 (Stravinsky) and GEMM 9329 (Monteux).

<sup>438</sup> Most recently reissued, together with nine other historical "reference recordings" (including Stokowski's with the Philadelphia Orchestra, first published somewhat later in 1929), on Sony Music / RCA Red Seal B00BXQ3KXY (2013).

most spectacular timpani part in the whole literature. It wasn't Goodman's fault, or the orchestra's. Nobody knew the piece very well in those days. It was still a relative rarity on concert programs in 1940, and the unpredictable accents and irregular phrase lengths were a constant surprise and challenge to all concerned, including Stravinsky, who was not a trained conductor. The combination of his uncertain beat and the orchestra's need for leadership through the rhythmic thickets conspired to prevent a good performance—if by a good performance one means a fluent and rhythmically secure performance.

But is a fluent and rhythmically secure performance the sort of performance Stravinsky originally intended? A recent study of *The Rite* by the music theorist Matthew McDonald showed, to me convincingly, that in order to evoke a genuine sense of primeval hysteria the composer used *ad hoc* algorithms, formulas derived arbitrarily from the harmonies and melodies, to assemble rhythmic patterns that would defeat anyone's expectations, even his own, and prevent the music from ever losing its shock value by becoming familiar or predictable.<sup>439</sup> But now everybody knows *The Rite*. It is a classic, and an audition piece that every music student practices, so that now any conservatory orchestra can give a spiffy performance of what used to stump their elders, and professional orchestras can play it in their sleep, and often do.

Stravinsky came to want it that way. After the Great War came the great neo-classical reaction, in which Stravinsky played the leading role among musicians. That is when he started resisting *The Rite* by touting it as “architectonic, not anecdotal,” an “objective construction,” and “absolute ballet.” One of the strange fruits of his neoclassicism—but not so strange when you put it in the context of that objectivist esthetic—was Stravinsky's infatuation with the piano, a mechanical instrument that never misses a note or a cue and never grows tired. It can maintain a regularity of tempo and rhythm far beyond the capacity of any mortal performer, and Stravinsky eagerly arranged all his music for the machine that so epitomized his new impersonal (or, to speak the language of the period, “dehumanized”) ideals. His piano roll of the *Danse sacrée* gave the piece a new meaning: no longer a dance of lethal fatigue and exhaustion but a paean to imperturbable stability and speed. For make no mistake: “dehumanized” meant superhuman, not subhuman; and for *The Rite* this was a diametrical reversal of meaning.<sup>440</sup>

Ever since the 1920s, that lithe stability and speed have been the performance ideal for *The Rite*, which Stravinsky officially sanctioned by re-notating and slightly rescoring the *Danse sacrée* (in 1943, after his frustrating experience

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<sup>439</sup> Matthew McDonald. 2010. *Jeux de Nombres: Automated Rhythm in The Rite of Spring*. *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, LXIII: 499-551.

<sup>440</sup> The piano roll has been recorded by Rex Lawson on IMP Masters CD 25 (1991).

with the New York Philharmonic three years earlier) to make the conductor's part easier to beat, and the orchestral parts easier to read. From then on it became the John-Henryish ideal of performers to match or even exceed the piano roll's rendition, and when the first recordings to do so (Benjamin Zander's with the Boston Philharmonic and Robert Craft's with the Orchestra of St. Luke's) were issued in 1991, they were greeted as a decisive breakthrough.<sup>441</sup>

Now the best orchestras and conductors can proudly equal or exceed that feat in live performance, as one may see the San Francisco Symphony doing, under Michael Tilson Thomas, in a DVD the orchestra issued on its own label in 2006.<sup>442</sup> As is usual in performance videos, it is full of close-ups, both of individual members of the orchestra and of the conductor, whose face live audiences never get to see during performances. At the very end of the *Danse sacrale*, when the applause begins, Maestro Thomas's beaming face fills the screen, and it is a perfect picture of what *The Rite of Spring* conveys now: elation and euphoria, the emotion of an athlete who has just completed the decathlon or an engineer who has designed and demonstrated a perfectly tuned and efficient precision appliance. Precision tooling is the message the camerawork is obviously deployed to emphasize throughout the performance, hopping from player to imperturbable player through all the rhythmic intricacies. The dark biological ballet of 1913, the icy comedy of primeval hysteria, has been decisively resisted, rejected, repressed in favor of "positive" good vibrations.

But not necessarily for all time. The tradition continues. Who can say where it is headed? What I have just described is merely the rendering of *The Rite* that best accords with current views and thus follows what is now the line of least resistance.

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<sup>441</sup> Zander's performance is preserved on the same CD as the piano roll (see fn 91); Craft's is on Musicmasters B000000FQS ("Stravinsky the Composer, vol. 1").

<sup>442</sup> Keeping Score: Revolutions in Music—Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (San Francisco Symphony Productions 821936001493).

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**ROZA**





## The Chosen One

### An interview with Róża Puzynowska

Realized 19 December 2013; published Winter 2013/2014.



Le Sacre First Act

**Witold Wachowski:** How did Stravinsky and Nijinsky find their way onto your paintings? Was it a commission, a proposition? Or, perhaps, the original idea was yours?

*Róża Puzynowska:* For three years I had been working at the Costume Painting Department of the Grand Theatre - National Opera House in Warsaw as an assistant, responsible for patterned elements of stage costumes. Once we received an enormous pile of 270 pairs of ballet shoes and 360 ribbons to paint at our studio. It was Nijinsky's/Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* as reconstructed by Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer - world renown reconstructors of old and new ballets.

I mention these astronomic numbers for a reason. Just try to divide all this work among three people and imagine that you have only a few months to paint all the individual elements, by hand! All the lines have different colours and all elements have their own proportions.

Having worked day after day on the same elements, I had dreams about these mountains of ballet shoes and their ribbons. The plot of the ballet captivated my imagination and in my dreams I ran away from an avalanche of ballet shoes that tried to trample me. In Nijinsky's work, the Chosen One dances herself to death, but I was trampled by shoes.

I decided that the only way to free myself was to have my own take on the subject in the most honest and intimate way possible - and that was to paint it all.

As it happened in the succeeding season, the theatre commissioned the Costume Department to prepare full costumes (before we only had to do the ballet shoes). As a member of a three-person team, I spent over a month trying to understand the patterns to be recreated on the tunics, trousers, hats and headbands. I described pictures of other realisations of the costumes by comparing the Polish version with the English one, I numbered the colours I used. It took about another two months to create those colours from a 136-colour palette! Then followed months of hand painting the costumes, it was truly painstaking.

In April 2012, I presented the idea of my paintings cycle. Both the reconstructors of the ballet and the director of the Polish National Ballet, Krzysztof Pastor, reacted enthusiastically. It was time to choose dancers that would pose for my paintings, all of them agreed.

... that's how it all started.

The paintings are a result of an internal, burning need. My initiative, my love.



Work in the Theater

**A hundred years ago, the premiere of *The Rite of Spring* created a cultural earthquake, more or less. This a phenomenon characteristic of our nature (and culture) that an original and precise, well-thought-out work of art is initially deemed to be a cacophony, a vacuous mockery of the audience. On the hand, the world of popular art is guided by the rule that “people will enjoy what they already enjoy”. What was the reception of your pictures from the series, exhibited after all on the walls of well-respected institutions?**

In general, the reception was very, very positive. But just like the original ballet stirred up emotions, with a smile on my face, I recall even the negative opinions. I was told that the idea is derivative and the execution kitschy and mediocre. I am happy to hear also this kind of views. I can't help but take it as

a compliment when both positive and negative reactions are strong - that must mean that I have hit a nerve. If something is really insipid and poor, then it is easily forgotten, it fades from memory and does not influence the viewer enough to elicit any comment at all. In my case, the biggest disturbance was to paint the dancers in suggested nudes. For me it was the only right way to do it.



Work in the Theater

**You have immortalised the actual dancers of the Polish National Ballet. How was it to work with them? How long did it take to finish this undertaking, taking into account the number of these relatively large paintings?**

Yes, my paintings are often multiplied portraits of the dancers of the National Ballet, life-size in the poses from the original choreography by Vaclav Nijinsky.

In March 2012, I compiled a list of my thirteen “chosen” dancers. There were mails, telephones, meetings, photo shoots, selections of photographic material, propositions of compositions and finally the painting itself. All intense... It was about a year of sleeping for 3-4 hours a day. A real marathon, but such a beautiful one!

I think that for most of us ballet is actually an amazing world. For me, it is a world of super- humans. Unrealistic characters, almost untouchable. My project was a wonderful opportunity to get to know the human aspects of this world. With the so called blood and sweat, fear and truly astonishing power of character. Every single one of my “chosen ones” from the ballet company is exceptional. Each person draws the eye of the viewers and doesn’t allow them to blink. That’s what I call a real force! It was a purely beautiful experience to be able to talk to them on the sofa, drink tea and, although we are from two different worlds, have a laugh about similar problems.



Atelier

**In what technique the paintings were made? Could you say a few words about these and other particulars of your painting methods?**

I use oil paint with glazing, which means that I apply several layers of more or less transparent paint and binder in the same place. I start with a draft of the composition that I already see in full in my head. There's no coincidence in my painting.

Due to the subject of the cycle and the unquestionably decorative character of the original *Rite of Spring*, I decided to use flakes of real gold and silver. These interact with the light and the walking viewer, in this way they emulate the movements on stage.

When I am done with a composition, I apply the flakes, polish them and secure their surface. After these preparations, I work on the rest of the painting. First, I need to choose what elements should show through the main colour layer and what shimmer to add. Then, gradually, I cover the canvass with different colours, one after the other, trying to retain their particular transparency which contributes to the final effect of fleshiness and depth. For instance, the brown that I use is not a colour from the tube. It is layers of reds, blues, oranges, sometimes ochre. It all depends on the temperature of the target layer. One painting may have as many as 20 to 30 layers in different spots. There is no place for mistakes. If I apply the paint too thickly and destroy the depth, the only solution is to paint the place over with white and start all over again.



Work in the Theater / Atelier

Owing to the technique I use, finishing one painting may take from one to three months. The process of drying cannot be accelerated without damaging the layering, so one can only wait in-between the layers. That's why I paint three to five canvases at the same time. While one is drying, I move to the next one and so on.

**In one of the interviews, you describe your attitude to realism in modern painting. It seems that realism may often serve as a motivation for accusations or shame. Is it really so bad in the world of art? Does “realistic” automatically implies “not modern”?**

I do not know whether “realistic” is the same as “not modern”, but that's how it looks like from my perspective. I often heard the view that realism is cheap and currently so not Polish. To plain, literary and decorative... about nothing. That I believe is not true, as the same can be said about the so called “dot on the canvas” or a black hole on a bare stretcher painted with fingers. Is this art? So what actually is this “art”? A craft or an idea? And why not a symbiosis of both?



Atelier

I came across the view that there is no reason to paint like I do, because with Photoshop you can work much faster and the effect is similar, a sugary print on a canvas. I am not ashamed of anything. Neither of my subjects, nor of my aesthetics. I am honest in what I do and how I do it. Still, it should not be forgotten that the honesty of emotions is not synonymous with literal autobiography. In other words, the fact that once I painted a self-portrait with male genitalia does not mean that I actually have them.

In my case, realism is a tool that I use to create the impression of universality and intimacy that is difficult to achieve by other means. I also use nudity, scale, colours and dreamlike light. There is a lot of room for interpretation. And apart from that, what a challenge it is to execute such a work! Each new painting is a challenge to the trust of both sides, the models' and mine. After all, I paint real people, not fantasies. It is amazing to feel the trust of a stranger, I love it, I experience euphoria and want to do more paintings.



Atelier / with Millicent Hodson & Kenneth Archer

**The figurative qualities of your work do not diminish their expressivity and the fact that these paintings keep the viewers several feet above the ground or pull them into spaces of marvel rather than realistically plant their feet on the ground, glued to the floor. These dynamic figures are shot through with light; sometimes the light even partners them. I think I now ought to ask you about your inspirations and favourite painters.**

I am happy that you view my work in this way.

Everything can be an inspiration. The art of others as well as the surrounding world: the sun trying to get under heavy eyelids, a queue in the shop, someone singing at the bus or a smiling stranger on the subway. It may be a feeling or a stray word, an accidentally overheard conversation, a thought-provoking article, a book, a film, fashion, nature etc.

For the last couple of months, I stayed in New York. I spent at least three hours each day on the train. I always had a book with me, but I could not focus on reading, because the surroundings were so interesting. I literally soaked up everything with the same passion as watching Old Masters at the Metropolitan Museum. Nevertheless, whenever I travel somewhere, I always try to find the works of Holbein, Vermeer, Rembrandt, Klimt, Caravaggio, de La Tour, da Vinci, Courbet, Goya, Velasquez, Bosch, Memling, van der Weyden, Brueghel, Monet, Mondrian, Pollock and Kahlo. As you can see, I have a rather extensive "collection" of the painters that I like. Each one teaches me something different and I admire every single one of them.

**If one takes a look at other paintings of yours .... without certain refinement, some of them may be seen as shocking. You turn out to be a controversial artist, fascinated by human corporeality to such an extent that you include experimentation with it in your art.**

Yes, physical aspects are beautiful and universal. Still, it should be remembered that without a soul, the body is only an empty shell. This is what happens when we label or pigeonhole it and we all do that, often unknowingly and automatically.

I am not fascinated by the corporeality itself, but only in relation with the spiritual. What are we without our emotions, belief, love or passions?

I think the package is never as important as its contents, don't you?

**Four years ago, you said that you oppose art about nothing. Bland reception of art included, it could be added.**

I like to ask questions in my art, or simply push the viewers to ask these questions themselves. I always say that good art should leave a stigma on the viewers and follow them around, entice a dialogue. It should help to get to know oneself, to develop internally, to enrich. All reaction to art is good. No reaction is a description of mediocrity that should be fought off with all might, regardless of whether we are talking about art, interpersonal relationships, private or emotional life.

For me honesty and quality are some of the principal measures of reality.



Le Sacre Second Act

**ROZA** is a painter and costume designer, representing art filled with symbolism and hyper-realism giving us an inviting flirtatious wink. RÓŻA PUZYNOWSKA – ROZA Born in 1984 in Warsaw. Diplomat of the International School of Costume and Fashion Design (Warsaw). Graduated in 2012 from Costume Design under supervision of costume designer Zofia de Ines; diploma: "Persona. Angels & Demons" awarded with distinction. Graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts (Warsaw). MA diploma 2009 in the field of Painting from the workshop of Professor Krzysztof Wachowiak; diploma cycle: "Stereotypes vs Identity" earned with the Rector's distinction. In 2007 she studied at the University College of Falmouth - BA Hons Fine Arts course (Cornwall, UK). Inter alia she took part in: International Audio-Visual Workshops "Moving Districts Budapest" (EUShorts festival, Budapest), costume realizations for music videos and theatrical performances, numerous exhibitions of paintings, interviews and discussions about art. From 2010 she co-operates with costume realizations by working on commission for Costume Painting Department in the Grand Theatre National Opera (Warsaw). In 2012 she joined the team of lecturers of the International School of Costume and Fashion Design and became an assistant to one of the most interesting Polish fashion designers - Mariusz Przybylski. At present she is a student of National Academy School, NYC. Her paintings can be found in private collections, mainly in Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States. She realised an art project based on Nijinsky's "The Rite of Spring" [more – in the interview].<sup>443</sup>

***<https://rozaartist.see.me>***

***<http://www.roza.cc>***

***<https://www.facebook.com/roza.artist>***

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<sup>443</sup> From <https://rozaartist.see.me>

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## Przedmowa

Drodzy Czytelnicy,

z przyjemnością prezentujemy specjalny – a trzeci w tym roku – tom *Avantu*. Stanowi on wybór tekstów, które ukażą się drukiem w anglojęzycznym zbiorze zatytułowanym „A Laboratory of Spring”, jak również w polskim przekładzie. Ta jedyna w swoim rodzaju i przez wielu z Was oczekiwana kolekcja obejmuje prace z zakresu muzykologii oraz historii, filozofii, psychologii, socjologii, etnografii czy wreszcie kognitywistyki muzyki. Okazji do tej publikacji dostarczyła setna rocznica premiery baletu „Święto Wiosny” Igora Strawińskiego – utworu uważanego przez niektórych za symboliczny początek muzyki współczesnej.

Korzystając z okazji, pragniemy złożyć szczególne podziękowania recenzentom – specjalistom w zakresie wyżej wymienionych dziedzin – których szczęśliwie udało nam się pozyskać do współpracy nad niniejszym tomem, jak również autorom spoza grona tu publikujących, ale z dużym zainteresowaniem sekundującym nam podczas przygotowań.

Redakcja  
Toruń–Warszawa  
Zima 2013





**LABORATORIUM**





## Laboratorium wiosny. Wprowadzenie

Bywa, że gdy wybierzemy się na koncert i rozbrzmiewają już pierwsze dźwięki muzyki, jesteśmy zmuszeni dyskretnie uciszać niefrasobliwie rozgadanych towarzyszy.

Bywa też odwrotnie: wtedy, gdy wyciszamy muzykę, by przepuścić przodem wypowiedane lub pisane słowa. Takie okazje jak setna rocznica premiery „Święta Wiosny” Igora Strawieńskiego – celebrowana w roku 2013 – należą do tych momentów, kiedy trzeba się wypowiedzieć: częściowo z konieczności, często pompatycznie, podsumowująco, a niekiedy też dość wnikliwie. Dzieło Strawieńskiego z pewnością na to zasługuje i już się takich honorów doczekało. Nie zawsze były to komplementy. Bo też i każdy Strawieński ma swojego Adorno.

Niniejszy tom stanowi nie do końca ten drugi przypadek. Jest on hołdem złożonym nie tyle dziełu czy kompozytorowi, ile pewnej epoce. „Święto wiosny” – powołane kiedyś do istnienia wysiłkiem tak Strawieńskiego, jak i Wacława Niżyńskiego czy Sergiusza Diaghilewa, ale i czynnikami dużo wcześniejszymi i pozajednostkowymi – świeci w tej epoce szczególnym blaskiem, zarówno własnym, jak i odbitym. Nie stanowi ono wyizolowanego tworu, który niezmiennie przechodzi przez dziesięciolecia i z rąk do rąk pokoleń. Oczywiście, że docieranie do źródeł, próby rekonstrukcji, eliminacja elementów obcych są czymś kuszącym i niesłychanie wzbogacają naszą kulturę muzyczną. Ale istnieje też inna pokusa: czy można zrekonstruować wrażliwość tamtych odbiorców? Dlatego pytać o to, co się tak naprawdę stało 29 maja 1913 w paryskim Théâtre des Champs Élysées, to trochę tak, jak pytać, co się stało 14 lutego 1900 pod Wiszącą Skałą<sup>444</sup>. Trudno powiedzieć, na ile pytamy o zdarzenia, które zaszły, a na ile o to, co tamci ludzie przeżyli. Czy jakieś laboratoria przyszłości „odtworzą” nam tamtą wrażliwość – cokolwiek to by znaczyło – i jakiego personelu należy się w nich spodziewać? Muzykologów? Neurobadaczy? Psychologów muzyki? A może również poetów?

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<sup>444</sup> Patrz: książka Joan Lindsay pt. „Picnic at Hanging Rock” oraz film Petera Weira pod tym samym tytułem.

Dlatego bohaterami „Laboratorium wiosny” są przede wszystkim nasi Autorzy, niektórzy sławni i już docenieni, inni – bez wątpienia zasługujący na zainteresowanie poprzez zaoferowany tutaj swój wkład pracy i talent. Na pewno nie mówią zgodnym głosem ani też nie mówią do końca o tym samym. Ale to oni są tą Epoką, przez którą przeleciała kometa dzieła Strawińskiego.

Tom rozpoczyna się od rodzaju pamiętnika prowadzonego przez Millicent Hodson i Kennetha Archera (projekt *Balety stare i nowe*) podczas inscenizacji „Święta wiosny”. Następnie prezentuje zbiór rozpraw, które ujmują dzieło Strawińskiego z różnych perspektyw i w kontekście różnych pytań i problemów, autorstwa Pietera van den Toorna (Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Santa Barbara), Hanny Järvinen (Uniwersytet Sztuk w Helsinkach), Lucy Weir (Uniwersytet w Glasgow), Helen Sills (Międzynarodowe Towarzystwo Badań nad Czasem), Piotra Przybysza (Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu), Howarda Gardnera (Wyższa Szkoła Edukacji Uniwersytetu Harvarda w Cambridge), Timothy’ego D. Taylora (Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Los Angeles) oraz Richarda Taruskina (Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Berkeley). Publikację zamyka wywiad z malarką Różą Puzynowską (absolwentka Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie, autorka obrazów prezentowanych na okładce).

**Witold Wachowski**

Ośrodek Badań Filozoficznych w Warszawie  
*w[[avant.edu.pl*

Grudzień 2013



**PRZYBYSZ**





## Muzyka a emocje

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### Streszczenie

W artykule omawiam współczesne badania empiryczne nad muzyką i emocjami, prowadzone na styku psychologii, neuronauki i muzykologii. Wykazuję, że wiele ogólnych kwestii podejmowanych w ramach tego interdyscyplinarnego programu nie różni się zbyt wiele od pytań stawianych przez klasycznych autorów, takich jak Strawiński i Hanslick. Głównym celem pracy jest pokazanie, że istnieją trzy obszary aktywności poznawczej i behawioralnej słuchacza oraz odpowiednie rodzaje emocji muzycznych: emocje ucieleśnione, emocje epistemiczne oraz emocje asocjacyjno-kontekstowe.

**Słowa kluczowe:** muzyka a emocje; reakcja emocjonalna na muzykę; absolutystyczne vs referencjalistyczne poglądy na istotę muzyki; psychologia muzyki; Strawiński.

### Wstęp

W potocznym odbiorze muzyka traktowana jest jako niezawodny środek do wywoływania w człowieku różnych reakcji emocjonalnych: potrafi wzruszyć i wprowadzić słuchacza w stan uniesienia, jest zdolna wywołać dreszcze i łzy, w innych okolicznościach działa uspokajająco lub można ją wykorzystać do poprawy nastroju. Pomimo że pogląd, iż funkcją muzyki jest wzbudzenie emocji, wywoływał niekiedy sprzeciw muzyków, a także teoretyków i badaczy muzyki (Strawiński, Hanslick), to trudno zaprzeczyć temu, że muzyka i emocje są dość mocno ze sobą powiązane. O tym, że tak jest, przekonuje prosty eksperyment myślowy, w którym należy wyobrazić sobie muzykę całkowicie wyzbytą funkcji emotywnych lub ekspresyjnych. Łatwo się przekonać, że niezwykle trudno jest wskazać lub wymyślić przykład tego typu muzyki, a jeśli nawet się to powiedzie, to pojawiają się wątpliwości, czy podany przykład to ciągle muzyka?

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przyjrzenie się współczesnym badaniom nad emocjami muzycznymi prowadzonym na styku psychologii, neuronauki i muzykologii. Przyjmuje się tam, że muzykę łączy bliskie związki ze sferą emocjonalną, a skala odpowiedzi afektywno-uczuciowych organizmu na bodziec muzyczny rozciąga się od reakcji fizjologiczno-behawioralnych do subtelnych uczuć estetycznych. Niestety natura tych związków, ich różnorodne funkcje (na przykład rola emocji muzycznych w ewolucji gatunku) oraz neuronalne podłoże i mechanizmy ciągle są dalekie od rozpoznania i wyjaśnienia. W niniejszym tekście proponuję wyróżnienie głównych obszarów poznawczo-behawioralnej aktywności człowieka, w których ujawniają się emocje muzyczne. Dzięki temu możliwe jest odróżnienie różnych typów tych emocji, na przykład afektów związanych z pobudzeniem ciała, emocji o charakterze poznawczym oraz emocji związanych z kontekstem słuchania muzyki. Dalszym krokiem powinno być oczywiście wskazanie konkretnych mechanizmów, które odpowiadają za pojawianie się emocji muzycznych w wymienionych obszarach.

Artykuł składa się z czterech części. W części pierwszej rekonstruuje argumenty krytyczne wobec emocjonalizmu w muzyce, jakie sformułował Igor Strawiański. Sądzę, że stanowią one dobry punkt wyjścia do zastanowienia się nad związkiem muzyki ze sferą emocjonalną, przede wszystkim w kontekście rozróżnienia na „emocje codzienne” i „emocje estetyczne”. W części drugiej pokazuję, że w ramach programu interdyscyplinarnych badań empirycznych nad emocjami muzycznymi podejmuje się szereg ogólnych kwestii – dotyczących na przykład tego, czy emocje muzyczne są standardowymi, codziennymi emocjami, czy też mają charakter estetyczny, czy odczuwamy je, czy jedynie percypujemy emocjonalną zawartość utworu, czy to sama muzyka, czy kontekst pozamuzyczny są przyczyną emocji – które to kwestie nie są wcale tak odległe od pytań, jakie stawiali klasyczni autorzy. W części trzeciej przywołuję wyniki badań psychologicznych, fizjologicznych i neuronaukowych świadczących o tym, że emocje muzyczne są zjawiskami, które można badać metodami empirycznymi. Wreszcie w części czwartej proponuję odróżnienie trzech obszarów aktywności poznawczo-behawioralnej słuchacza i odpowiadających im typów emocji muzycznych: emocji ucieleśnionych, emocji poznawczych oraz emocji asocjacyjno-kontekstowych.

## 1. Istota muzyki a jej funkcje emotywnie. Strawiński o budzeniu emocji przez dzieło muzyczne

Rozważania o miejscu emocji w muzyce zajmują ważne miejsce w europejskiej kulturze muzycznej, między innymi dzięki sporom, które toczyli autorzy dostrzegający w muzyce domknętą strukturę formalną z tymi, którzy utożsamiali znaczenie muzyki z czynnikami emocjonalnymi (por. Dahlhaus, Eggebrecht 1992: 35-43)<sup>445</sup>. Krytycy silnego wiązania muzyki z emocjami powoływali się między innymi na specyfikę samego dzieła muzycznego – uporządkowanej struktury dźwięków odsyłających do innych elementów tej samej struktury – jako dzieła *samego w sobie*. Zadaniem tak rozumianej muzyki nie jest wcale wzbudzanie miłych i przyjemnych odczuć, ale skłonienie słuchacza do zmysłowego, intelektualnego podążania za jej przebiegiem i do estetycznego jej doświadczania.

Postulat nielączenia muzyki z emocjami wynika często z filozoficznych zapartywań na naturę (znaczenie) muzyki. Z uwagi na to, że muzyka – głównie instrumentalna – jest czymś ulotnym, abstrakcyjnym i nieobrazowym, podstawowym problemem teorii i filozofii muzyki stało się zagadnienie, czy może ona w ogóle „desygnować, opisywać lub w inny sposób komunikować referencjalne pojęcia, obrazy, przeżycia i stany emocjonalne”? (Meyer 1974: 48). Według Leonarda Meyera w odpowiedzi na to pytanie wyłoniły się dwa przeciwstawiane stanowiska: *absolutystyczne* (Hanslick, Strawiński), według którego utwór muzyczny jest dziełem autonomicznym odnoszącym się do samego siebie i definiowanym jako system wewnątrzmuzycznych odniesień<sup>446</sup>, oraz stanowisko *referencjalistyczne*, zgodnie z którym muzyka odnosi się do szeroko rozumianej sfery pozamuzycznej, na przykład zdarzeń w świecie, pojęć lub emocji (por. Meyer 1974: 11).

Według absolutystów piękno muzyki leży „wyłącznie w tonach i ich artystycznym połączeniu, niezawisłe od wszelkiej treści pochodzącej z zewnątrz, wcale mu niepotrzebnej” (Hanslick 1903: 73). Stanowisko absolutystyczne posiada też swoją *negatywną* wersję, której ostrze krytyki skierowane jest przeciwko poszukiwaniu piękna i znaczenia (desygnacji)

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<sup>445</sup> Zdaniem Hansa Eggebrechta muzykę europejską przenika napięcie – ujawniające się z historycznie zmienną intensywnością – pomiędzy dwoma przeciwstawnymi, choć równocześnie konstytutywnymi pojęciami: „emocja” i *mathesis*, por. Dahlhaus i Eggebrecht 1992: 42.

<sup>446</sup> Najbardziej charakterystyczne dla stanowiska absolutystów jest definiowanie muzyki poprzez odniesienia do typu idealnego dzieła muzycznego rozumianego jako „czysta” muzyka instrumentalna, „muzyka absolutna”. O wyróżnionym miejscu muzyki instrumentalnej (jako „sztuki samotnej”) w badaniach nad znaczeniem muzycznym pisał Eduard Hanslick (1903: 47 i nast.). Filozoficzno-kognitywną charakterystykę zjawiska muzyki samotnej (*music alone*), niedookreślonej przez „tekst, tytuł, przedmiot, program lub temat”, zaproponował Peter Kivy (1990). Z perspektywy historii muzyki i estetyki muzycznej, paradygmat estetyczny muzyki absolutnej szeroko charakteryzuje Dahlhaus (1988).

muzyki w sferze pozamuzycznej, między innymi wśród emocji, nastrojów i uczuć, jakie muzyka wywołuje. W klasycznym dziele *O pięknie w muzyce* Eduard Hanslick przekonuje, że to piękno jest podstawową kategorią estetyki muzyki, natomiast uczucie (emocja) jest jedynie kategorią pomocniczą, drugorzędną. Obie te kategorie traktuje on jako rozłączne: (a) celem piękna nie jest wywoływanie uczuć, (b) nie ma wpływu na piękno to, czy ktoś doznaje przyjemnych uczuć, (c) przedmiot może być piękny, nawet gdyby u nikogo nie wzbudzał żadnych uczuć (por. Hanslick 1903: 17-18)<sup>447</sup>.

Na autonomiczność, swoistość i nieprzetłumaczalność przeżycia muzycznego kładł nacisk również Igor Strawiński<sup>448</sup>. W jego rozważaniach estetycznych i w komentarzach do własnej twórczości pojawiają się tezy spójne z negatywną wersją stanowiska absolutystycznego i wymierzone w nadmierną uczuciowość, sentymentalizm czy ekspresjonizm muzyki:

*uwagam, że muzyka jest ze swej natury bezsilna w wyrażaniu czegokolwiek, czy to uczuć, stanów umysłu, nastroju psychologicznego, czy fenomenów natury... Ekspresja nie była nigdy własnością wewnętrzną muzyki i na pewno nie jest celem jej istnienia. A jeśli nawet wydaje nam się, jak to zwykle bywa, że muzyka cokolwiek wyraża, to jest to raczej iluzja, a nie realny fakt* (Strawiński 1974: 53).

Poglądy Strawińskiego na temat związków muzyki z emocjami są jednak znacznie bardziej złożone i wielowarstwowe, gdyż obejmują również na przykład krytykę wykorzystywania muzyki do wywoływania życiowych, codziennych emocji oraz krytykę traktowania jej jako łatwej odskoczni od codzienności:

*Większość ludzi kocha muzykę dlatego, że spodziewa się w niej znaleźć uczucia takie, jak radość, smutek, ból, znaleźć wyobrażenie natury czy przedmiot marzeń, albo jeszcze lepiej: zapomnienie o „życiu prozaicznym”. Szukają w niej narkotyku, „dopingu”... Muzyka nie byłaby wiele warta, gdyby tylko to było jej przeznaczeniem* (Strawiński 1974: 156).

Wydaje się więc, że aby uchwycić złożoność absolutystycznej krytyki emocjonalizmu w muzyce, należy wyróżnić kilka elementów składowych tego stanowiska. Proponuję zatem odróżnić: (i) *antyekspresjonizm muzyczny* (muzyka nie jest w stanie wyrazić ani oddać indywidualnych odczuć lub nastroju twórcy); (ii) *antyrepresentacjonizm muzyczny* (muzyka nie jest w stanie adekwatnie przedstawić lub odwzorować zjawisk pozamuzycznych, na przykład istoty

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<sup>447</sup> Mimo to Hanslick przewiduje możliwość *pośredniego* wzbudzania uczuć przez piękno (via wrażenia zmysłowe oraz wyobraźnię i fantazję), por. Hanslick 1903 np. 19-25, 76-77.

<sup>448</sup> Strawiński tak pisał on o osobach poszukujących znaczenia poza muzyką: „Nie mogą pojąć, że muzyka jest czymś sama w sobie, niezależnie od tego, co mogłaby sugerować. Inaczej mówiąc, muzyka interesuje ich tylko wtedy, gdy zahacza o kategorie rzeczy będących poza nią, ale wywołujących w nich znajome wrażenia” (Strawiński 1974: 156).

emocji lub nastroju); oraz (iii) *antyemotywizm muzyczny* (zadaniem muzyki nie jest wywoływanie u słuchaczy naturalnych emocji i codziennych odczuć).

Sądzę, iż poglądy Strawińskiego (i Hanslicka) na emocje w muzyce są połączeniem tak rozumianego antyekspresjonizmu, antyrepresentacjonizmu i antyemotywizmu, lecz jest to połączenie w nierównych proporcjach i nigdy nie przybiera postaci idealnego dopasowania. Wprawdzie absolutyzm Strawińskiego nakazuje mu odrzucić nadmierną rolę emocji w muzyce, ale nigdy nie jest to odrzucenie absolutne. Po pierwsze sprzeciw wobec łączenia muzyki z emocjami ma u Strawińskiego charakter postulatywny i nie polega na kwestionowaniu faktu, że w realnych sytuacjach muzyka jednak wyraża i wzbudza u ludzi emocje. Strawiński dostrzega to, lecz traktuje jako drugorzędną, nieistotną funkcję muzyki:

*To po prostu dodatkowy element, który dzięki cichej i zastarzałej umowie przydaliśmy muzyce, narzucony jej jak etykieta, jak mundur; krótko mówiąc – kształt zewnętrzny, który przez przyzwyczajenie czy nieświadomość zaczęliśmy mylić z jej istotą* (Strawiński 1974: 54).

Po drugie drażni go i nie podoba mu się wzbudzanie przez muzykę trywialnych, codziennych uczuć i emocji – drugorzędnych z punktu widzenia istoty muzyki. Dopuszcza natomiast i akceptuje sytuację, gdy muzyka budzi w słuchaczach swoiste *uczucia estetyczne*. Jeśli potraktować – co postuluję – te „wzruszenia o całkiem swoistym charakterze” jako rodzaj emocji estetycznych, to okazuje się, że antyemotywizm Strawińskiego nie jest aż tak radykalny, jak mogłoby się wydawać. Jest on wymierzony w codzienne odczucia i emocje, lecz nie w emocje estetyczne. Przykładowo Strawiński wiąże fenomen muzyki z organizowaniem przez słuchacza na bieżąco dźwięków w czasie i unikatowym przez to doświadczaniem teraźniejszości. Jest to zupełnie wyjątkowe doznanie, gdyż ze względu na ograniczenia poznawcze w normalnych sytuacjach człowiek doświadcza czasu jedynie pod postacią przeszłości lub przyszłości (por. Strawiński 1974: 54; 1980: 22-26). I właśnie konstruowanie ładu i kontemplowanie uporządkowania dźwięków w czasie wywołuje w słuchaczu wyjątkowe doznania i uczucia:

*Właśnie ta konstrukcja, ten osiągnięty ład wywołują w nas wzruszenie o całkiem swoistym charakterze, które nie ma nic wspólnego z naszymi codziennymi odczuciami i naszymi reakcjami spowodowanymi oddziaływaniem codziennego życia. Najlepiej można sprecyzować uczucie wywołane muzyką, utożsamiając je z tym, które wywołuje w nas kontemplowanie gry form architektonicznych. Goethe rozumiał to dobrze, gdy mówił, że architektura to skamieniała muzyka* (Strawiński 1974: 54).

Dalej autor *Symfonii Psalmów* nie pozostawia już wątpliwości, że dopuszcza i postuluje to, aby muzyka wzbudzała w słuchaczach „wyższą” estetyczną przyjemność:

*Gdy ludzie nauczą się kochać muzykę dla niej samej, gdy będą jej słuchać inaczej, ich przyjemność będzie o wiele wyższego rzędu, co pozwoli im sądzić muzykę na innym planie i odstłoni im jej wewnętrzne wartości* (Strawiński 1974: 157).

W ramach podsumowania powiemy, że – po pierwsze – krytyka roli obecności emocji w muzyce wynika wprost z przyjmowanych przez Strawińskiego filozoficznych poglądów absolutystycznych na temat istoty dzieła muzycznego. Pokazuje to, jak sądzę, że absolutyści uzależniali sposób odbioru muzyki od natury (budowy) bodźca muzycznego oraz że nieco arbitralnie próbowali ostro oddzielić jego odbiór emocjonalny od poznania estetyczno-intelektualnego. Po drugie antyekspresjonizm i antyrepresentacjonizm autora *Święta wiosny* nie polega na radykalnym wyrzuceniu emocji z muzyki, lecz jest jedynie postulatem, aby nie mylić istoty dzieła muzycznego z jego funkcją drugorzędną, jaką jest ekspresja i przedstawianie uczuć, nastrojów oraz innych stanów psychicznych. Po trzecie, jak się wydaje, Strawiński nie odrzuca całkowicie postulatu wywoływania przez muzykę uczuć w słuchaczu, pod warunkiem jednak, że są one przyjemnościami doznawanymi wskutek podziwiania wewnętrznej formy muzyki, na przykład śledzenia przebiegu muzycznego, dostrzegania melodycznych czy harmonicznnych napięć pomiędzy elementami dzieła i tak dalej. Sugeruje to, że dzieli on sferę emocji muzycznych na dwie części – na emocje codzienne (naturalne) i emocje estetyczne – i tylko tym ostatnim przypisuje związek z autentycznym odczuwaniem piękna w muzyce.

Jak dalej zobaczymy, echa dylematów z jakimi przyszło się mierzyć absolutystom muzycznym, daje się odnaleźć nawet we współczesnych badaniach nad emocjami w muzyce prowadzonych z perspektywy nauk biologicznych. Sugeruje to z jednej strony, że dyskusje wokół stanowiska absolutystów nie są wcale oderwane od realnych problemów z rozumieniem muzyki, a z drugiej strony, że dziedzina empirycznych badań nad muzyką nie jest wolna od głębokich problemów i napięć o charakterze filozoficznym.

## **2. Empiryczne badania nad emocjami muzycznymi – generalne problemy i kwestie sporne**

We współczesnych badaniach nad emocjami muzycznymi prowadzonych na styku psychologii poznawczej, neuronauki muzyki i muzykologii dominuje podejście empiryczne. Częściowo wynika ono z porzucenia podejścia normatywnego próbującego metodami filozoficznymi ustalić, co jest istotą i główną rolą muzyki<sup>449</sup>, a częściowo z oparcia się na tradycji biologicznych badań nad

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<sup>449</sup> Oczywiście filozoficzne badania i refleksja nad naturą muzyki i jej emocjonalnym oddziaływaniem (głównie w wymiarze poznawczym i estetycznym) ciągle są równolegle efektywnie prowadzone i rozwijane, por. np. Kivy (1989), Madel (2002), Davies (2003), Scruton (2009), Levinson (2011).

ekspresją emocji u ludzi i zwierząt (Darwin 1902, 1988; Ekman 2012), dominującej we współczesnej psychologii wymiarowej interpretacji stanów afektywnych (Russell 1980) i empirycznych badań nad pobudzeniem estetycznym (Berlyne 1971). Klasyczna kognitywistyczna tradycja muzykologicznych badań nad emocjami uwzględniana jest w tym nurcie przede wszystkim poprzez mocną, niekwestionowaną pozycję, jaką zajmuje w nim dzieło Meyera (1974, por. Huron 2006).

Badaczom towarzyszy przekonanie o wielości ról i funkcji, jakie pełni muzyka – na przykład rola poznawcza, społeczna, terapeutyczna, estetyczna – i o potrzebie ich uwzględnienia przy udzielaniu odpowiedzi na pytanie o afektywne oddziaływanie muzyki na słuchacza (por. artykuły zebrane w: Juslin i Sloboda 2001 i tychże 2010). Przy czym funkcja estetyczna jest traktowana nie jako wyjątkowa, lecz jako równorzędna pozostałym. Powszechne występowanie muzyki oraz jej ingerowanie w życie człowieka na każdym właściwie kroku zmusza badaczy do uwzględnienia jak największej liczby rodzajów muzyki (muzyka poważna i rozrywkowa, instrumentalna i śpiew, muzyka filmowa i tak dalej) oraz do brania pod uwagę szerokiej palety zjawisk muzycznych (na przykład muzykowanie biesiadne, taniec, muzyka towarzysząca codziennym czynnościom, por. Sloboda i O'Neil, 2001; Sloboda 2010).

Jednym z celów tego rodzaju badań jest empiryczne przebadanie, jak poszczególne elementy muzyki (na przykład głośność i wysokość dźwięku, jego barwa, rytm, postęp melodyczny i harmoniczny, tonalność) oraz ich kombinacje mogą wywoływać u słuchacza efekt emocjonalny. Chodzi też o wyjaśnienie, w jaki sposób pobudzenie afektywne daje się modulować poprzez percepcyjno-poznawczą aktywność słuchacza, jak na rodzaj i siłę odczuwanych emocji wpływa jakość i sposób wykonania utworu, oraz jak na pojawienie się afektu wpływają różne okoliczności towarzyszące słuchaniu muzyki. Przyjmuje się, że afektywne oddziaływanie bodźca muzycznego na system percepcyjno-emocjonalny odbiorcy jest wielopoziomowe i może odbywać się w warstwie pobudzenia fizjologiczno-mózgowego, behawioralnego czy psychologicznego (por. artykuły zebrane w Peretz i Zatore 2003; Koelsch 2012).

Wiąże się z tym problematyka nabywania przez dziecko zdolności do emocjonalnego reagowania na muzykę oraz wpływu uszkodzeń mózgu na odbiór afektywny (por. np. Peretz 2001; Trehub 2003). Zainteresowanie budzą podobieństwa i różnice w reagowaniu na muzykę i na pokrewne zjawiska dźwiękowe, jak choćby na mowę (Patel 2010). Pytanie o istotę i główną funkcję muzyki pojawia się „w przebraniu” pod postacią pytania o funkcję przystosowawczą, jaką muzyka oraz emocje przez nią generowane mogą pełnić w perspektywie ewolucji naszego gatunku (por. np. Cross 2003; Huron 2003).

Tak szeroko zakrojony program badawczy siłą rzeczy powoduje silne rozczłonowanie prowadzonych badań i zmusza do posługiwania się różnymi metodami badawczymi (por. np. Juslin, Liljeström i in. 2010), co z kolei stwarza

potrzebę uzgadniania, integracji i całościowej dyskusji wyników uzyskanych na tak różnych polach (por. Juslin i Sloboda 2010; Arbib 2013). Przy tej okazji ujawniają się problemy bardziej ogólnej natury, które często pozostają niewidoczne z perspektywy zajmowanej przez badaczy-eksperymentatorów. Wiele z tych problemów i znaków zapytania dotyczy spraw podobnych do tych, o które spór filozoficzny toczyli wcześniej absolutyści. Poniżej skupię się na trzech takich kluczowych problemach dotyczących powiązania muzyki z emocjami.

*2.1. Czy muzyka wywołuje emocje podstawowe?* – Czy emocje wzbudzone przez muzykę są podobne do afektów podstawowych, takich jak strach, smutek, wstępn lub odczucie radości? I czy muzyka oraz właściwe jej emocje pełnią funkcje adaptacyjne i wspomagają w jakiś sposób przetrwanie człowieka? A może tworzą osobną, autonomiczną kategorię emocji estetycznych, których ważność dla przetrwania jest prawdopodobnie mniejsza?

Problem ten dostrzegali już Karol Darwin, którego zdaniem muzyka „wzbudza w nas różne emocje, choć nie te najbardziej dramatyczne związane z przerażeniem, strachem, wściekłością itd. Pobudza ona w nas łagodniejsze odczucia, jak czułość i miłość, które łatwo przechodzą w przywiązanie” (Darwin 1902: 635). Czy oznacza to, że emocje tego typu nie mają nic wspólnego z przeżyciami towarzyszącymi biologicznej walce o przetrwanie? Sam Darwin proponował inne rozwiązanie: przypisywał przyjemnościom i emocjom estetycznym rolę w doborze płciowym. Widział ich źródła w rytuałach zalotów, rywalizacji o partnera i triumfie nad przeciwnikiem (Darwin 1902: 733-737; por. również np. Miller 2004). Możliwe też, że emocje muzyczne pełnią funkcjonalną rolę w życiu społecznym. Emocje towarzyszące wspólnemu śpiewaniu pieśni, tańcom czy obrzędom mogą wzmacniać więź wspólnotową, konsolidować grupę ludzką dla osiągnięcia wspólnych celów i w ten sposób przyczyniać się do jej przetrwania i sukcesu (Wilson 2012: 267-284).

Inną możliwością jest, że emocje wywołane słuchaniem muzyki mają przede wszystkim walor estetyczny i nie są do końca autentycznymi, naturalnymi emocjami życiowymi. Idąc tym tropem Scherer (2004) oraz Zentner, Grandjean i Scherer (2008) odróżnili emocje *użytkowe* związane z interesem i dobrostanem jednostki od *muzycznych emocji estetycznych*, które nie wywierają bezpośredniego efektu na dobrobyt indywiduum. Badacze ci wyszli z założenia, iż standardowe podejście do badania afektywnego oddziaływania muzyki polegające na doszukiwaniu się w muzyce emocji podstawowych jest zawodne. W przeprowadzonych przez siebie eksperymentach Zentner i Scherer mieli za cel wskazanie na te cechy emocjonalnego i estetycznego przeżywania muzyki, które odróżniają ten rodzaj doświadczeń od pozostałych afektów. W tym celu posłużyli się oni kwestionariuszem zawierającym bardzo szeroki zestaw określeń emocjonalnych kojarzonych z muzyką, również tych o cha-

rakterze estetycznym<sup>450</sup>. W badaniach zarejestrowali oni, że muzyka u zdecydowanej większości słuchaczy wywołuje odczucia o charakterze pozytywnym (odprężenie, radość, rozbawienie, marzenia), a jedynie w niewielkiej mierze o charakterze negatywnym (agresję, niepokój, żal, depresję, złość). Negatywne emocje takie jak smutek czy strach są częściej rozpoznawane w materiale muzycznym, choć w mniejszym stopniu udzielają się i „przechodzą” na słuchaczy. Wy tłumaczyć to można zapewne tym, że w typowej sytuacji słuchacz doświadcza dzięki muzyce odprężenia, a „zatopienie się” w muzyce pozwala mu na chwilowe odcięcie się od życiowych trosk i smutków. Nawet jeśli słuchacz doświadcza – przykładowo – uczucia smutku, to nie jest to ten sam smutek, który wywołują codzienne doświadczenia. Może on przybrać postać smutku paradoksalnego, kiedy to uczuciu smutku towarzyszy zachwyt nad dziełem muzycznym, albo może wystąpić pod postacią jednej ze „smutkopodobnych” estetycznych kategorii emocjonalnych, na przykład melancholii. Zarówno w jednym, jak i drugim przypadku odczucie smutku estetycznego przestaje pełnić rolę emocji typowo negatywnej o charakterze awersyjnym, o czym przekonuje fakt, że zazwyczaj nie odsuwamy się ani nie uciekamy przed muzyką wyrażającą smutek. Według badaczy określenia, jakimi posługują się osoby badane w celu opisu emocji towarzyszących słuchaniu muzyki, korelują z dziewięcioma estetycznymi emocjami muzycznymi: zachwytem (*wonder*), poczuciem transcendencji, poczuciem łagodności, nostalgią, uspokojeniem, odczuciem siły, rozbawieniem, napięciem i smutkiem (Zentner, Grandjean, Scherer 2008: 507; Zentner 2010: 106).

2.2. *Odczuwanie vs. percepcja emocji muzycznych?* – Kolejne sporne zagadnienie dotyczy tego, czy w konkretnym przypadku muzyka pobudza emocjonalnie słuchacza czy też odbiorca jedynie percypuje i rozpoznaje wyrażoną w utworze emocję. Zależnie od rozstrzygnięcia w tej sprawie wyróżnia się stanowisko *emotywnie* oraz *kognitywnie*. W pierwszym przypadku zasłyszany utwór muzyczny traktuje się jako bodziec, który powoduje, że słuchacz doświadcza określonych emocji. Uruchamia on w nim kaskadę reakcji afektywnych o charakterze psychologicznym, fizjologicznym lub motorycznym: poczucie szczęścia czy odprężenie likwiduje napięcie mięśniowe lub wywołuje skłonność do wystukiwania rytmu. Na inny aspekt związku między muzyką a emocjami kładziemy nacisk, kiedy rozpatrujemy utwór muzyczny jako ekspresję emocji kompozytora lub wykonawcy. Emocje zawarte w utworze mogą udzielić się słuchaczowi, ale nie muszą (Konečni 1993: 701-702) Bywa czasami tak, że słuchacz angażuje się jedynie w ich rozpoznanie, bez ulegania im. W tej sytuacji nie mamy już do czynienia z relacją o charakterze emotywnym, lecz kognitywnym. Na przykład zamiast odczuwać nastrój radości i szczęścia pod-

<sup>450</sup> Tzw. *Geneva Emotional Musical Scale* (GEMS), por. szerzej: Zentner, Grandjean i Scherer (2008).

czas każdego kolejnego odsłuchania *Ody do radości*, rozpoznają jedynie tę emocję w utworze i potrafią ją odróżnić od innych emocji, na przykład od smutku.

Zdaniem K. Scherera i V. Konečni'ego niezbyt precyzyjne odróżnianie tych dwóch aspektów oddziaływania emocjonalnego muzyki prowadzi do nadinterpretacji wyników różnych eksperymentów testujących wrażliwość emocjonalną słuchaczy. Dotyczy to przede wszystkim psychologicznych badań kwestionariuszowych. Jedynie przemyślane i precyzyjne skonstruowanie takiego kwestionariusza pozwala na wyciągnięcie ostatecznych wniosków co do tego, czy osoba badana raportowała własne odczucia emocjonalne, czy raczej to, jakie emocje dostrzegła w utworze (por. Scherer 2004: 239; Konečni 2008: 118 i nast.).

*2.3. Co wzbudza emocje muzyczne: sama muzyka czy pozamuzyczny kontekst?* – Kolejne trudne pytanie dotyczy tego, czy to przebieg i forma muzyki wzbudza ją emocję, czy raczej okoliczności towarzyszące słuchaniu. Jest tak we wszystkich tych sytuacjach, w których muzyka stanowi tło dla równolegle rozgrywających się zdarzeń pozamuzycznych (na przykład mszy w kościele, tańca, w muzyce marszowej i tak dalej), lub gdzie muzyka jest impulsem wzbudzającym aktywność myślową słuchacza (na przykład pamięć, wyobraźnia) nakierowaną na sferę pozamuzyczną. Pokazuje to też, że referencjalistyczny pogląd szeroko łączący muzykę ze światem zewnętrznym nie jest pozbawiony racji.

Może być to związane na przykład z miejscem, w jakim przyszło mi słuchać muzyki, na przykład na pogrzebie, gdzie „struktura utworu nie ma dla mnie znaczenia i niezależnie od struktury utworu odczuwam smutek” (Sloboda 1999: 42). Śpiewy gromadnie wykonywane przez kibiców na stadionie piłkarskim mają zasadniczy cel: wywołanie poczucia jedności z własną drużyną i zademonstrowanie siły wobec przeciwnika. Muzyka stadionowa jest więc programowo nakierowana na wywołanie emocji związanych z mobilizacją, na przedstawienie organizmu w stan podwyższonej gotowości oraz na obniżenie progu, po przekroczeniu którego rodzi się agresja. W sytuacji stadionowej, tak samo jak na pogrzebie czy weselu, złożona struktura utworu traci zazwyczaj na znaczeniu i najlepiej jeśli daje się ją zredukować do kilku prostych i szeroko rozpoznawalnych schematów muzycznych. W takich sytuacjach muzyka ma podtrzymywać, stabilizować, a niekiedy wzmacniać właściwą dla danego miejsca i kontekstu społecznego reakcję emocjonalną. Emocje takie trudno więc nazwać czysto muzycznymi.

Podobnie kontekstowy charakter mają emocje generowane przez ślady pamięciowe wywołane muzyką. Dla emocji zainicjowanych przez ślady pamięciowe istotne jest to, z kim i w jakich okolicznościach w przeszłości słuchaliśmy utworu muzycznego – następnie „za każdym razem, gdy słyszycie ten

utwór, porusza on wasze serca, ponieważ jest to muzyka związana z ukochaną osobą” (Sloboda 1999: 43). Na podobnym kontekstowo-temporalnym odniesieniu do przeszłości opierają się niektóre wzruszenia, jak na przykład nostalgia. Może być ona spowodowana wysłuchaniem piosenki pamiętanej z okresu młodości i wywołaniem kaskady wspomnień ze starych, dobrych czasów.

### **3. Psychologiczne, fizjologiczne i neuronalne wskaźniki emocjonalnych reakcji na muzykę**

Uznanie, że muzyka to tylko „drgania rozchodzące się w powietrzu”, może skłaniać do sceptycyzmu i ostrożności w sprawie przypisywania muzyce możliwości budzenia autentycznych emocji. Jednak silnym argumentem za realnością emocji muzycznych jest to, że ich przejawy daje się zaobserwować i zarejestrować w tych samych sferach, w których przejawiają się emocje podstawowe:

- w sferze subiektywnych odczuć i doznań (na przykład odczucie smutku wywołane słuchaniem smutnej muzyki),
- w sferze pobudzenia fizjologicznego i behawioralnego (na przykład zmiany tętna, ciśnienia krwi, przewodnictwo skórne, wzrost lub obniżenie napięcia mięśniowego towarzyszące przeżywaniu emocji, mimowolna skłonność do wystukiwania rytmu), oraz
- w sferze aktywności neuronalnej (między innymi ośrodki podkorowe wchodzące w skład układu limbicznego oraz układu nagrody, szlaki aktywności dopaminergicznej).

Badania rozwojowe nad percepcją i odczuwaniem emocji muzycznych pokazały, że zdolność ta pojawia się dość wcześnie w rozwoju dziecięcym i że umiejętność dyskryminacji emocji na podstawie coraz bardziej złożonych wskaźników muzycznych powiększa się stopniowo wraz z wiekiem dziecka. Już między drugim a czwartym miesiącem życia dzieci preferują i łączą przyjemne odczucia z brzmieniami zgodnymi (konsonansowym), a nieprzyjemne z niezgodnymi (dysonansowymi) (por. Trainor, Tsang i in. 2002). Przypuszczalnie około trzeciego lub czwartego roku życia dzieci opanowują umiejętność rozpoznawania radosnej muzyki, natomiast nieco później – około szóstego roku życia – są już w stanie rozpoznawać szerszy zestaw emocji możliwych do wyrażenia przez muzykę, jak smutek, strach czy złość (Cunningham i Sterling 1988)<sup>451</sup>. Najpierw dziecko opanowuje umiejętność identyfikacji podstawowych emocji muzycznych, radości lub smutku, na podstawie rozpoznania tempa (szybko, wolno), a dopiero później – na podstawie innych kryteriów (na

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<sup>451</sup> Rozpoznanie polega w tym przypadku na przypisaniu do danego fragmentu muzycznego nazwy odpowiadającej mu emocji.

przykład wychwycenia różnicy między trybem molowym a durowym) (por. Dalla Bella i Peretz 2001).

Umiejętności wypracowane w wieku dziecięcym decydują o tym, że osoby dorosłe, zarówno te kształcone muzycznie, jak i te bez wykształcenia muzycznego, potrafią szybko i trafnie wyczuwać i rozpoznawać w muzyce większość podstawowych emocji i nastrojów, na przykład radość, smutek, uspokojenie czy zagrożenie (por. np. Viellard, Peretz i in. 2008; Mohn, Argstatter i in. 2010). W warunkach eksperymentalnych rozpoznawanie emocji muzycznych jest możliwe zarówno przy podejściu „kategorialnym”, gdy osoby badane mają za zadanie określić, która z etykiet słownych określających emocje („smutny”, „wesoły” i tak dalej) najlepiej pasuje do danego fragmentu muzycznego, jak i przy ujęciu „wymiarowym”, gdy zadaniem badanych jest ocenić bodziec muzyczny na odpowiednich skalach, na przykład pod względem stopnia wywołwanego pobudzenia oraz walencji (emocje pozytywne/negatywne) (por. Viellard, Peretz i in. 2008; Eerola, Vuoskoski 2011).

Pewien kłopot dla badaczy w tego typu badaniach (to znaczy opartych o raporty werbalne) stanowi ciągle rozstrzygnięcie, czy dana osoba odczuła daną emocję, czy jedynie ją rozpoznała w materiale muzycznym. Przeprowadzone badania sugerują, że w większości przypadków, kiedy badani rozpoznają daną emocję muzyczną, równocześnie udziela im się ona w jakimś stopniu (por. np. Juslin i Laukka 2004). Również w eksperymencie, w którym osoby należące do jednej z grup wykonywały zadanie związane z kategoryzowaniem emocji, a osoby z drugiej grupy szacowały wielkość pobudzenia, jakie dany utwór wywołuje, otrzymano silną korelację wyników w odniesieniu do tych samych fragmentów muzycznych (Viellard, Peretz i in. 2008). Oczywiście jest jednak, że pojawiają się sytuacje, gdy odczuwanie i rozpoznawanie emocji nie pokrywają się. Jeśli osobie będącej w radosnym nastroju zaprezentuje się fragment smutnego utworu, to jest prawdopodobne, że będzie ona w stanie rozpoznać tę emocję, jednak sama jej nie odczuje (por. Gabrielson, 2002).

Według P. Juslina muzyka jest w stanie wywoływać zasadniczo te same emocje co pozostałe wydarzenia życiowe, jednak występuje statystycznie zauważalna odmiennność cechująca ten sposób percepcji emocjonalnej. W badaniu przeprowadzonym przez Juslina, Liljestroma, Västfjälla, Barradasa i Silvē odkryto, że pozytywne stany emocjonalne, takie jak szczęście-uniesienie (ang. *happiness-elation*) oraz nostalgia-tęsknota, częściej towarzyszą epizodom słuchania muzyki niż codziennym sytuacjom życiowym, w których brak tła muzycznego. Z kolei złość-irytacja, znudzenie-obojętność lub niepokój-strach były częściej spotykane wśród emocji dnia codziennego niż w trakcie słuchania muzyki (Juslin, Liljestrom i in. 2008). Do podobnych wniosków doszli M. Zentner, D. Grandjean i K. Scherer, którzy w serii badań pokazali, że muzyka wywołuje u ludzi odczucia zdecydowanie częściej pozytywne (odprężenie, ra-

dość, rozbawienie, marzenia) niż negatywne (agresję, niepokój, żal, depresję, złość) (Zentner, Grandjean i Scherer 2008).

Z kolei podczas badań przeprowadzonych przez Carol Krumhansl (1997) za pomocą aparatury do rejestracji reakcji fizjologicznych organizmu (oddechu, ciśnienia krwi czy przewodnictwa elektrycznego skóry) wykazano, że podczas słuchania fragmentów utworów muzycznych wyrażających smutek (na przykład *Adagio for Strings* Barbera), strach i niepokój (na przykład *Noc Łysej Górze* Mussorgskiego) oraz radość (na przykład *Wiosna z Czterech pór roku* Vivaldiego) zmianie ulega poziom pobudzenia fizjologicznego organizmu. Podczas badania smutne fragmenty muzyczne wpływały w największym stopniu na zmiany częstotliwości bicia serca, ciśnienia krwi, przewodnictwa skóry (SCR – por. równ. Khalifa, Peretz i in. 2002) i temperatury ciała u słuchaczy. Muzyka wyrażająca strach i niepokój wywoływała przede wszystkim efekty krążeniowe w postaci zmiany parametrów tętna. Natomiast muzyka radosna wpływała u badanych głównie na zmiany w parametrach oddychania.

Różne reakcje behawioralne o podłożu emocjonalnym badali też J. Sloboda (1991) i J. Panksepp (1995). W badaniu kwestionariuszowym Slobody osoby badane raportowały, że słuchanie muzyki wywołuje u nich całą gamę reakcji behawioralnych, takich jak ciarki/dreszcze przechodzące po krzyżu, śmiech, wrażenie ucisku w gardle, łzy, gęsią skórę, pocenie się, przyspieszenie bicia serca, ziewanie, pobudzenie seksualne i inne. Najczęstszą z reakcji na muzykę okazały się ciarki, do których przyznawało się 90 % respondentów. Celem eksperymentu Slobody było też skorelowanie odpowiedzi behawioralnej organizmu z określonymi formami muzycznymi. Uzyskane wyniki pokazały, że na przykład łzy wywoływane były najczęściej przez appogiatury, natomiast o ciarki i dreszcze przyprawiały słuchaczy nagłe zmiany w przebiegu harmonii. Ciarki pojawiające się podczas słuchania muzyki były również przedmiotem badania przeprowadzonego przez Pankseppa. Pokazało ono, że tego typu reakcja pojawia się częściej w przypadku słuchania smutnych niż radosnych fragmentów muzycznych i że kobiety odczuwają je częściej niż mężczyźni.

Wyniki eksperymentów z zakresu neuroobrazowania pokazały z kolei, że emocjom odczuwanym podczas słuchania muzyki towarzyszy częściowa aktywacja podobnych obszarów mózgu co w przypadku emocji naturalnych. Przykładowo Anne Blood i Robert Zatorre (2001) oraz Vinod Menon i Daniel Levitin (2005) pokazali – odpowiednio – za pomocą pozytronowej emisyjnej tomografii (PET) i funkcjonalnego rezonansu magnetycznego (fMRI), że emocjom podczas słuchania muzyki towarzyszy aktywacja tak zwanego układu nagrody w mózgu i szlaków aktywności dopaminergicznej, analogicznie jak w sytuacjach naturalnej euforii wywołanej bodźcami erotycznymi, jedzeniem czekolady lub korzystaniem z innych używek.

Do podobnych wniosków na podstawie badań własnych oraz przeglądu badań neuroobrazowych i studiów nad lezjami doszedł Stefan Koelsch (2010; 2012, rozdz. 12.6). Jego zdaniem w oparciu o przeprowadzone do tej pory eksperymenty można wyciągnąć wniosek, że emocjom muzycznym towarzyszy aktywacja struktur podkorowych, głównie obszarów limbicznych i okołolimbicznych: ciała migdałowatego, hipokampa, zakrętu przyhipokampowego, jądra półleżącego, brzuszno-pola nakrywki, wyspy, przedniej części zakrętu obręczy i kory oczodołowej. Świadczyć to może o tym, że przynajmniej niektóre z emocji muzycznych są powiązane z aktywnością istotnych przeżyciowo struktur, które zawiadują ukształtowanymi w procesie ewolucji podstawowymi mechanizmami afektywnymi, co jest najlepszym dowodem na to, że emocje tego typu są czymś realnym (Koelsch 2010: 133).

#### **4. Obszary aktywności behawioralno-poznawczej słuchacza. Wstępna typologia emocji muzycznych**

Liczne czynniki z jednej strony bliżej związane z warstwą muzyczną, a z drugiej z sytuacją odbioru muzyki – na przykład elementy struktury utworu muzycznego, jakość i sposób wykonania, cechy indywidualne charakteryzujące słuchacza, zewnętrzne okoliczności składające się na kontekst słuchania – znacząco komplikują możliwość przedstawienia zjawiska indukowania emocji muzycznych w ramach jednorodnego procesu lub pojedynczego mechanizmu. Przykładowo Patrik Juslin i Daniel Västfjäll, opierając się głównie na dotychczasowych ustaleniach empirycznych dotyczących wzbudzenia emocji przez muzykę, wymieniają aż sześć różnych mechanizmów, za pomocą których, jak sądzą, muzyka oddziałuje emocjonalnie na osobę słuchającą. Są to: (1) odruchy pnia mózgu, (2) warunkowanie klasyczne, (3) zarażenie emocjonalne, (4) wyobrażenia wzrokowa, (5) pamięć epizodyczna oraz (6) oczekiwania muzyczne (por. Juslin i Västfjäll 2008)<sup>452</sup>.

Z kolei w ramach przyjmowanej przeze mnie perspektywy obiecującym punktem wyjścia do określenia kluczowych mechanizmów i procesów powstawania emocji muzycznych może być wskazanie na podstawowe obszary aktywności behawioralno-poznawczej słuchacza, w których pojawiają się reakcje emocjonalne na muzykę. W związku z tym proponuję wyodrębnienie trzech takich zasadniczych obszarów, w których pojawiają się emocje muzyczne. Reakcje emocjonalne na muzykę mogą być:

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<sup>452</sup> Autorzy rozważali (a nawet eksperymentalnie testowali) możliwość dodania do powyższej listy dodatkowych mechanizmów wzbudzenia emocji muzycznych, tj. mechanizmów (7) kognitywnej oceny i (8) synchronizacji z rytmem (ang. *rhythmic entrainment*) (por. Juslin, Liljeström i in. 2010: 616, 621).

- generowane wprost jako reakcje percepcyjno-behawioralne słuchacza, czyli jako reakcje jego ciała (*ucieleśnione emocje muzyczne*);
- zapośredniczone przez aktywność poznawczą odbiorcy nakierowaną na analizę struktury i formy muzycznej (*epistemiczne emocje muzyczne*);
- wynikiem nakierowania aktywności poznawczej podmiotu na pozamuzyczne czynniki zewnętrzne (*asocjacyjno-kontekstowe emocje muzyczne*).

4.1 *Dziedzina ucieleśnionych emocji muzycznych* – Ucieleśnione emocje muzyczne powstają niezależnie od czynników poznawczych, najczęściej jako reakcje autonomicznego układu nerwowego pobudzonego percepcyjnie przez elementy struktury dźwiękowej utworu muzycznego. Percepcja muzyki jest w stanie wywołać przyspieszenie bicia serca, pocenie się skóry, dreszcze czy łzy, jak również inne tego typu reakcje fizjologiczne i cielesne (por. np. Sloboda 1981; Krumhansl 1997). Wzbudzone są wtedy reakcje, które należy wiązać między innymi z aktywacją obszarów podkorowych: pnia mózgu, elementów układu limbicznego, jak ciało migdałowate i podwzgórze, kontrolujących behawioralne, hormonalne i wegetatywne reakcje organizmu (por. Berlyne 1971 rozdz. 8).

Elementarnymi bodźcami, które są w stanie *oddolnie* zainicjować tego typu reakcje cielesne u odbiorcy, są przede wszystkim takie cechy bodźca muzycznego jak na przykład: nagły dźwięk, jego głośność, rytm, brzmienia dysonansowe i tak dalej (por. Juslin i Västfjäll, 2008: 564; Johnstone i Scherer 2005: 294-296). Przyczynami reakcji cielesnych na muzykę mogą być jednak również nieco bardziej złożone mechanizmy, do których należy zarażenie emocjonalne. Powoduje ono, że na przykład radosna lub smutna muzyka potrafi mechanicznie zarażać słuchacza tkwiącą w niej emocją i wywołać odpowiadające jej pobudzenie emocjonalne w postaci odczucia wesołości lub smutku, wzrostu lub obniżenia napięcia fizycznego lub wydzielania odpowiednich hormonów do krwi (prolaktyny, endorfin) (por. np. Juslin i Västfjäll 2008: 564-566; Huron 2011). Wyjątkowe możliwości zarażania emocjonalnego posiada głos ludzki i oparte na nim ekspresje muzyczne. Przykładowo możliwości, jakie posiada w tym względzie śpiew, znacznie przewyższają możliwości muzyki instrumentalnej, co jest pochodną tego, że fizjologiczne zmiany charakterystyczne dla poszczególnych rodzajów emocji – na przykład parametry oddechu podczas doświadczania strachu – powiązane są ściślej ze zmianami w parametrach emisji głosu (por. Gorzelańczyk i Podlipniak 2011: 80). Interesujące jest też to, że zarażanie emocjonalne za pomocą środków wokalnych jest bardziej efektywne w przypadku emocji takich jak strach lub niepokój niż w przypad-

ku emocji wstrętu, co wiąże się prawdopodobnie z adaptacyjnymi funkcjami głosu jako środka komunikacji na odległość i wykorzystywaniem go w grupie do sygnalizowania zbliżającego się zagrożenia i wywoływania tym samym strachu przed zagrożeniem (wstręt trudno jest zaś komunikować za pomocą głosu (por. Johnston i Scherer 2005: 292; Gorzelańczyk i Podlipniak 2011: 81). Zażalenie emocjonalne za pomocą środków wokalnych działa również efektywnie w przypadku innych emocji, takich jak na przykład emocja smutku, co również może być spowodowane charakterystycznymi dla tej emocji parametrami akustycznymi głosu – spadkiem tempa, słabnącym natężeniem dźwięku, mniejszym natężeniem wyższych składowych (aliquotów) dźwięków o strukturze harmoniczej – i ich oddziaływaniem emocjonalnym na słuchacza (por. Johnston i Scherer 2005: 297).

*4.2 Dziedzina epistemicznych emocji muzycznych* – Czynnikiem umożliwiającymi powstanie emocji muzycznych może być intensywna aktywność poznawcza słuchacza, na przykład w formie oczekiwań, wyobrażeń, wzmożonego zaangażowania pamięci roboczej, nakierowana bezpośrednio na analizę utworu muzycznego. Kluczową aktywnością poznawczą biorącą udział w inicjowaniu emocji są antycypacje pojawiające się w trakcie słuchania muzyki. Podczas słuchania utworu odbiorca – świadomie lub nieświadomie – żywi określone, wybiegające naprzód oczekiwania na temat jego dalszego przebiegu. Mogą one dotyczyć na przykład pojawienia się akordu w określonym czasie, kontynuacji linii melodycznej, powtórzenia lub dopełnienia określonej frazy lub motywu.

Zaproponowana w połowie lat 50-tych XX wieku przez Leonarda Meyera wpływowa koncepcja emocji muzycznych reprezentuje takie właśnie podejście. Ogólna definicja emocji, jaką Meyer proponuje, wiąże powstawanie emocji z zahamowaniem jakiejś ważnej życiowo funkcji lub praktyki: „emocja lub afekt zostają wzbudzone wtedy, gdy tendencja do reagowania zostaje wstrzymana lub zahamowana” (Meyer 1974: 26, por. tamże: 46). Przykładem, do którego odwołuje się, jest przypadek nałogowego palacza, który gdy sięgnie do kieszeni po papierosy i ich tam nie znajdzie, może zareagować emocjonalnie (tamże: 25, 39). Przykład ten pokazuje, że emocje mogą powstawać wskutek zaburzenia oczekiwań. Z podobną sytuacją mamy do czynienia podczas słuchania muzyki. Kompozytor utworu muzycznego poprzez zaingerowanie w oczekiwania muzyczne słuchacza może wywołać u niego na przykład emocję zaskoczenia. Kompozytor może spowodować, że następstwo w materiale muzycznym „niekoniecznie musi być dokładnie zgodne z oczekiwaniem” słuchacza (tamże: 40). Oczekiwanie może też zostać spełnione, ale z opóźnieniem. Początkowy bodziec muzyczny może dopuszczać z równym prawdopodobieństwem różne rozwinięcia, czyli wytworzyć u słuchacza wrażenie niezdecydowania i niepewności. Poza kompozytorem również wykonawca utwo-

ru muzycznego może estetycznie i twórczo manipulować oczekiwaniami odbiorcy poprzez tak zwane „odchylenia wykonawcze” w zakresie tonalności, chromatyki, ornamentyki lub poziomu ekspresyjności wykonania (por. także: rozdz. VI).

4.3 *Dziedzina muzycznych emocji asocjacyjno-kontekstowych* – Słuchanie muzyki może pobudzać słuchacza emocjonalnie poprzez zewnętrzne skojarzenia i asocjacje, jakie dany utwór wywołuje. Dzięki muzyce odbiorca zwraca się wtedy w wyobraźni lub w pamięci epizodycznej bądź semantycznej ku przedmiotom, ludziom, zdarzeniom, ideom ze sfery pozamuzycznej (por. Sloboda 2002: 78). W umyśle słuchacza powstają obrazy dotyczące na przykład przeszłych zdarzeń, miejsc lub osób, z którymi się zetknął, które wywołują pobudzenie emocjonalne. Również miejsce, w którym odbiorca muzyki aktualnie się znajduje (kościół, koncert), oraz ludzie, którzy mu towarzyszą podczas słuchania, mogą przyczynić się do wygenerowania określonych emocji. Muzyka może też skłaniać odbiorcę do bardziej abstrakcyjnego zastanowienia się nad własnym życiem, a nawet do myślenia o sensie istnienia, co w pewnych sytuacjach może wprowadzić go w określony stan afektywny: wywołać żal, smutek, a nawet strach.

Istnieje prawdopodobnie cały szereg mechanizmów – różniących się stopniem kontroli poznawczej, poziomem uświadomienia, wpływem czynników indywidualnych i szybkością reakcji emocjonalnej na bodziec muzyczny – które zawiadują takim „przekierowywaniem” uwagi na kontekst pozamuzyczny, jakie zachodzi w pamięci lub wyobraźni podczas słuchania muzyki. Przykładowo jeden z takich mechanizmów, o których warto w tym kontekście wspomnieć, ma postać – wyuczonego, kulturowo zautomatyzowanego i nawykowego – procesu inicjowania przez muzykę skojarzeń wspólnych szerokiej grupie osób. Takie *zorganizowane kulturowo skojarzenia* (Meyer nazywa je „konotacjami”) wiążą elementy i sposoby organizacji muzycznej, a nawet brzmienie czy wizerunki instrumentów ze światem pozamuzycznym: „organy na przykład kojarzą się słuchaczom zachodnim z kościołem, a dzięki temu z pobożnością i przekonaniem oraz postawami religijnymi. Gong jest powiązany skojarzeniem kontaktowym ze Wschodem, stanowi często konotację tajemniczości i egzotyki” (Meyer 1974: 313). Skojarzenia powstałe na tej bazie przyczyniają się do określonego ukierunkowania emocji lub nastroju, na przykład skojarzenia wywoływane podczas słuchania kolęd mogą prowadzić do pojawienia się nastroju świątecznego oraz odczuć emocjonalnych związanych z rodzinną czułością i poczuciem bliskości.

### **Zakończenie**

Zjawisko wywoływania emocji przez muzykę jest ważnym fragmentem codziennych oraz estetycznych doświadczeń człowieka. Jednym zaś z celów współczesnych interdyscyplinarnych badań nad doznaniem muzycznym prowadzonych na styku psychologii, neurokognitywistyki i muzykologii jest pokazanie, że emocje muzyczne są zjawiskiem dającym się wyjaśnić metodami naukowymi i że dzięki temu można uczynić je nieco lepiej zrozumiałymi. Jednak cel ten, między innymi ze względu na nieuchwytność i zagadkowość emocji muzycznych, jest bardzo trudny w realizacji i sam w sobie kontrowersyjny.

W niniejszym artykule starałem się pokazać, że mimo trudności, z jakimi musi zmierzyć się program interdyscyplinarnych badań nad emocjami muzycznymi, doprowadził on, jak się wydaje, do pewnej zmiany optyki w patrzeniu na to zjawisko. Po pierwsze udało się pokazać, że emocje muzyczne nie są fikcją, ale czymś realnym pod względem psychologicznym, fizjologicznym i mózgowym. Po drugie pokazano, że doznania emocjonalne związane z muzyką nie ograniczają się do doznań czysto estetycznych i mogą być wielorako powiązane z aktywnością poznawczo-behawioralną słuchacza. Po trzecie wiadomo, że odczuwanie emocji muzycznych zależy od działania wielu różnych mechanizmów – mózgowych, poznawczych, behawioralnych – które decydują o jakości i sile odczuwanych emocji.

Istotą propozycji przedstawionej w niniejszym tekście jest przekonanie, że występują trzy bazowe obszary emocji muzycznych wyznaczone przez różne sposoby behawioralno-poznawczego reagowania na muzykę: reakcje ucielesnione, reakcje wzbudzone poznawczo i nakierowane na dzieło muzyczne oraz takie, które są wypadkową asocjacji umysłowych i oddziaływania kontekstu pozamuzycznego na słuchacza.

Równocześnie starałem się podkreślać, że empiryczne badania nad emocjami muzycznymi nie są i nigdy nie będą zwolnione od konieczności stawiania ogólnych pytań ani od potrzeby filozoficznego podświetlania poruszanych problemów. Przykładem tego typu ogólnych kwestii są na przykład pytania o to, czy emocje muzyczne mają charakter utylitarny, czy estetyczny, czy odczuwamy je, czy jedynie percypujemy zawartość emocjonalną utworu, oraz pytanie o to, czy to sama muzyka, czy pozamuzyczny kontekst są przyczyną emocji. Sądzę, że te kwestie nie odbiegają wcale aż tak daleko od doniosłych pytań filozoficznych, które stawiali autorzy klasycy, na przykład E. Hanslick i I. Strawiański.

Jest oczywiście bardzo wiele punktów, w których proponowane rozwiązania rozmiągają się z klasyczną propozycją przedstawioną przez Hanslicka i Strawiańskiego. Najważniejszą kwestią sporną jest zapewne stawianie emocjonalnych doznań estetycznych na równi z innymi rodzajami afektywnych doświadczeń muzycznych. Mimo że zarzut ten jest częściowo uzasadniony, to

jednak nie sędzę, aby tak było do końca (por. np. Juslin 2013). We współczesnych badaniach empirycznych nad doświadczeniami muzycznymi nurt podkreślający wyjątkowość muzycznych doznań estetycznych bardzo silnie zaznacza swoją obecność (por. np. Konečni 2005; Zentner i Scherer 2008; Zentner 2010; Trost, Ethofer i in. 2012). Dodatkowe nadzieje na wyjaśnienie estetycznych aspektów oddziaływania muzyki na pracę mózgu wiązać można z programem badawczym neuroestetyki muzyki (por. Brattico i Pearce 2013; Przybysz 2013). W świetle tego teza o wyjątkowym charakterze estetycznych doznań muzycznych jest ciągle, jak sędzę, inspirującą hipotezą i będzie ona przedmiotem badań empirycznych w najbliższych latach.

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### **Piotr Przybysz**

Pracuje w Instytucie Filozofii Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu; wcześniej zajmował się metodologią nauk społecznych; opublikował książkę pt. *Modele teoretyczne we współczesnej filozofii politycznej liberalizmu* (2009); obecnie zajmuje się problematyką neurokognitywistyczną, koncentruje się na zagadnieniach neuroestetyki oraz neurokognitywistyki społecznej; ostatnio pod jego współredakcją ukazała się książka *Neuroestetyka muzyki* (2013).





## Streszczenia tekstów anglojęzycznych

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### **Siedem dni z kilku miesięcy w Teatrze Maryjskim**

**Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer**

Projekt *Balety Stare i Nowe*, Londyn

Tekst stanowi rodzaj dziennika prowadzonego przez znaną parę: choreografkę Millicent Hodson i scenografa Kennetha Archera w okresie inscenizacji baletu „Święta wiosny” wykonywanego przez Balet Kirowa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Strawiński; Niżyński; Święto wiosny; Teatr Maryjski; balet.

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### **Od *Ognistego ptaka* do *Święta wiosny*: metrum i struktura w pracach Strawińskiego z „okresu rosyjskiego”**

**Pieter van den Toorn**

Wydział Muzyki

Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Santa Barbara

Autor podejmuje problem psychologicznej złożoności metrum – zapisanego i słyszanego – w *Ognistym ptaku* i *Święcie wiosny*. Z perspektywy słuchacza koncentruje się na przeciwstawnych siłach metrum, przemieszczenia i równoczesności. Zastępują one motywiczość stylu klasycznego (rozwijanych wariacji), jak to już dawno zauważył Theodor Adorno. Efektem jest harmonia oktatoniczna oraz ścisły, precyzyjny styl wykonania preferowany przez Strawińskiego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** metryczne przemieszczenie; pararelizm; Adorno; harmonia oktatoniczna; ścisły styl wykonania.

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**„Oni wcale nie tańczą”:  
choreografia *Le Sacre du Printemps*, 1913**

**Hanna Järvinen**

Centrum Badań Sztuk Teatralnych  
Uniwersytet Sztuk w Helsinkach

Autorka omawia choreografię do *Le Sacre du Printemps* stworzoną przez Wacława Niżyńskiego, taką jaką się nam jawi w świetle dostępnych materiałów źródłowych z roku 1913. W ich świetle Niżyński postawił przed swoimi tancerzami ambitne wymagania w odniesieniu do sposobów poruszania się i układów. Autorka kwestionuje wiele z powszechnie przyjmowanych założeń na temat tej pracy, a w szczególności tańca, i pokazuje, jakie wyzwanie stanowiły choreograficzne pomysły Niżyńskiego dla tancerzy i krytyków.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Święto wiosny; Niżyński; Strawiński; choreografia; taniec.

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**Prymitywne rytuały, współczesne reperkusje:  
Przywołanie orientalnego „Innego” w czterech realizacjach  
*Le Sacre du printemps***

**Lucy Weir**

Szkoła Kultury i Sztuk Pięknych  
Uniwersytet w Glasgow

Autorka traktuje oryginalną choreografię *Sacre* jako podstawę współczesnych poszukiwań nie-zachodnich wątków w dziedzinie tańca nowoczesnego, nieustającej fascynacji orientalnym „Innym”, co poprzedza choreografię autorstwa Wigman, Bausch i Graham. W tym świetle dwie kwestie stają się oczywiste: po pierwsze utwór ten zwiastuje narodziny modernizmu w obrębie klasycznego spektaklu tanecznego, a po drugie – anty-klasyczna, anty-tradycyjna rytmika *Sacre* zaszczerpia na trwałe zainteresowanie estetyką prymitywizmu. Choreografia Niżyńskiego okazuje się wręcz prekursorska dla tańca awangardowego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Święto wiosny; Niżyński; Strawiński; prymitywizm; taniec.

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## Strawiński i czas

**Helen Sills**

Międzynarodowe Towarzystwo Badań nad Czasem  
Alumn Uniwersytetu w Birmingham

Autorka bada dążenia Strawińskiego do skoordynowania człowieka i czasu poprzez muzykę w kontekście pojawiających się na przełomie XX wieku zmian w naszym rozumieniu czasu. Analizuje rosnącą biegłość kompozytora w konstruowaniu struktur czasowych o różnych jakościach i głębi w celu stworzenia nośników dla zwiększonej świadomości czasowej i duchowej, począwszy od jego wczesnych prac, od *Pietruszki* po *Le Sacre du Printemps*, badając także tło jakości czasowych tych utworów. Z dystansu minionego stulecia prezentuje pewne idee dotyczące efektu, jaki wywarła premiera *Sacre* na widownię w odniesieniu do świadomości czasu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** duchowość; czasowość; ruch; konstrukcja muzyczna; wspólnota.

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## Igor Stravinsky: Poetyka i polityka muzyki

**Howard Gardner**

Wyższa Szkoła Edukacji Uniwersytetu Harvarda  
Cambridge, MA

Najsłynniejsza wypowiedź Igora Strawińskiego znana z jego autobiografii brzmi: „Muzyka jest ze swojej natury niezdolna do wyrażenia czegokolwiek”. Wypowiedź ta zaskoczyła jego odbiorców. W końcu Strawiński skomponował jedno z najbardziej ekspresyjnych utworów muzycznych XX wieku, od lirycznej *Pietruszki* do dramatycznego *Le Sacre du Printemps* czy elegijnej *Symfonii Psalmów*. Autor podejmuje próbę stworzenia intrygującego portretu Strawińskiego, aż do swoistej „anatomii” jego rzemiosła i kontekstu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Strawiński; Święto wiosny; poetyka; polityka; muzyka.

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## Strawiński i inni

**Timothy D. Taylor**

Wydział Etnomuzykologii i Muzykologii

Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Los Angeles

Autor przywołuje stare już pytanie, na które nikt nie był w stanie wyczerpująco odpowiedzieć: dlaczego dziewiętnastowieczni kompozytorzy, którzy mieli całkiem dobry dostęp do muzyki spoza krajów zachodnich, tak rzadko się do niej odwoływali? Już na początku wieku dwudziestego sytuacja uległa wyraźnej zmianie. Kiedy pojawiały się ideologie towarzyszące kapitałowi finansowemu, kompozytorzy – tak jak i wszyscy inni – zaczęli rozglądać się za inną muzyką, innymi dźwiękami, za innymi obiektami jako czymś wymienialnym. Widoczne jest to w pracach Igora Strawińskiego. Ta nowa ideologia wymienności wprowadzona przez wzrost kapitału finansowego była kontynuowana w *musique concrète* w latach 40., towarzyszyła pojawieniu się cyfrowego samplowania w latach 80., a także później.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Strawiński; muzyka; kompozytor; Zachód; nie-Zachód; kapitalizm.

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## Odrzucając Święto

**Richard Taruskin**

Wydział Muzyki

Uniwersytet Kalifornijski w Berkeley

Autor dokonuje rozległej i wnikliwej analizy przejawów oporu względem „Święta Wiosny” Igora Strawińskiego, w kontekście kulturowym, artystycznym, politycznym oraz przy rozróżnieniu na opór wobec samej muzyki i opór wobec baletu. W sposób zaangażowany i w odwołaniu do wielu źródeł omawia pozycję utworu w historii muzyki oraz jego recepcję.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Strawiński; Święto wiosny; opór; muzyka; balet.

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**KSIĄŻKI**



## Wybrane najnowsze publikacje (w tym reedycje) poświęcone „Świętu wiosny”, Igorowi Strawińskiemu i Wacławowi Niżyńskiemu



### **After the Rite: Stravinsky's Path to Neoclassicism (1914-1925)**

Autor: Maureen A. Carr

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Oxford University Press / 2014

Język: angielski

W książce przedstawiono w sposób nowatorski i szczegółowy przemiany kompozytorskiego stylu Igora Strawińskiego od czasu „Święta wiosny”.



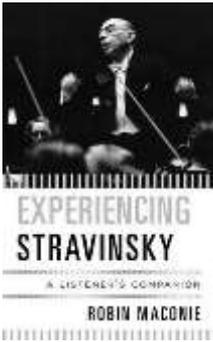
### **Stravinsky and His World**

Autor: Tamara Levitz

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Princeton University Press / 2013

Język: angielski

Publikacja, która dzięki pracom międzynarodowego grona uczonych dostarcza świeżego spojrzenia na życie i muzykę Igora Strawińskiego, sytuując je w nowych kontekstach intelektualnych i muzycznych.



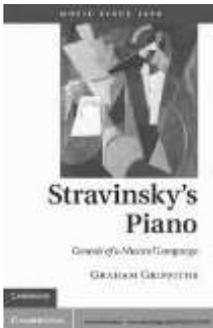
### **Experiencing Stravinsky: A Listener's Companion**

Autor: Robin Maconie

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Scarecrow Press / 2013

Język: angielski

Świeża próba ujęcia dzieł Strawińskiego, z naciskiem na fenomen ich unikalnego brzmienia, adresowana do słuchaczy chcących wzbogacić swoją wiedzę o oddziaływaniu tej muzyki.



### **Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language**

Autor: Graham Griffith

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Cambridge University Press / 2013

Język: angielski

Analiza twórczości Strawińskiego przede wszystkim z uwagi na rolę fortepianu, co umożliwia autorowi niekiedy gruntowne zrewidowanie rozpowszechnionych ujęć pracy tego kompozytora.



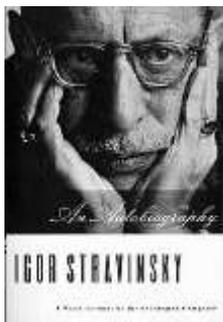
### **Igor Stravinsky**

Autor: Christine Kohler

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Compass Publishing / 2013

Język: angielski

Igor Strawiński: uważany za twórcę modernistycznego (choć nie lubił o sobie myśleć w ten sposób), kompozytor, który na zawsze odmienił oblicze muzyki klasycznej.



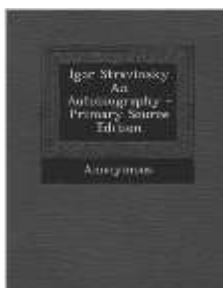
### **An Autobiography by Igor Stravinsky**

Autor: Igor Stravinsky

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: W. W. Norton & Company / 2013

Język: angielski

Strawiński o swoim życiu: między innymi muzycznym, wypowiadający się nierzadko kontrowersyjnie, na pewno – intrygująco.



### **Igor Stravinsky an Autobiography – Primary Source Edition**

Autor: Igor Stravinsky

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Nabu Press / 2013

Język: angielski

Reprodukcja książki opublikowanej przed r. 1923, razem ze wszystkimi niedoskonałościami, uszkodzeniami itd.



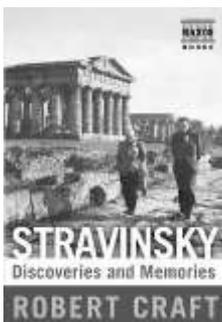
### **Conversations with Igor Stravinsky by Robert Craft**

Autor: Robert Craft

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Faber Finds / 2013

Język: angielski

Pierwszy ze słynnych tomów będących zapisem konwersacji przeprowadzonych ze Strawińskim przez dyrygenta i pisarza Roberta Crafta.



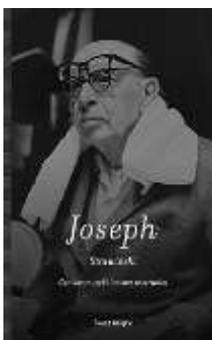
### **Stravinsky: Discoveries and Memories by Robert Craft**

Autor: Robert Craft

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Naxos Books / 2013

Język: angielski

Robert Craft, współpracujący i zaprzyjaźniony z Igorem Strawińskim, odsłania mniej znane i nieznane sfery życia kompozytora.



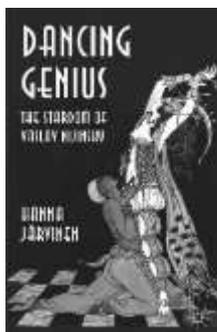
### **Strawiński**

Autor: Charles M. Joseph

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Świat Książki / 2012

Przekład polskojęzyczny: Aleksander Laskowski

Strawiński w zaskakującym ujęciu, bo jako mistrz marketingu, czy nawet gwiazda medialna. Jednocześnie praca ta obrazuje zmiany, jakie dokonały się w świecie sztuki i mediów w ciągu zeszłego stulecia.



### **Dancing Genius: The Stardom of Vaslav Nijinsky**

Autor: Hanna Järvinen

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Palgrave Macmillan / 2014

Język: angielski

Obszerne studium krytyczne działalności Wacława Niżyńskiego jako czołowego tancerza Baletów Rosyjskich. Autorka analizuje kategorie wirtuozerii, sławy i geniuszu, a jednocześnie przeciwstawia bogaty materiał źródłowy rozpo-wszechnionym interpretacjom, z którymi polemizuje.



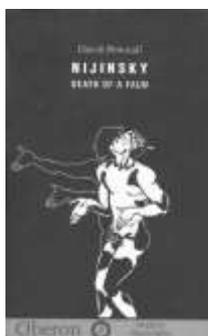
### **Nijinsky**

Autor: Lucy Moore

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Profile Books / 2014

Język: angielski

Pierwsza tak obszerna biografia Wacława Niżyńskiego od przeszło trzydziestu lat. Autorka odwołuje się do pamiętników tancerza, przedstawiając proces twórczy i rozwój relacji osobistych jednej z ważniejszych postaci kultury dwudziestego wieku.



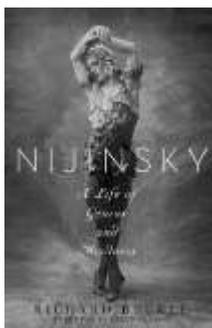
### **Nijinsky: Death of a Faun**

Autor: David Pownall

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Oberon Books / 2013

Język: angielski

Biograficzna praca dostarczająca opisu relacji Niżyńskiego z Siergiejem Diagilewem oraz późniejszego losu tancerza po śmierci impresario Baletów Rosyjskich.



### **Nijinsky: A Life of Genius and Madness**

Autor: Richard Buckle

Wydawnictwo / Rok wydania: Pegasus / 2013

Język: angielski

Sugestywna historia jednego z największych tancerzy w historii baletu, podziwianego geniuszu, który osunął się w szaleństwo.





**ROZA**



## Wybrana

### Wywiad z Różą Puzynowską

Zrealizowano: 19 grudnia 2013; opublikowano: zima 2013/2014.



Le Sacre Akt Pierwszy

**Witold Wachowski: Któreży Strawiński z Niżyńskim wkradli się do Pani malarstwa? Drogą zamówienia, propozycji – czy może pierwotnie pomysł należał do Pani?**

*Róża Puzynowska:* Przez trzy lata współpracowałam z Malarnią Kostiumów stołecznego Teatru Wielkiego – Opery Narodowej jako pomocnik, wykonawca elementów wzorów kostiumów scenicznych.

W trakcie jednego z sezonów w naszej pracowni pojawiła się ogromna sarta 270 par baletek i około 360 sztuk taśm do pomalowania. Było to „Święto wiosny” Niżyńskiego/Strawińskiego w rekonstrukcji Millicent Hodson i Kennetha Archera – światowej sławy rekonstruktorów baletów.

Wspominam te kosmiczne ilości nie bez przyczyny. Proszę podzielić to wszystko na trzy osoby i wyobrazić sobie, że ma się zaledwie parę miesięcy na pomalowanie absolutnie każdego elementu. Ręcznie! Gdzie każda linia jest innego koloru. Gdzie wszystko ma swoje proporcje.

Po codziennej pracy przy tych samych elementach owe góry baletek i okalających je taśm zaczęły mi się śnić. Treść baletu zawładnęła dodatkowo moim umysłem i tak oto w oparach snu uciekałam przed lawiną próbujących mnie strącić baletek. U Niżyńskiego *Wybrana* niewiasta zatańcowuje się na śmierć. Mnie zadeptywały buty.

Stwierdziłam, że jedynym wyjściem, by oswobodzić się, jest rozprawić się z tematem w sposób mi najbliższy. Najbardziej osobisty. Najszczerzy.

Namalować.

Traf chciał, że w następnym sezonie teatr zlecił Malarni wykonanie całych kostiumów (wcześniej były to tylko baletki). Jako należąca do trzyosobowego zespołu, spędziłam ponad miesiąc na rozgryzaniu wzorów do odtworzenia na tunikach, spodniach, czapach i opaskach. Opisywałam zdjęcia realizacji kostiumów, porównywałam polską wersję z angielską i nadawałam numery używanym kolorom. Kolejne dwa bodajże miesiące zajęło mi samo odtworzenie wspomnianych kolorów ze 136-cio barwnej palety!! Potem – miesiące ręcznego malowania na kostiumach. Naprawdę mrówcza praca.

W kwietniu 2012 roku napisałam maila z opisem propozycji mojego cyklu obrazów. Zarówno rekonstruktorzy baletu, jak i dyrektor Polskiego Baletu Narodowego, Krzysztof Pastor odpowiedzieli bardzo entuzjastycznie. Przyszła pora na wybór tancerzy-modeli. 100 procent zgody.

...no i się zaczęło.

Obrazy są wynikiem wewnętrznej, palącej potrzeby.

Moja inicjatywa, moja miłość.



Praca w Teatrze

**Sto lat temu premiera Święta Wiosny wywołała kulturalne trzęsienie ziemi, mniejsze lub większe. To zjawisko właściwe naszej naturze (i kulturze), że oryginalne a jednocześnie precyzyjne, przemyślane dzieło bywa na wstępie odbierane jako kakofonia, bezmyślna kpina z odbiorcy. A z drugiej strony – świat sztuki popularnej rządzi się regułą: „ludzie polubią to, co już lubią”. Jaki był odbiór Pani obrazów z tej serii, wystawionych w – bądź co bądź – w szacownych murach wystawienniczych?**

Ogólnie odbiór był bardzo, bardzo pozytywny, lecz podobnie jak sam balet podczas prapremiery wywołał poruszenie i w moim przypadku nie obyło się bez emocji. Nawet z uśmiechem na ustach wspominam jedną z negatywnych opinii, gdy powiedziano mi, iż pomysł jest wtórny, a wykonanie kiczowate oraz słabe. Mnie cieszą także takie wypowiedzi. Gdy zarówno pozytywne, jak i negatywne reakcje są silne, musi to oznaczać sukces. Jeśli coś jest rzeczywistością nijakie oraz mierne – łatwo się to zapomina, gdzieś ulatuje i w efekcie nie męczy nas do tego stopnia, by silić się na jakikolwiek komentarz. W moim przypadku największym trzęsieniem był fakt namalowania tancerzy w sugerowanym akcie. Dla mnie – jedyny właściwy sposób.



Praca w Teatrze

**Uwieczniła Pani rzeczywistych tancerzy Polskiego Baletu Narodowego. Jak wyglądała praca z nimi? Ile czasu zajęło Pani całe to przedsięwzięcie, biorąc pod uwagę liczbę tych względnie dużych obrazów?**

Tak, obrazy te to często zmultiplikowane, w proporcji niemal 1:1 portrety trzynastu tancerzy PBN w pozach zaczerpniętych z oryginalnej choreografii Wacława Niżyńskiego.

W marcu 2012 roku sformułowałam listę swoich „wybranych” tancerzy. Były maile, telefony, spotkania, sesje zdjęciowe, selekcja materiału fotograficznego, propozycje kompozycji i wreszcie samo malowanie. Intensywnie... Ogólnie ponad rok spania po 3–4 godziny na dobę. Prawdziwy maraton, ale jaki piękny!

Myślę, że dla większości z nas balet jest naprawdę niesamowitym światem. Dla mnie – światem nadludzi. Postaci nierealnych, których niemal nie da się dotknąć. Dzięki pracy nad projektem miałam niezwykłą okazję poznania jego ludzkiego aspektu. Z przysłowiowym potem i krwią, obawami i autentycznie niesamowitą siłą charakteru. Każdy z moich „wybranych” z grona PBN jest wyjątkowy. Każdy przyciąga wzrok oglądającego i nie pozwala mu mrugnąć. To jest dopiero siła! Pięknym doświadczeniem było porozmawiać z nimi na kanapie, wypić herbatę i mimo reprezentowania dość różnych światów pośmiać się z podobnych problemów.



Pracownia

**Jaką techniką zostały wykonane te obrazy? Czy może Pani przybliżyć te i inne detale swojego warsztatu?**

Maluję w oleju, laserunkowo – czyli nanoszę kilka warstw bardziej lub mniej przezroczystej farby i spoiwa na siebie. Zaczynam od wstępnego rozrysowania kompozycji, którą zawsze już wcześniej mam zamkniętą w głowie. Nigdzie tu nie ma przypadku.

W związku z tematem tego cyklu i bezsprzecznie dekoracyjnym charakterem oryginalnego „Święta wiosny” zdecydowałam się tu użyć także płatków prawdziwego srebra i złota. Ich „współpraca” ze światłem i ruchem przemieszczające się oglądającego zastępuje mi ruch sceniczny.



Praca w Teatrze / Pracownia

Zatem po dookreśleniu kompozycji kładę wspomniane płatki, poleruję i zabezpieczam. Po takim przygotowaniu zaczynam malowanie reszty. Najpierw decyzja, co ma prześwitywać spod głównej powierzchni koloru i czym ma się ona jeszcze mienić. Następnie stopniowe zakrywanie płótna kolejnymi kolorami. Jeden na drugi, przy zachowaniu ich własnej przezroczystości – to powoduje końcowy efekt mięsistości bryły i głębi. Na przykład brąz: nie jest brązową farbą z tubki. Jest warstwą czerwieni, błękitów, oranżów, czasem ochry.

Wszystko jeszcze zależy od temperatury docelowej powierzchni. Jeden obraz może mieć w różnych miejscach po dwie do 20–30 warstw. Nie ma tu miejsca na błąd. Jeśli coś „zasmaruję” i zabiję tym samym głębię – jedynym ratunkiem jest zamalowanie bielą i ponowne rozpoczęcie.

W związku ze stosowaną techniką namalowanie jednego obrazu może zająć od jednego do trzech miesięcy. Schnięcia nie da się przyspieszyć bez szkody dla malatury. Pozostaje czekanie między kolejnymi warstwami. Dlatego maluję zawsze po 3–5 obrazów naraz. Jeden schnie, więc przeskakuję do następnego i tak dalej.

**W jednym z wywiadów mówi Pani o swoim stosunku do realizmu w malarstwie współczesnym. Wydaje się, że realizm bywa powodem do zarzutów czy wstydu. Czy jest tak źle w świecie sztuki? „Realistyczne” to automatycznie „niewspółczesne”?**



Pracownia

Nie wiem, czy „realistyczne” równa się „niewspółczesne”. Tak to niestety wygląda z mojej perspektywy. Często słyszałam, że realizm jest tani i taki niepolity obecnie. Zbyt dosłowny, literacki i dekoracyjny... o niczym. Nieprawda, bo czy tego samego nie można powiedzieć o przysłowiowej kropce na płótnie, czy czarnej dziurze na gołym białym, malowanej palcami? Tylko czy to jest sztuka? I czym w ogóle ta „sztuka” jest właściwie? Rzemiosłem czy pomysłem? A czemu nie symbiozą obydwu?

Słyszałam opinie, że nie ma po co malować jak ja, bo od tego jest o niebo szybszy Photoshop i podobnie jak moje prace przesłodzony wydruk na płótnie. Ja niczego się nie wstydzę. Ani swoich tematów, ani estetyki. Jestem szczera w tym, co i jak robię. Należy jednak pamiętać, że nie zawsze szczerość emocji łączyć się musi z dosłownym autobiografizmem. Innymi słowy to, że kiedyś namalowałam siebie z męskim przyrodzeniem, nie znaczy, że sama takie mam.

W moim przypadku realizm jest narzędziem do stworzenia wrażenia ponadczasowości oraz intymności, którą trudno inaczej wywołać. Dodatkowo pomaga akt, skala, kolorystyka i odrealniające światło. Pole interpretacji jest spore. A do tego jakie wyzwanie przy realizacji! Każdy nowy obraz to próba wiary obu stron, modela i mojej. Maluję przecież postacie rzeczywiste, nie fantazję. Niesamowitym uczuciem jest owe zaufanie osoby skądinąd obcej. Uwielbiam to! Dodaje euforii i chęci na więcej obrazów.



Pracownia / z Millicent Hodson i Kennethem Archerem

**Figuratywność tych prac w niczym nie umniejsza ich ekspresji oraz tego, że obrazy te raczej unoszą widza wysoko nad ziemią lub wciągają w niezwykle przestrzenie – niż realistycznie przytwierdzają do ziemi, podłogi. Dynamiczne postacie przeszyte są światłem; światło to niekiedy wręcz ich partner. To budzi pytanie o Pani inspiracje, ulubionych malarzy.**

Ciesz się mnie Pana zdanie!

Inspiracją jest wszystko. Zarówno inna sztuka, jak i świat otaczający: słońce klujące w zaspane powieki, kolejka w sklepie, ktoś śpiewający na przystanku czy uśmiech nieznanego w metrze. Może to także być jakieś uczucie lub oderwane słowo, przypadkowo zasłyszana rozmowa, poruszający artykuł, książka, film, moda, natura i tym podobne.

Przez parę ostatnich miesięcy byłam w Nowym Jorku. Spędzałam około trzech godzin dziennie w pociągu. Zawsze brałam ze sobą książkę, ale otoczenie nie pozwalało mi się na niej skupić. Chłonełam dosłownie wszystko z taką samą

siłą jak Wielkich Mistrzów w Metropolitan Museum. Niemniej, gdziekolwiek nie pojadę, zawsze odwiedzam dzieła Holbeina, Vermeera, Rembrandta, Klimta, Caravaggio, De la Toura, da Vinci, Courbeta, Goya, Velasqueza, Boscha, Memlinga, Weydena, Bruegela, Moneta, Mondriana, Pollocka i Fridy. Jak Pan widzi, mam dość spory zbiór tych „ulubionych”. Każdy z nich dużo mnie uczy. Każdego cenię.

**Jeśli rozejrzeć się za innymi Pani pracami, można się... przy braku pewnego wyrobienia nawet zaszokować. Okazuje się Pani twórcą kontrowersyjnym, zafascynowanym ludzką cielesnością aż do prób pewnego rodzaju majstrowania przy niej.**

Tak. Cielesność jest piękna i ponadczasowa! Należy jednak pamiętać, że sama, bez duszy jest tylko wydmuszką. Taką też się staje, jeśli nadamy jej jakąkolwiek etykietkę. Zaszufiadkujemy. A robimy to wszyscy. Często bezwiednie i automatycznie.

Fascynuje mnie nie sama cielesność, lecz w relacji z aspektem duchowym. Bo czym jesteśmy bez emocji, wiary, miłości czy pasji nami targającej?

Samo opakowanie nie jest nigdy tak ważne jak jego zawartość, prawda?

**Cztery lata temu powiedziała Pani, że przeciwstawia się sztuce o niczym. I nijakiemu odbiorowi sztuki – chciałoby się dodać.**

Lubię swoimi obrazami stawiać pytania, czy też po prostu popychać odbiorcę do postawienia ich samemu sobie. Zawsze to powtarzam, że dobra sztuka powinna wypalić się znamieniem w odbiorcy i chodzić za nim. Rozmawiać. Pomóc poznać samego siebie, a tym samym rozwijać wewnątrz, wzbogacać. Każda reakcja na sztukę jest dobra. Brak jakiegokolwiek jest określeniem nijakości. A z nią należy walczyć, niezależnie od tego, czy w sztuce, życiu osobistym, emocjonalnym czy relacjach międzyludzkich.

Szczerść i jakość to dla mnie jedne z zasadniczych mierników rzeczywistości.



Le Sacre Akt Drugi

**RÓŻA PUZYNOWSKA – ROZA**

Ur. 1984 w Warszawie.

Dyplomantka Międzynarodowej Szkoły Kostiumografii i Projektowania Ubioru (Warszawa).

Dyplom z wyróżnieniem 2012 z Kostiumografii, zrealizowany pod okiem kostiumograf Zofii de Ines; pt. "Persona. Anioły i Demony".

Absolwentka Wydziału Malarstwa Akademii Sztuk Pięknych (Warszawa).

Dyplom 2009 z Malarstwa w pracowni profesora Krzysztofa Wachowiaka, pt. "Stereotypy a Tożsamość" uzyskany z Wyróżnieniem Rektorskim.

W 2007 studiowała na University College of Falmouth na kierunku BA Hons Fine Arts (Kornwalia, Wielka Brytania). Obecnie kursant National Academy w Nowym Jorku.

Brała udział m.in. w Międzynarodowych Warsztatach Audiowizualnych *Moving Districts Budapest* (festiwal EUSshorts, Budapeszt), realizacjach kostiumograficznych do teledysków i spektakli teatralnych oraz licznych wystawach malarstwa, wywiadach i dyskusjach o sztuce.

W latach 2010-2013 współpracowała przy realizacji zleceń Malarni Kostiumów dla Teatru Wielkiego Opery Narodowej (Warszawa).

W 2012 dołączyła do grona wykładowców Międzynarodowej Szkoły Kostiumografii i Projektowania Ubioru i została asystentką jednego z najbardziej interesujących polskich projektantów mody – Mariusza Przybylskiego.

Jej obrazy można znaleźć w prywatnych kolekcjach na terenie kraju, Wielkiej Brytanii oraz Stanów Zjednoczonych.

***<https://rozaartist.see.me>***

***<http://www.roza.cc>***

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## Contributors to this issue



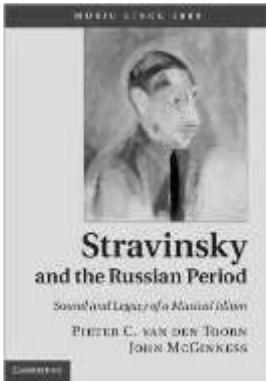
### **Millicent Hodson & Kenneth Archer**

They are a dance and design team based in London. They are known internationally for their reconstructions of lost ballet masterpieces from the early 20th century, most notably *Le Sacre du Printemps* from 1913, with scenario and designs by Nicholas Roerich, music by Igor Stravinsky and choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky. Since its premiere in 1987, they have staged their recon-

structed *Sacre* to acclaim in the United States, England, France, Finland, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Russia, Germany, Brazil and Japan. Four films have been made about their work on *Le Sacre* and three on other ballets in their repertoire. The couple lecture internationally, write books and articles about their productions and exhibit drawings from their projects.

Through *Ballets Old & New*, Hodson and Archer have built a repertoire of some twenty ballets, both reconstructions and creations. In addition to *Le Sacre* they have reconstructed two other ballets by Nijinsky for Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* (*Jeux* and *Till Eulenspiegel*), five by Balanchine, mostly for Diaghilev (*Valse Triste*, *Le Chant du Rossignol*, *La Chatte*, *Le Bal* and *Cotillon*) and five by Jean Borlin for Rolf de Mare's *Ballets Suedois* which competed with Diaghilev's company in the 1920's (*Dervishes*, *Skating Rink*, *Within the Quota* and *La Creation du Monde*). Their creations include Stravinsky's opera *Persephone*, a version of Prokofiev's *Pas d'Acier* and a series of Greek ballets for Carla Fracci and other dancers in Italy.

[source: <http://www.hodsonarcher.com>]



### Pieter C. van den Toorn

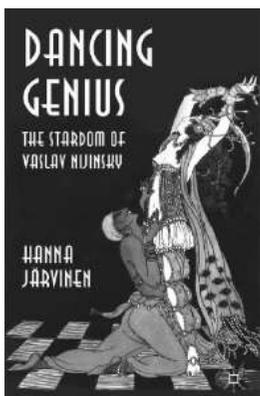
The music of Igor Stravinsky, theory and analysis of tonal and atonal music, sketch studies, aesthetics, and meta-theory. His books include *The Music of Igor Stravinsky* (Yale University Press, 1983), *Stravinsky and the Rite of Spring* (University of California Press, 1987), *Music, Politics and the Academy* (University of California Press, 1995), ), and *Stravinsky and the Russian Period; Sound and Legacy of a Musical Idiom* (co-author: John McGinness, Cambridge University Press, 2012). *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring* won the Deems Taylor-ASCAP award in 1989 and the Outstanding Publication Award of the Society for

Music Theory (SMT) in 1990. Articles on a variety of subjects ranging from Beethoven to Stravinsky and atonal music have appeared in the *Journal of Music Theory*, *Music Analysis*, *Perspectives of New Music*, and the *Journal of Musicology*.

Recent articles on Stravinsky include "Stravinsky, Adorno, and the Art of Displacement", *Musical Quarterly* 87, no.3 (2004), "Stravinsky, Les Noces, and the Prohibition Against Expressive Timing", *Journal of Musicology* 20, no.2 (2003), and "The Sound of Stravinsky", *Music Theory Spectrum* 25, no.1 (2003). "Will Stravinsky Survive Postmodernism?", *Music Theory Spectrum* 22, no.1 (2000), is a critical review of recent literature on Stravinsky. Other articles include "Metrical Displacement in Stravinsky", *Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung* 11 (1998), "Neoclassicism and Its Definitions", in James Baker, ed., *Music Theory in Concept and Practice* (U. of Rochester Press, 1997), and "What's in a Motive? Schoenberg and Schenker Reconsidered", *Journal of Musicology* 14, no.3 (1996).

Recent lectures include "Stravinsky and His Critics", keynote address, Stravinsky Festival, SUNY-Fredonia, February, 2004, and "Continuity and Discontinuity in Stravinsky", keynote address, West Coast Conference, University of San Francisco, March, 2005. Professors van den Toorn and Hall served as co-organizers of the annual meeting of the West Coast Conference held at UCSB, April, 2004. Professor van den Toorn will be lecturing and supervising seminars at the Mannes Institute in New York, June, 2005.

[source: <http://www.music.ucsb.edu>]



### **Hanna Järvinen**

Hanna Järvinen works as a University Lecturer at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. She holds a PhD in Cultural History as well as an MA in Performance Studies and is currently the Treasurer of the Society of Dance History Scholars. She has published in several journals, including *The Senses and Society*, *Dance Research*, and *Dance Research Journal*. Her book, *Dancing Genius: The Stardom of Vaslav Nijinsky* (2014), is a critical study on virtuosity, stardom and genius in the figure of Vaslav Nijinsky.

[source: H. Järvinen's archive]



### **Lucy Weir**

She obtained her PhD in History of Art and Theatre Studies from the University of Glasgow, UK. Specialising in modern dance and performance studies, the interdisciplinary nature of her thesis reflects a wide range of research interests, which include experimental theatre practices, Viennese Actionism, and Japanese postwar performance, with a particular emphasis on Butoh. Lucy regularly gives public talks on the history of art and dance. She lectures on a variety of subject areas within art history and dance studies, both at the University of Glasgow and the Glasgow School of Art.

[source: L. Weir archive]



### **Helen Sills**

She followed her music degree from Nottingham University with an M.A. thesis exploring the relationship between violin techniques, as seen in the concerti grossi of the Late Baroque Era, and the development of the symphony, in the transition to the Early Classical Period.

Her professional career has been mainly as a freelance musician: as a Director of Music for the Girls' Public Day School Trust, a lecturer for the Workers' Educational Association, an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, a conductor for operatic societies, a private violin and piano teacher, and a freelance violinist. She has a special love of chamber music and is the violinist of the Plaegan Piano Trio which gives regular concerts.

In 1992 she gained a Ph.D from Birmingham University, with a thesis on the spirituality and creative philosophy of Igor Stravinsky. Since then, she has continued her research into this area, expanding her exploration into the field of neuroscience and making connections between her work and some of its recent discoveries. Fulfilling a life-long interest in the subject of Time, she is a member of the International Society for the Study of Time, which, together with its Founder, the late J.T.Fraser, has been a source of inspiration and support to her in her work as an independent scholar.

Helen now hopes to enjoy more time to write, living near Brighton in the UK and also in France, near Poitiers.

[source: H. Sills' archive]



### **Piotr Przybysz**

He works at the Institute of Philosophy at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan.

Previously he was interested in methodology of the social sciences.

He published a book entitled *Modele teoretyczne we współczesnej filozofii politycznej liberalizmu* [Theoretical models in contemporary political philosophy of liberalism] (2009).

Currently he deals with neurocognitive issues, focusing on neuroaesthetics and social neurocognitive sciences.

Most recently, he was co-editor of a book *Neuroestetyka muzyki* [Neuroaesthetics of Music] (2013).

[source: P. Przybysz's archive]



### **Howard Gardner**

He is the John H. and Elisabeth A. Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He also holds positions as Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Harvard University and Senior Director of Harvard Project Zero. Among numerous honors, Gardner received a MacArthur Prize Fellowship in 1981. He has received honorary degrees from twenty-nine colleges and universities, including institutions in Bulgaria, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, South Korea and Spain. In 2005 and again in 2008, he was selected by *Foreign Policy* and *Prospect* magazines as one of the 100 most influential public intellectuals in the world. Most

recently, Gardner received the 2011 Prince of Asturias Award for Social Sciences. The author of twenty-eight books translated into thirty-two languages, and several hundred articles, Gardner is best known in educational circles for his theory of multiple intelligences, a critique of the notion that there exists but a single human intelligence that can be adequately assessed by standard psychometric instruments.

During the past two decades, Gardner and colleagues at Project Zero have been involved in the design of performance-based assessments; education for understanding; the use of multiple intelligences to achieve more personalized curriculum, instruction, and pedagogy; and the quality of interdisciplinary efforts in education. Since the middle 1990s, in collaboration with psychologists Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and William Damon, Gardner has directed the GoodWork Project—a study of work that is excellent, engaging, and ethical. More recently, with long time Project Zero colleagues Lynn Barndsen and Wendy Fischman, he has conducted reflection sessions designed to enhance the understanding and incidence of good work among young people. With Carrie James and other colleagues at Project Zero, he is also investigating the nature of trust in contemporary society and ethical dimensions entailed in the use of the new digital media. Among new research undertakings are a study of effective collaboration among non-profit institutions in education and a study of conceptions of quality, nationally and internationally, in the contemporary era. His latest book, *Truth, Beauty, and Goodness Reframed*, was published in the spring of 2011.

[source: H. Gardner's archive]



### **Timothy D. Taylor**

He is a Professor in the Departments of Ethnomusicology and Musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

He has published extensively on a range of subjects, from classical to popular music, and a variety of theoretical issues. He is the author of *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (Routledge, 1997), *Strange*

*Sounds: Music, Technology and Culture* (Routledge, 2001), *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Duke, 2007), and *The Sounds of Capitalism: Advertising, Music, and the Conquest of Culture* (Chicago, 2012), which won the 2012 John C. Cawelti Award from the Popular Culture Association/American Culture.

His collection, *Music, Sound, and Technology in America: A Documentary History of Early Phonograph, Cinema, and Radio*, co-edited with Mark Katz and Tony Grajeda (Duke, 2012), was awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Association for Recorded Sound Collections Awards for Excellence for Historical Recorded Sound Research in General Topics. His article "The Commodification of Music at the Dawn of the Era of Mechanical Music," published in *Ethnomusicology* in 2007, was awarded the Jaap Kunst Prize by the Society for Ethnomusicology. His work has been supported by a junior fellowship and the Charles A. Ryskamp Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, and the National Humanities Center.

He is currently completing a book about music in today's capitalism, to be published by the University of Chicago Press.

He is an avid performer of Irish traditional music on the flute and can be heard regularly at sessions in southern California.

[source: T.D. Taylor's archive]



### **Richard Taruskin**

He is Professor of Musicology at the University of California, Berkeley.

A musicologist, music historian, critic. His research interests are: Theory of Performance, Russian music, Twentieth-century music, nationalism, theory of modernism, analysis.

Books:

*Oxford History of Western Music*, 6 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents* (with Piero Weiss), second (expanded) edition (Belmont, CA: Thomson-Schirmer, 2007); *The Danger of Music, and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008); *On Russian Music* (University of California Press, 2008).

Articles and Reviews:

“A Suggestive Detail in Weber’s Freischütz,” in L. Vikarius and V. Lampert, ed., *Essays in Honor of László Somfai: Studies in the Sources and the Interpretation of Music* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005), pp. 269-72; “Speed Bumps” (Review of *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. J. Samson [2001], and *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music*, ed. N. Cook and A. Pople [2004]), *Nineteenth-Century Music*, XXIX (2005-6), 185-207; “The Birth of Contemporary Russia out of the Spirit of Russian Music,” *Muzikologija* (Journal of the Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Belgrade), no. 6 (2006), pp. 63-76; “Is There a Baby in the Bathwater?” [on aesthetic autonomy], *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, LXIII (2006), 163-85, 309-27; Review of *Roots of the Classical: The Popular Origins of Western Music* by Peter van der Merwe, *Music & Letters*, LXXXVIII (2007), 134-39.

Others:

Greenberg Prize, 1978; Alfred Einstein Award, 1980; Dent Medal, 1987; Kinkeldey Prize 1997.

Member American Philosophical Society.

[source: <http://music.berkeley.edu>]



### **Róża Puzynowska**

She is a painter and costume designer, representing art filled with symbolism and hyper-realism giving us an inviting flirtatious wink. Diplomant of the International School of Costume and Fashion Design (Warsaw). Graduated in 2012 from Costume Design under supervision of costume designer Zofia de Ines; diploma: "Persona. Angels & Demons" awarded with distinction. Graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts (Warsaw). MA diploma 2009 in the field of Painting from the workshop of Professor Krzysztof Wachowiak; diploma cycle: "Stereotypes vs Identity" earned with the Rector's distinction. In 2007 she studied at the University College of Falmouth - BA Hons Fine Arts course (Cornwall, UK). Inter alia she took part in: International Audio-Visual Workshops "Moving Districts Budapest" (EUShorts festival, Budapest), costume realizations for music videos and theatrical performances, numerous exhibitions of paintings, interviews and discussions about art. From 2010 she co-operates with costume realizations by working on commission for Costume Painting Department in the Grand Theatre National Opera (Warsaw). In 2012 she joint the team of lecturers of the International School of Costume and Fashion Design and became an assistant to one of the most interesting Polish fashion designers – Mariusz Przybylski. Her paintings can be found in private collections, mainly in Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States. She realised an art project based on Nijinsky's "The Rite of Spring" [more – in the interview].

[source: <https://rozaartist.see.me> and R.Puzynowska's archive]



