

**PROGRAM PAGES FOR  
CONCERT NIGHT  
ON  
DISCOVER CLASSICAL  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2024, 8-10PM**

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75th ANNIVERSARY  
"PORTRAITS in SOUND"  
2007-2008 SEASON

# Program Book

NORMAN MOSES  
DIANE PENNING  
FEBRUARY 22/23

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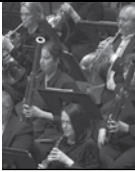
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DAYTON  
PHILHARMONIC

Neal Gittleman, Music Director

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# DAYTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

2007–2008 “Portraits in Sound” – 75th Anniversary Season

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Lucas Alemán,\*  
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J. Ralph Corbett Chair  
Aurelian Oprea,  
*Acting Concertmaster*  
Dona Nouné-Wiedmann,  
*Acting Associate*  
*Concertmaster*  
Huffy Foundation  
Chair  
Izumi Lund,\*  
*Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*  
Sherman Standard  
Register Foundation  
Chair  
Calvin Lewis,  
*Acting Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*  
Elizabeth Hofeldt\*  
William Manley  
Karlon Taylor  
Mikhail Baranovsky  
Louis Proske  
Nancy Mullins\*  
Barry Berndt  
Philip Enzweiler  
Xiao Fu\*  
Janet George

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Kirstin Greenlaw,  
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Jesse Philips Chair  
Myroslava Bartels,  
*Assistant Principal*  
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Gloria Fiore  
Marcel Lund\*  
Kara Lardinois  
Tom Fetherston  
Lynn Rohr  
Yoshiko Kunimitsu  
William Slusser  
Yen-Ting Wu

## Violas

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Chair  
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*Assistant Principal*  
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Grace Counts Finch  
Chair  
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Dale Kim  
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*Acting Principal*  
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*Acting Assistant*  
*Principal*  
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Nan Watson  
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Nadine Monchecourt  
Linda Katz,  
*Principal Emeritus*

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*Principal*  
Dayton Philharmonic  
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Memorial Chair  
Jon Pascolini,  
*Assistant Principal*

Donald Compton  
Stephen Ullery  
Christopher Roberts  
James Faulkner  
Bleda Elibal  
Nick Greenberg  
Maurice Todd

## Flutes

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*Principal*  
Dayton Philharmonic  
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Jennifer Northcut  
Janet van Graas

## Piccolo

Janet van Graas

## Oboes

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Bieser Chair  
Roger Miller  
Robyn Dixon Costa

## English Horn

Robyn Dixon Costa  
J. Colby and Nancy  
Hastings King Chair

## Clarinets

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*Principal*  
Rhea Beerman Peal  
Chair  
Robert Gray  
Anthony Costa

## Bass Clarinet

Anthony Costa

## Bassoons

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*Principal*  
Robert and Elaine  
Stein Chair

Kristen Canova  
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## Contrabassoon

Bonnie Sherman

## French Horns

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Memorial Chair  
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Todd Fitter  
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Ashley Hall

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*Principal*  
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Memorial Chair  
Richard Bege

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Chad Arnow

## Tuba

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and Natalie Denka  
Chair

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*Principal*  
Rosenthal Family  
Chair in Memory of  
Miriam Rosenthal

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*Principal*  
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Chair  
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Richard A. and  
Mary T. Whitney  
Chair  
Gerald Noble

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*Principal*  
Demirjian Family  
Chair

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*Acting Principal*

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*Music Director*

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*Personnel Manager*

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*Orchestra Librarian*

Hank Dahلمان,  
*Chorus Director*

Patrick Reynolds,  
*Assistant Conductor*

Karen Young,  
*Junior String*  
*Orchestra Director*

\*Leave of Absence

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Clarence Rice—Assistant Carpenter  
Steve Williams—Master Electrician  
Keith Thomas—Audio Engineer  
Doug Atkins—Piano Technician  
Lloyd Bryant—Recording Engineer/Broadcast Host



## NEAL'S NOTES

"Listening with Your Eyes"

**M**y back is to you most of the time, but I know your secret... Sometimes you close your eyes during the music! How do I know? Because I do, too, sometimes, when I'm in the audience. (Lisa thinks I'm snoozing, but I swear, I'm listening intently!) But when we perform Stravinsky's *Petrushka* ballet music in February, you want to be sure to keep those peepers open if you don't want to miss out on the fun.

Almost 20 years ago I was talking to an Artist Manager—someone who handles the careers of conductors and soloists. He was pitching me one of his artists, a famous television and radio announcer who had developed a pretty cool shtick: he had written narrations to some of the great tone-poems—like Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Don Quixote*—and would appear as a soloist with orchestras telling the story while the orchestra played the music. I thought it was a brilliant idea—a sure-fire way to help the audience "get it." The only problem, of course, was the intrusion of a voice on the musical experience. It's hard to listen to the beautiful clarinet solo over a narrator's voice—especially a well-known "announcerly" baritone. I never hired the manager's client. But I loved the idea...

A few years later, the Milwaukee Symphony was scheduled to perform *Don Quixote* on a classical subscription program. As it happened, the subscription concerts were just before one of the MSO's educational concerts for high school students. Here was the perfect opportunity to play a great, exciting piece of music that should really appeal to high school kids and their teachers. It was already rehearsed and ready to go. All we needed was a way to get the idea of the music across. And so, MusicTitles were born. The idea of MusicTitles was a simple one:

it's the narrator idea without the narrator. Replace voice-over narration with silent-movie-style titles projected on a screen above the orchestra giving a blow-by-blow description of what's happening in the music. There'd be no doubt when Don Quixote was charging at windmills and when he was attacking flocks of sheep. There'd be no confusing Sancho Panza's music with Dulcinea's. There'd be no way to think the Don was floating on a river when in fact he was flying through the air.

Working with a computer graphics specialist who designed corporate slide presentations, I developed a 45-slide scheme telling the story of Strauss' *Don Quixote*. Then I prepared a score specially marked-up with slide cues to so the right slide was onscreen at the right time. Thanks to the MusicTitles, the MSO's *Don Quixote* High School Concert was a big success.

In subsequent years, MusicTitles have proven to be a powerful tool for enhancing audiences' concert experience. And not just student audiences! I've created MusicTitles for Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*, Act I of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* ballet, Bartok's *Miraculous Mandarin*, Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*, and many other programmatic and dramatic works, including Stravinsky's *Petrushka*.

For the DPO's last performance of *Petrushka*—in October 1995—the MusicTitles were very well received. Lots of folks said they were surprised at how much they had liked the music—modern though it was—because they understood what was going on.

For this season's performances, I've revised the titles, reformatting them for an opera-style SuperTitles screen rather than a full-size screen. And thanks to a dozen

years of technological innovation, they're no longer slides: they're images projected directly from a PowerPoint presentation. But the idea behind the MusicTitles remains unchanged, as does their power to connect listeners with the music.

One of my delights in preparing the *Petrushka* titles is how it reaffirms the genius of Stravinsky's score. I confess that in some other MusicTitles presentations I've let the storyteller in me run a little wild, putting in things that were more from my own imagination rather than the composer's. But between the stage instructions printed in the score, the detailed scenario in George Balanchine's *101 Stories of the Great Ballets*, and the graphic brilliance of Stravinsky's writing, I didn't have to make anything up this time. The story you'll read on the screen is the story Stravinsky told and the story you'll hear the orchestra play—with a little bit of your own imagination added, too.

There's only one small technical detail that we haven't yet solved. The microphone cables that Lloyd Bryant uses to make our radio broadcast recordings cast wonderful shadows on the SuperTitles screen. We could avoid the shadows by using rear-projection from an onstage projector, but then you'd hear the projector's fan noise, magnificently amplified by the Schuster Center's acoustical shell. Or Lloyd could change his microphone placements, but that would compromise the high quality of our Dayton Public Radio rebroadcasts. So please forgive the mic cables' shadows.

Or maybe you could think of them as *Petrushka's* puppet strings!

*"Please Note: Performance times for the Young People's Concerts on February 20 and May 13 have been changed to 9:30am and 11:10am (see Education Schedule on page 18 of this program book)."*



These enterprising high school students join us for select concerts throughout the season to display their musical skills and to enjoy the DPO performances afterwards. Here, at the Dayton Philharmonic, we are proud of these talented teens and their teachers. Pre-concert performances are 7pm in the Wintergarden. Dates at right. Come early!

2007-2008 "Portraits in Sound" Season  
**STARS of TOMORROW SCHEDULE**

November 10, 2007 (Romantic Legends)  
Stivers School for the Arts Handbell Choir  
HENRIETTA CISSY MATTHEWS, DIRECTOR

November 30, 2007 (Myth and Majesty)  
Stebbins High School Symphonic Choir  
CHRISTINA SMITH, DIRECTOR

December 1, 2007 (Myth and Majesty)  
West Carrollton High School Varsity Choir  
BRIAN COLEMAN, DIRECTOR

February 14, 2008 (A Touch of Fantasy)  
Beavercreek High School Acapella Choir  
& Friends Show Choir  
SHARON BUSCH, DIRECTOR

March 7, 2008 (Compass Points)  
Stivers School for the Arts Philharmonic Orchestra  
MICHAEL MANGAN, DIRECTOR

March 8, 2008 (Compass Points)  
Oakwood High School Chamber Orchestra  
NAN WATSON, DIRECTOR

April 11, 2008 (Life's Treasures)  
Vandalia Butler High School Choir  
KEVIN WILSON, DIRECTOR

April 12, 2008 (Life's Treasures)  
Oakwood High School Concert Band  
RON NELSON, DIRECTOR

# CLASSICAL CONCERT

Presented by Kettering Health Network & Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

## Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra

Neal Gittleman, Music Director

Thursday  
Feb. 14  
2008

8:00 PM  
Schuster Center

### A Touch of Fantasy

Lise de la Salle, piano

*Benjamin and Marian Schuster Endowed Young Classical Artist*

**Saturday Night's Sponsor: Victory Wholesale Group**

*The DPO would like to recognize the Education Underwriters at Saturday night's performance.*

Saturday  
Feb. 16  
2008

8:00 PM  
Schuster Center

**Ohio Arts Council**  
A STATE AGENCY  
THAT SUPPORTS PUBLIC  
PROGRAMS IN THE ARTS

Maurice Ravel  
(1875–1937)

- Ma Mère L'oye (Mother Goose Suite)*
- I. Pavane de la Belle au Bois dormant  
Lent
  - II. Petit Poucet  
Très modéré
  - III. Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes  
Mouv't de Marche
  - IV. Les entretiens de la Belle et da la Bévé  
Mouv't de Valse modéré  
Animez peu à peu
  - V. Le jardin féérique  
Lent et grave

Camille Saint-Saëns  
(1835–1921)

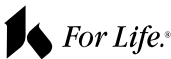
- Concerto No. 2 in G Minor for Piano and  
Orchestra, Op. 22
- Andante sostenuto
  - Allegro scherzo
  - Presto
- Lise de la Salle, piano**

- INTERMISSION -

Igor Stravinsky  
(1882–1971)

*Petrushka*

Classical Series Presented By



**Kettering Health Network<sup>SM</sup>**

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Concert Broadcast on  
Saturday, May 24, 2008,  
at 10 a.m.



# MAURICE RAVEL

## Biography

**M**aurice Ravel (1875–1937) was a man of contradictions. He wrote music that evoked foreign countries before visiting them instead of after, he was an undistinguished conservatory student despite the fact that he was a perfectionist and meticulous musical craftsman, and above all else, he composed extraordinarily sensuous music despite the fact that he was a cold, calculating person who had very few close emotional attachments. Perfectionism pervaded all aspects of his life, including his appearance—he was easily the best-dressed composer of all time. We often think of Ravel and Debussy as a pair, especially as Impressionist composers, but Ravel has more in common with his friend Stravinsky. Both composers had an Apollonian aesthetic and obsession with minute details. As a result, Ravel gave us only a small body of works, but some are justifiably regarded as masterpieces.

Ravel's career focused on composition. He did not have the need or desire to teach, perform, or conduct. Early success earned him a place among the Parisian intellectual and artistic elite. He was turned down for several major prizes, including the *Prix di Rome*, but this was due in part to his stubborn insistence on writing music in his own unique style that often violated the rather formal rules followed by the conservative leaders of musical institutions. Critics often reacted to the lack of emotion in Ravel's work, ironically pointing to the lack of style but abundance of musical substance. Today he is considered one of the great masters of orchestration and his music is widely studied and admired for its remarkable craft and precision. Ravel suffered from poor health, which tragically interfered with his ability to compose in the last years of his life. He died a frustrated man, physically unable to write down the music that still flowed through his brain and soul.

## *Mother Goose Suite*

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 French horns, timpani, percussion, harp, celesta, strings.

The DPO last performed this piece on Thursday, January 23, 1992 with Isaiah Jackson conducting.

**R**avel adored children. When he was around them, the reserve and formality of his public persona would melt away and he would reveal the true warmth of his personality. He was quite fond of Jean and Mimie, the children of artist Cyprian Godebski. When they began formal piano study, Ravel decided to compose a four-hand piece with their limited range and technique in mind. He created a suite based on the children's favorite fairy tales. Many commentators consider it his most expressive work. It was too difficult for the Godebski children, so Jeanne Leleu and Genevieve Durony, ages six and seven, premiered the work in April 1910. Ravel orchestrated it later that year and added several new numbers to make it a ballet in 1911.

The movements are perfectly shaped, unpretentious miniatures that have an innocent clarity. The first is a mere twenty measures but it contains a beautiful progression of melodies. The second movement depicts the story of Tom Thumb, lost in the forest, unable to find his way since the birds have devoured his breadcrumb trail. Ravel musically depicts Tom as he bumbles, lost and confused, and we hear the birds in the violins. Ravel shows his fascination with oriental exoticism in the third movement, writing in the score that the empress “undresses herself and gets into her bath. Soon pagodas and pagodines begin to sing and play instruments. Some have theorbos made of walnut shells, others have viols made of almond shells, for the instruments had to be proportioned to their height.” Ravel deftly depicts this with xylophone, woodblock, and glockenspiel. The fourth movement is a conversation between beauty and the beast represented by a clarinet melody for beauty and a grumbling melody in the contrabassoon for the beast. Ravel ends the suite with a soaring, beautiful melody developed through the last movement.

—Christopher Chaffee



# CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

## Biography

To say that Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) was a child prodigy is an understatement. Like Mozart in the previous century, his extraordinary gifts were clear from an early age. His first composition, which is now on display at the Paris Conservatory, came at age three. His professional piano debut, where he played two difficult works from memory, then offered to play any Beethoven sonata by memory as an encore, was at age ten. We may see this as the limited gifts of a savant—he had a photographic memory and perfect pitch—but his intelligence was manifest in more than music. By age seven, he read Latin, studied philosophy, and possessed an insatiable curiosity for the natural sciences. He used the profits from his first composition sale to purchase a telescope and became an elected member of the Astronomical Society of France. In addition to his prolific composition career, he also published two volumes of poetry, plays, and a philosophical tract.

Saint-Saëns personal life was rife with tragedy. His father died the year he was born and he was understandably attached to his mother. A series of childhood illnesses further cemented this bond. At the age of forty, he entered into a disastrous marriage with a nineteen year old, much to his mother's chagrin. They had two sons who died tragic deaths; one from illness in infancy, the other fell from a fourth story window when he was two and a half. While on holiday in 1881, Saint-Saëns simply walked away from his wife and never saw her again. For the rest of his life he lavished attention on his dogs and spent his abundant paternal energy on his students.

Early in his life, Saint-Saëns was a proponent of the newer tendencies in French music. He was also an advocate for the music of Wagner, Mozart, and Liszt through both performances and articles published in various music journals. His sarcasm and combative tone often created conflict with other composers and intellectuals. In his later years, Saint-Saëns allied himself with conservatives who were opposed to Debussy and other progressive French elements. The

progressives fought back, calling Saint-Saëns a composer of “bad music well written” and the enemy of progress. This backlash did not prevent several of his works, including the Piano Concerto in G Minor, from becoming some of the most beloved in the modern concert tradition.

## Concerto No. 2 in G Minor for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 22

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 French horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings.

The DPO last performed this piece on Wednesday, September 21, 1994 with Gisèle Ben-Dor conducting.

Saint-Saëns was friends with several other leading composers throughout his long life, from Rossini and Berlioz to Stravinsky and Ravel. The second piano concerto stems from his friendship with Russian pianist-conductor-composer Anton Rubenstein. After hearing a concert together at the *Salle Pleyel* in Paris, Rubenstein decided he needed to conduct an orchestra in that city. They inquired and learned that the *Salle Pleyel* would be available in three weeks. Saint-Saëns offered to compose a concerto in that short time. He completed the work in just seventeen days, and served as the pianist for the somewhat shaky premier. As he described it, “except for the scherzo...it did not go well.” Nevertheless, Rubenstein subsequently adopted the piece as a staple in his repertoire, calling it a “first rate warhorse.”

As we might expect from a collaboration of two legendary pianists, the concerto is a virtuoso showpiece. The first movement opens with a dramatic cadenza, and continues with fiendishly difficult passages. The Scherzo is equally dazzling, but lighthearted enough that it became a favorite accompaniment for comedies in the era of silent films. The last movement shows us just how skilled the pianist friends must have been.

—Christopher Chaffee





# IGOR STRAVINSKY

## Biography

Igor Stravinsky's (1882–1971) first three ballets, *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911), and *The Rite of Spring* (1913) announced the arrival of modern music with a resounding crash. Audiences were stunned, fascinated, and in some cases, frightened by the driving rhythms, discordant dissonances, and exotic (to those outside of Russia) folk melodies found in each ballet. Stravinsky was an overnight sensation who quickly became the leading figure of modern music, a position he held for the next six decades. As many scholars argue, he did not “invent” what we call modern music; he simply dominated every new trend with superior skills. Not all of his masterpieces are widely performed today. Music he composed after the spectacular ballets does not garner as much attention, despite extensive performances and critical acclaim during his lifetime. After the ballets, Stravinsky turned to a more ordered, austere composition style. He experimented with various “isms,” including neo-classicism and serialism, but adamantly refused to identify his music with labels, dismissing them as meaning “absolutely nothing.”

As early as 1921, he espoused an Apollonian, thoroughly intellectual (and somewhat elitist!) attitude, writing about his music. “It is futile to look in it for passionate impulse or dynamic brilliance. The music is not meant to please an audience, nor to arouse its passions. Nevertheless, I had hopes that it would appeal to some of those persons in whom a purely musical receptivity outweighed the desire to satisfy their sentimental cravings.” We are still debating the merit of this attitude and the accessibility of some of his later music. This prickly aesthetic stance sometimes strained his relationships with other musicians and artists, and was part of the reason his attempt to write for Hollywood proved embarrassingly unsuccessful. Stravinsky remains a Promethean idol for some, a cold, difficult person for others, but is always the object of considerable respect.

Stravinsky's father was a leading singer in the St. Petersburg Opera. His exposure to music was nearly constant: listening to his father practice, attending concerts, and astutely

absorbing the vibrant music of the Russian peasants wherever his landed, upper middle class family traveled. At his father's urging he studied law, but music was a distraction and he spent more energy preparing for private composition lessons with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov than he did on his studies. When his father passed away, Igor dropped out of school and devoted himself to composing. Rimsky-Korsakov became a second father and his five years of private study with the Russian master constitutes the only formal musical training he ever received.

Stravinsky was truly a world citizen—widely traveled, capable of conversing in several languages, recognized on every continent—but he remained loyal to his Russian roots even when he lived in France, Italy, Switzerland, and finally in the United States. Friends of the family observed that Russian customs and language remained dear to him despite his decades of nomadic living. World events chased him from one place to another. During and after the Russian revolution he took up residence in Switzerland and France. Just before the outbreak of World War II, he was invited to lecture at Harvard University and once he arrived in the USA, he stayed until his death. Americans embraced him as a cultural icon as they had since his first trip here in 1925 when he conducted several different orchestras, including a well-documented appearance in Cincinnati. He is buried in Italy, near the grave of Diaghilev, the impresario who commissioned the early Ballets and introduced Stravinsky to the world.

—Christopher Chaffee

## *Petrushka*

**Instrumentation:** 4 flutes, 4 oboes, 4 clarinets, 4 bassoons, 4 French horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, celesta 4-hands, pianoforte, strings.

The DPO last performed this piece on Wednesday, October 11, 1995 with Neal Gittleman conducting.

After the phenomenal success of *The Firebird*, impresario Serge Diaghilev immediately asked Stravinsky to compose another ballet score. Stravinsky

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shared his nascent idea for a ballet that depicts pagan rites in prehistoric Russia, which would later become *The Rite of Spring*, and Diaghilev enthusiastically agreed. Stravinsky had other plans. He had been thinking about an orchestral work with a prominent piano part and he soon devoted his attention to this project instead of *The Rite*. An image haunted him. As he wrote in his *Autobiography*, “In composing the music, I had in mind a distinct 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 terrific noise which reaches its climax and ends in the sorrowful and querulous collapse of the poor puppet.”

When Diaghilev arrived in Switzerland to visit Stravinsky and check on the progress of *The Rite* he was astonished to learn that Stravinsky had composed an entirely different piece. Stravinsky played portions of the score and outlined the scenario. Diaghilev’s skepticism quickly turned to enthusiasm. He assembled famous artists to produce the ballet. Alexandre Benois designed the scenery, the elaborate choreography was by Michael Fokine, and Pierre Monteux conducted. The incomparable Nijinsky played the title role of the puppet. The Paris premier was a triumph and a continental tour by the Ballet Russes quickly followed. Reception was not always favorable. It is hard to imagine today that *Petrushka* was once considered shockingly dissonant. Among other daring features, Stravinsky employed *polytonality*, meaning the simultaneous occurrence of two distinct keys, a technique used extensively in subsequent modern music. Stravinsky revised the score in 1947 but today’s performance is a restored version of the 1911 score with editing by Neal Gittleman.

The story of *Petrushka* resonates on many levels. Petrushka is a tragic figure, the Russian counterpart to Punch, Pierrot, or Harlequin, the “immortal and unhappy hero

of every fair in all countries,” as Stravinsky described him. The ballet falls into four sections played without pause. In brief, this is the scenario:

Scene I: An 1830s Shrovetide fair in St. Petersburg. There is much celebration. The opening flute theme represents the carnival spirit. Showmen perform, dance, and add to the revelry. Suddenly a Magician appears with three puppets—Petrushka, the Ballerina, and the Blackamoor. He charms them to life with his magical flute solo, and they begin to dance.

Scene II: Petrushka’s cell. The magician has endowed Petrushka with human feelings, but Petrushka is unhappy with his appearance and thinks of himself as an outsider. He decides to fall in love with the Ballerina, and pays her a visit. She rejects his advances, leaving him despondent and angry with the magician.

Scene III: The Blackamoor’s Cell. Despite the fact that he is slow-witted and arrogant, the Blackamoor (a formulaic representation of the exotic “other” with dangerous social implications that we do not often consider, even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!) is dressed in flowing, unusual attire and uses his charms to seduce the Ballerina. Petrushka storms in and interrupts in a jealous rage.

Scene IV: The Fair has peaked—lots of dancing and celebrations, stock characters appearing (trained bears and the like), even offstage fireworks. Suddenly the three puppets burst onto the scene—the Blackamoor is chasing Petrushka with his sword, while the Ballerina tries to restrain him. The Blackamoor beheads Petrushka and he and the Ballerina disappear, leaving the crowd to gasp at the brutal scene. The Magician re-appears and assures the crowd that it was all magic, and Petrushka was merely wood and sawdust. The crowd disperses, leaving the Magician to contemplate what happened. As he drags the headless puppet off the stage, Petrushka’s ghost appears on the roof of the theater, jeering and mocking everyone.

—Christopher Chaffee



# LISE de la SALLE

## Biography

**B**orn in 1988, Lise de la Salle is a native of the northern French town of Cherbourg. Her family background involves both painting and vocal music (her mother sings in choirs). Lise declared her passion for the piano at the age of four. She played her first concerto, Beethoven's No. 2 (learned in just a few days in Avignon at the age of thirteen), bravely standing in for another pianist with dazzling results.

After a number of first prizes elsewhere, her Special Prize at the 2004 Young Concert Artists International Auditions

in New York led to a series of concert appearances in key American musical centers. In the same year, she made debuts in Japan and at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival. She has also recently been a much-fêted guest at the French summer Mecca for pianists, the Festival of La Roque d'Anthéron in Provence. She is a true musician with a precocious mastery of balance.

Lise de la Salle is the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Endowed Young Classical Artist.

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## Dayton Daily News Classical Connections No. 3

Neal Gittleman, conductor / presenter

Stravinsky: Scherzo à la russe  
Stravinsky: Petrushka (1911 Version)

Friday, February 15, 2008

# Igor Stravinsky



**1881** June 17, born in Orienbaum, Russia to operatic bass Fyodor Stravinsky and Anna Kholodovskaya, an amateur singer and flutist.

**1891** Starts piano lessons.

**1898** First composition, Tarantella for Piano.

**1902** Begins composition studies with Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

**1909** Brief orchestral showpiece *Fireworks* is premiered. Ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev hears it and commissions Stravinsky to write orchestral arrangements for his *Ballets Russes* troupe.

**1910** Composes his first full-length ballet, *The Firebird*, for Diaghilev. Plans a follow-up ballet — *The Rite of Spring* — based on prehistoric pagan rituals. First, begins work on a short piece for

solo piano and orchestra. This is the genesis of an entirely new ballet: *Petrushka*.

**1911** *Petrushka* premieres in Paris to great acclaim. Begins to compose *The Rite of Spring*.

**1913** Historic, riot-causing premiere of *The Rite of Spring*.

**1920** The ballet *Pulcinella* launches a new musical style — Neo-Classicism — which dominates Stravinsky's output for the next 30 years.

**1940** Moves to the United States to escape war in Europe, eventually settling in Hollywood where his neighbors include George Gershwin, Arnold Schoenberg, Charlie Chaplin, and Harpo Marx.

**1944** Composes *Scherzo à la russe* for Paul Whiteman's big band, re-arranged for symphony orchestra a year later.

**1947** Re-works the score to *Petrushka* for a smaller, more-practical, less-expensive-to-assemble orchestra.

**1954** Begins to experiment with Schoenberg's "12-tone" composition techniques.

**1966** *The Owl and the Pussycat*, a whimsical three-minute 12-tone song for soprano and piano, is his final work.

**1971** April 6, dies of heart failure in New York City.

## Master Puppeteer



In his 1973 Norton Lectures at Harvard, Leonard Bernstein used Igor Stravinsky as one of the tentpoles of his analysis of the unanswerable question, "Whither music in the 20th century?" Bernstein portrayed the 20th century as a battle between Arnold Schoenberg — out to destroy the key-based language of traditional Western music — and Stravinsky — out to preserve tradition by keeping it fresh and modern.

That's a gross simplification (both of Bernstein's position and music history), but it's essentially true.

Schoenberg was interested in freeing musical expression from the conventions of the past. And Stravinsky was interested in re-interpreting and re-inventing the musical language of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky.

But Stravinsky was no protector of tradition. He had no interest in writing music that sounded like that of earlier eras. He was a modernist — out to create a new musical world. To a large extent, that world began with his 1911 ballet score, *Petrushka*.

Before *Petrushka*, Stravinsky's music owed a debt to his mentor Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov. While no one would confuse Stravinsky's *Fireworks* with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherezade*, the influence of late 19th century Russian exoticism is everywhere in Stravinsky's music up to and including *The Firebird*. It's not quite modern music yet. More like old music trying on some mod-ish clothes.

Perhaps Mark Twain was right, and clothes do make the man. Less than a year after finishing *Firebird*, *Petrushka* revealed Stravinsky was a full-fledged modern composer using all kinds of new techniques to tell a kaleidoscopic story of love, jealousy, betrayal, and murder set in a St. Petersburg puppet show. There were many twists and turns still to come in Stravinsky's musical journey, but they all trace back to *Petrushka*. Program and liner notes will tell you that *The Rite of Spring* was Stravinsky's revolutionary ballet. Wild though it is, however, *The Rite of Spring* is straightforward compared with the complexity, intricacy, innovation, and novelty of *Petrushka*.

February's opening piece, the *Scherzo à la russe*, is a piece in which Stravinsky looks back at *Petrushka* from afar. From the first time he heard it, Stravinsky was taken with the sound of American jazz, and its echoes began to appear in his music as early as the 1917 chamber piece *Rag-Time*. But when he was asked in 1944 to write something for Paul Whiteman's band to play on the Blue Network radio program, instead of writing something jazzy, Stravinsky returned to the accordion-like sonorities that infused the crowd scenes of *Petrushka*.

Stravinsky never did the expected. He always stayed a step ahead of people's expectations. Stravinsky's listeners and performers are just like *Petrushka*: puppets under the control of a master puppeteer.

(Note: In reading about this Stravinsky ballet, you'll see many different spellings: *Petrushka*, *Pétrushka*, *Petrouchka*, *Pétrouchka*. It all depends on whether one is starting from the Russian or French title, and how the source language is translated into English. All four of

those variants are "correct". But it does make things tricky if you're searching a library or online catalogue!)

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Pierre Monteux / RCA

## A Musical Chameleon



Our culture prizes consistency. We want our Pizza Lab 11-inch pepperoni pizza to taste just like every other Pizza Lab medium pepperoni. We want our politicians to have predictable, contradiction-free positions on all subjects. We want to walk in to the seven o'clock show of *Ocean's 27* and know it'll be just like the last 15 films of the series.

No wonder concert audiences don't quite know what to do with Igor Stravinsky. Hear his *Firebird Suite*, and you'll imagine he's a late-19th century romantic à la Rimsky-Korsakov. Hear *The Rite of Spring*, and you'll believe he's a mad Russian genius using the orchestra like a giant punk band. Hear his *Pulcinella Suite*, and you'll think he's a be-wigged (and slightly wiggy) 18th century composer. Hear his *Canticum Sacrum*, and you'll be convinced he's a medieval monk at the beginning and a Schoenberg disciple at the end.

You simply never know with Stravinsky. He was a musical chameleon — constantly changing his style, but always true to himself.

There were at least four different Igor Stravinskys, each with a characteristic musical style and approach. And each of them was wonderful.

### - Stravinsky 1.0 -

#### The Russian Impressionist

The two greatest musical influences on the young Stravinsky were Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Claude Debussy. Rimsky-Korsakov taught composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatory from 1871 to 1905, training an entire generation of Russian composers. Stravinsky became Rimsky's student in 1902, and continued to work with him even after he was fired from the Conservatory on suspicion (unfounded) of revolutionary leanings.



Rimsky-Korsakov, master teacher

Rimsky-Korsakov is probably best known to modern audiences from *Scheherezade*, an 1888 symphonic suite loosely based on the *Tales of a Thousand and One Nights*. It's a fabulous piece (subject of a January 2003 Classical Connections program) full of gorgeous melodies, infectious rhythms, and sumptuous, glittering orchestration. It's some of the most vivid, compelling, and entertaining music ever written — one of those

rare pieces that *everyone* likes.

Rimsky-Korsakov taught his pupils by having them study the great Russian composers. Stravinsky learned Tchaikovsky's romantic lyricism, Glinka's use of Russian folk materials, and Rimsky-Korsakov's own passion for exoticism and gift for orchestration. But Rimsky did not believe in training composers to write old-fashioned music. He encouraged his students — Stravinsky included — to learn from the old models but write fresh, new music.

Stravinsky learned well.

Following his 1907 Symphony No. 1 in E-flat, a dutiful, traditional student piece, Stravinsky's earliest independent pieces — *Scherzo fantastique* and *Fireworks*, both completed in 1908 — show his assimilation of Rimsky-Korsakov's teaching. They are brilliant orchestral showpieces, bold but tuneful, with vivid, Rimsky-style orchestration.

His next composition, *The Firebird* (1909-1910), was his first collaboration with the Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev. The score is a blend of the early Rimsky-inspired music combined with a heavy dose of French impressionism *à la* Debussy.



Debussy and Stravinsky

Stravinsky had been exposed to Debussy's music during his student days and dabbled in pseudo-Debussy composition in some of his student pieces. *Firebird*, composed for the

*Ballets Russes'* 1910 Paris season, shows more explicit Debussy influence, particularly in its intricate, delicate musical textures and impressionistic effects.



Diaghilev, master impresario

*Firebird* was a tremendous success and established Stravinsky as the young composer to watch, the toast of the Paris arts world. It also marked the end of the "First Stravinsky", composer of lush, post-romantic music.

### - Stravinsky 2.0 - The Revolutionary

While working on *Firebird*, Stravinsky had a vision for a radical, new ballet: a group of tribal elders in ancient pagan Russia watching a young woman dance herself to death. This was the generating idea of *The Rite of Spring*, considered one of the turning points in music history. Between *The Firebird* and *The Rite of Spring* came *Petrushka*, which is, stylistically, a transitional work — call it "Stravinsky 1.5". (See "Three Ballets that Shook the World" on page 34.)

*The Rite of Spring* defined a new style for Stravinsky based on complex, ever-changing rhythms, harsh dissonance, and a machine-like brutality. It is one of those rare pieces that will always sound shocking, regardless of where or when it is played. Indeed, shock was what *The Rite of Spring* was all about: shocking events in the scenario, shocking actions in the

choreography, shocking sounds from the pit. It was the classic *épater les bourgeois* work of art. The bourgeois were suitably astonished, then oh-so-proud of themselves later for having survived.

Stravinsky quickly discovered that the problem with being an *enfant terrible* is living up to that reputation. How do you top the scandal and sensation of *The Rite of Spring*? Once you've stunned the world with the frightening sound of 100 blaring musicians in the pit, what can you do? Use 150 musicians to make even more noise?

Stravinsky realized that despite its influence and success, *The Rite of Spring* was really a dead end. The next Stravinsky-Diaghilev project, *The Nightingale* (1914), was smaller-scale — still dissonant, but less so, and nowhere near as confrontational as *The Rite*. His next theater works got even smaller: *Renard* (1916), scored for 15-piece orchestra and four singers; *The Wedding* (1917), for soloists, chorus and an orchestra of four pianos and percussion; and *The Soldier's Tale* (1918), for narrator and seven instruments.

### - Stravinsky 3.0 - The Neo-Classicist

From the very beginning, Stravinsky had been susceptible to outside influences. First Rimsky-Korsakov. Then Debussy. Then Japanese music for *The Nightingale*. Then jazz in *Rag-Time*, and *The Soldier's Tale*. In each case, Stravinsky studied a musical style then assimilated it into his own musical language.

A turning point came in 1919 when Diaghilev, anxious to work again with Stravinsky after several

years, proposed that Stravinsky orchestrate some music of the Italian composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) for a *Commedia-del-Arte*-inspired ballet called *Pulcinella*. Not satisfied with the idea of simply doing orchestrations, Stravinsky instead re-arranged, re-worked, and re-composed the Pergolesi material into something entirely new. It was Pergolesi's 18th century notes (some of them, at least) refracted through the prism of Igor Stravinsky's 20th century ear. It was fun, bracing, wonderful. And it defined a new style — Neo-Classicism — that became one of the dominant styles of mid-20th century music.

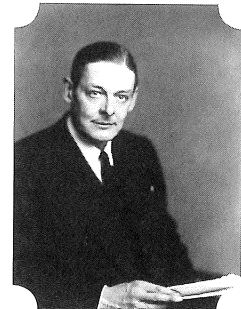


Pergolesi, ready to be plundered

For Stravinsky, the liberating thing about Neo-Classicism was that there was no end of possible source material. As a result, this became the longest, most fruitful period of Stravinsky's compositional career. It included *Cedipus Rex* (1927), a cantata with influence from Gluck and Verdi; *The Fairy's Kiss* (1928), a ballet based on discarded Tchaikovsky sketches; the *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto* (1938), a chamber orchestra work inspired by Bach and Mozart; *Ebony Concerto* (1945), a jazz-influenced piece for Benny Goodman's big band; *The Rake's Progress* (1951), an opera loosely inspired by Mozart's *Don Giovanni*; and many other pieces not patterned on specific pre-existing models,

including the majestic *Symphony of Psalms* (1930), generally considered to be the great masterpiece of Neo-Classicism.

In his Norton Lectures, Leonard Bernstein made a compelling analogy between Stravinsky's neo-classic music and T.S. Eliot's poetry, especially *The Waste Land* (1922). Eliot's poem borrowed extensively from multiple sources — the Bible, Hindu and Buddhist texts, Greek and Roman mythology, Grail legends, Shakespeare, Dante, St. Augustine, Wagner, and many others — woven together into a bewildering and emotionally shattering masterpiece. The borrowings were evident (Eliot even included footnotes in *The Waste Land* to illustrate his sources), but the result was pure, original Eliot.



T.S. Eliot, the Stravinsky of poetry

When Bernstein analyzed *Cedipus Rex* he heard Stravinsky acting just like Eliot, raiding Gluck, Mozart, Handel, Beethoven, even Verdi's *Aida*! But above all, he heard Stravinsky, filtering all this music of the past through his unerring, omnivorous ear.

Because Bernstein was interested in the links between music and language (see *Quadrophenia: The Four Lennies*, on page 9) Eliot was a natural choice for comparative analysis with Stravinsky. An equally apt choice — perhaps even a better choice given that they were close friends and

collaborators — would have been Pablo Picasso. The neo-classic Stravinsky did in music exactly what Picasso did in art: borrow, bend, and break traditional models to force his audience to experience the world in a new way.



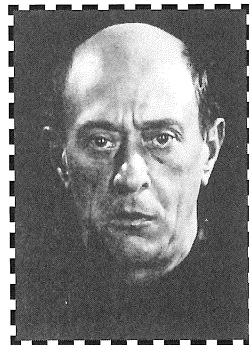
Stravinsky by Picasso, 1920

Be careful, though, not to dismiss Stravinsky's neo-classic borrowings as a lack of originality. As the great French pedagogue Nadia Boulanger, Stravinsky's good friend and confidante, used to say, "Stravinsky always sounded like Stravinsky." To borrow yet still sound like yourself is the hallmark of a truly original voice.

### - Stravinsky 4.0 - The Serialist

By the 1950s Igor Stravinsky knew that he was one of the protagonists in "the great struggle for 20th century music". In this world view, there were two camps of 20th century composers: the Schoenberg camp, who wrote atonal music; and the Stravinsky camp, who refused to abandon the traditional tonal language. Perhaps Stravinsky felt like rebelling against his reputation. Or perhaps he decided to try to beat Schoenberg at his own

game. Whatever his motivations, in his 1954 ballet score *Agon*, Stravinsky suddenly began to compose using Schoenberg's 12-tone system of atonality — or at least dabbling in it.

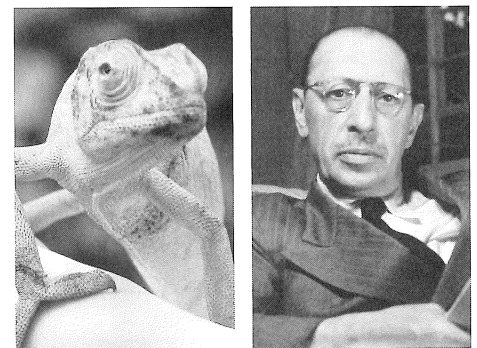


Schoenberg, guarding his turf

Stravinsky's 12-tone works include *Canticum Sacrum* (1956), a chorus and orchestra piece composed for St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice; *Threni* (1958), a setting of the Lamentations of Jeremiah; *Variations in Memory of Aldus Huxley* (1964); *Requiem Canticles* (1966); and Stravinsky's last piece, the sweet 1966 setting of "The Owl and the Pussycat" for soprano and piano. These works share a tendency toward sparse, dry sonorities and a brittle sound which, combined with extreme dissonance, complex rhythms, and jagged melodies, made them generally unpopular with audiences. But if Stravinsky's aim in this final stylistic change was to prove that he could compose in any style and still remain himself, he proved his point.

In a sense, Stravinsky 4.0 was a different facet of the Neo-Classic Stravinsky: Instead of filtering the music of Bach or Mozart or Verdi and turning it into Stravinsky, he was using his "arch-enemy" Schoenberg as his source material.

That's the tale of Igor Stravinsky, musical chameleon.



But in reality, he wasn't a chameleon at all. Chameleons change their color to match their environment. Stravinsky changed his color and, in doing so, changed his musical environment!

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## Three Ballets that Shook the World



The principal instrumental musical form of the Classical Era was the symphony, with Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as its greatest exemplars. In the Romantic Era, the symphony was largely supplanted by the tone-poem (a single-movement symphonic work with programmatic content, often linked directly to an actual poem), a form invented by Franz Liszt in 1848. With the advent of the modern era, both symphony and tone-poem were eclipsed as the cutting-edge musical form by the ballet score.

The history of ballet dates back to 17th century France and Italy, to Louis XIV's creation of the *Académie Royale de Danse* in 1671 and the danced interludes inserted between the acts of Italian operas. By the 19th



century, ballet was such an integral component of French opera that operas composed without ballets were not performed at the Paris Opera unless ballet music was added. The modern ballet tradition — theatrical dance performances independent of opera — traces its lineage directly to the Russian Imperial Ballet of the mid-19th century.



The Sun-King, ready to (regally) shake a leg

The three great early Stravinsky ballets — *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring* — are direct descendents of the three great Tchaikovsky Ballets — *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*. While Stravinsky did not actually pattern his ballets on Tchaikovsky, he knew the scores, knew the traditions, and therefore knew how to build on them to create a new ballet repertoire and new ballet traditions for the 20th century. When the commission for *The Firebird* came from Diaghilev in 1909, the 28-year-old Stravinsky was ready to go.

### The Firebird

Music composed 1909-1910. Scenario and choreography by Michel Fokine. Scenery and costumes by Léon Bakst and Alexandre Golovine. Premiered by Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*, Paris, June 25, 1910 with Fokine as Prince Ivan, Tamara Karasavina as the Firebird, and Gabriel Pierné conducting.

*The Firebird* story is nothing special, cobbled together from a hodgepodge of Russian folk tales. Prince Ivan, a hunter, captures the magical Firebird in the enchanted garden of the evil sorcerer Kastchei. The Firebird makes a deal with the Prince: in return for her freedom she gives him one of her feathers, which he can use at any time to summon her for assistance. Princesses whom Kastchei has kidnapped and imprisoned in the garden beg Prince Ivan for assistance. He agrees and is nearly captured by Kastchei and his henchmen. At the last minute he remembers the Firebird's feather, summons her, defeats Kastchei, frees the princesses, marries the most beautiful one, and everyone lives happily ever after.



Bakst's costume design for the Firebird

What *is* special, however, is Stravinsky's opulent 47-minute score. The music is rich, vivid, and thrilling, providing the otherwise silly story with emotional depth and great beauty. Stravinsky wrote for a very large orchestra that afforded him the opportunity to create fabulous musical effects. The fluttering dance of the Firebird mimics the fluttering of the bird's wings and its swooping flight. Ballerina Karasavina, could not fly, of course, but Stravinsky's music helped create the illusion that she could. The beautiful dance of the princesses uses a lovely melody that isn't a Russian folk tune, but could be:



The raucous high-speed Dance of Kastchei's Subjects as they pursue Prince Ivan around the garden is some of the most fearsome, thrilling chase music ever written. And the glorious happily-ever-after finale is pure Russian triumph, with the entire orchestra representing a giant carillon peeling out bells of victory. The finale also includes an early example of Stravinsky's use of uneven meters, in this case 7/4 time:



Though there's nothing particularly shocking there — irregular meters are not uncommon in Russian folk music — it's the beginning of a trend towards metric and rhythmic complexity that eventually exploded four years later.

The acclaim for *Firebird* — and especially for Stravinsky's music — was universal. It earned him the praise of musicians as diverse as the arch-conservative Camille Saint-Saëns and Stravinsky's modernist hero Claude Debussy. And it inspired Diaghilev to green-light Stravinsky's idea for a new, very different ballet, *The Rite of Spring*.

### Petrushka

Music composed 1910-1911. Scenario by Stravinsky and Alexandre Benois. Choreography by Michel Fokine. Scenery and costumes by Alexandre Benois. Premiered by Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*, Paris, June 13, 1911 with Vaslav Nijinsky as Petrushka, Tamara Karasavina as The Ballerina, Alexandre Orlov as The Moor, Ennio Cecchetti as The Charlatan, and Pierre Monteux conducting.

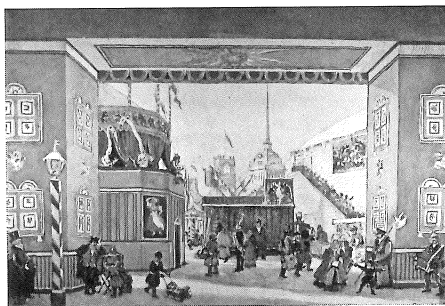
Before embarking on *The Rite of Spring*, which seemed that it would be an even more daunting task than *Firebird*, Stravinsky decided to “clear his palette” with a concert piece for piano and orchestra. In his 1936 *Autobiography*, Stravinsky described his idea: “I had in my mind a distinct picture of a puppet [represented by the piano], suddenly endowed with life, exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of *arpeggi*. The orchestra in turn retaliates with menacing trumpet-blasts. The outcome is a terrific noise which reaches its climax and ends in the sorrowful and querulous collapse of the poor puppet.”

After finishing the piece Stravinsky was at a loss for a title until he thought of *Petrushka*, the sad sack hero of the Punch-and-Judy-type puppet shows popular in Russian fairs. When he described the piece to Diaghilev, the impresario immediately saw the potential for a new ballet and agreed to postpone the *Rite of Spring* project in favor of a full-length ballet incorporating Stravinsky’s piano-and-orchestra composition. The result was perhaps the greatest combination of music, theater, dance, and stagecraft ever created: *Petrushka*.

The brilliance of the story is its immediacy. It takes place not in the mythical fairylands of *The Firebird* or *Sleeping Beauty*. It has its magical side, but it’s rooted in the reality of Russian fairs.

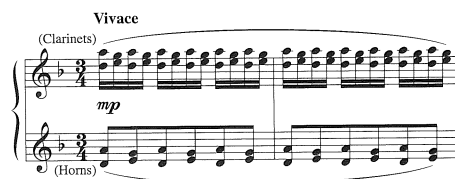
**First Tableau:** Admiralty Square in St. Petersburg during the Shrovetide Fair, the last blast of carnival before Lent. (Think Mardi Gras with warm clothes!) This setting called for a massive crowd scene depicting

hundreds of people out celebrating on a crisp, cold winter night. One of Stravinsky and Benois’ most brilliant — and most modern — decisions was to embrace the chaos of the crowd scene. One of the key innovations of *Petrushka* is simultaneity: things don’t just happen sequentially, as they did in traditional ballets; they happen at the same time, just as they do in real life.



*Petrushka*, First Tableau: Benois’ backdrop

To create the image of bustling activity, Stravinsky hit on a marvelously simple — yet apt — sonority of notes oscillating at two different speeds...



...against which are arrayed many different short melodic fragments, each depicting a different detail of the crowd scene. The effect is chaotic and dissonant, but not unpleasantly so. You simply feel immersed in the hub-bub of the busy last night of the fair.

With the scene set, the focus shifts to one particular area of the fairgrounds where an organ grinder begins to crank out a tune on his somewhat balky instrument. (One of the notes on the organ is broken, so Stravinsky deliberately leaves a blank

space in the melody each time that note is to be played!) The organ grinder accompanies a dancing girl who plays the triangle as she pirouettes. (Triangle tinkles away in the orchestra.) Another entertainer sets up nearby with a music box and begins to play. Stravinsky gives us both pieces of music simultaneously — a delightfully entertaining mess!

The crowd scene continues until a loud drum roll calls people’s attention to the “Living Theater” puppet show. The Charlatan who runs the show does a magic trick, then pulls back the puppet theater curtain to reveal his three puppets suspended by their arms on a wooden rack: the sad sack *Petrushka*, the beautiful *Ballerina* whom he loves, and his rival for her affections, the *Moor*. With three magical flourishes on his flute...



...the Charlatan brings the puppets to life, and they begin a lively folk dance, suspended by their arms from pegs on the Charlatan’s puppet rack. At a certain point, to everyone’s delight and amazement, the puppets jump down from the Living Theater stage and begin to dance among the crowd. The drum roll returns as the Charlatan tosses the puppets back onto the puppet theater stage and brings down the curtain.



Nijinsky as *Petrushka*

**Second Tableau:** The setting is backstage at the puppet theater, in Petrushka's room — barren except for a giant portrait of his boss, the Charlatan. As the orchestra explodes in a violent fanfare...



...a door opens and a giant foot (the Charlatan's) kicks Petrushka into the room. The door slams, and Petrushka is left in a heap on the floor.

Petrushka cries in despair. No one believes that his feelings are real. No one understands his love or feels his pain.



The clarinets in that passage introduce what has come to be known as the "Petrushka chord", two completely normal triads — C Major and F# Major — which, sounded together, make a pungent dissonance. This is one of Stravinsky's first overt experiments with polytonality (music in two or more keys at once), a technique which later became a harmonic cornerstone of *The Rite of Spring*.

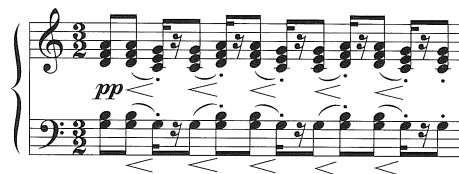
With the entrance of the solo piano, who has a fiendishly difficult virtuoso part to play, Petrushka stops crying and starts cursing: cursing the Charlatan who imprisons him; cursing the Moor who lusts after his beloved; cursing the people who

laugh mockingly at his performances — performances where he is always the loser for the Ballerina's affections. But when the Ballerina appears at his door, Petrushka's mood changes instantly, and he runs about the room doing joyful jumps and flips.



Karasavina as the Ballerina

She's unimpressed and abruptly leaves, whereupon Petrushka hurls himself against the walls, smashes furniture, screams curses, and, finally, punches a hole in the wall. In a masterstroke, Stravinsky inserts a single measure of muted fair music coming through the hole...



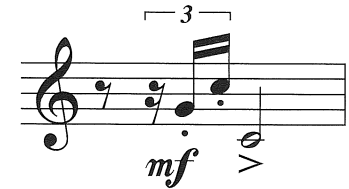
...before the scene ends with a frustrated shake of Petrushka's fist.

**Third Tableau:** Still backstage at the puppet theater, now inside the Moor's lavishly appointed room.



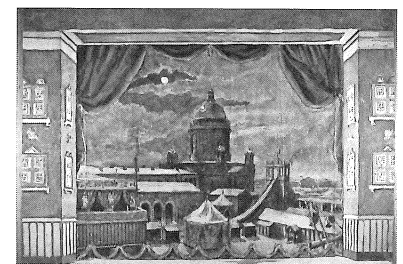
Benois' costume design for the Moor

The Moor lounges on his back on a divan balancing a coconut on his feet. Tired of that, he starts tossing the coconut up in the air. Bored again, he attacks the coconut with his scimitar, but it refuses to break. This convinces the Moor that the coconut must be an all-powerful deity, and he kneels before it in prayer. Suddenly, a flourish on a trumpet:



It's the Ballerina, come to flirt. She dances for the Moor, accompanying herself on a trumpet. The Moor is enchanted. She begins to waltz. He tries to join in, but he can't manage a waltz. So he does his own thing — in a different key, a different tempo, and a different mood. A sudden noise interrupts them: Petrushka banging on the wall. Oblivious, the Ballerina and Moor resume their ungainly duet.

Suddenly Petrushka bursts in to confront the Moor. They fight. The Ballerina faints. The Moor overpowers Petrushka and pushes him out the door.



Petrushka, Fourth Tableau: Benois' backdrop

**Fourth Tableau:** Back outside, later that same evening, the Shrovetide Fair is in full swing. The same crowd music is heard as the First Tableau, now fuller, louder, and with more densely layered superimpositions

of music. A group of Wet-Nurses enter and dance to the Russian folksong "Down the Petersburg Road"...



...while the crowd noise music continues in the background. The Wet-Nurses change to another folk song, "At My Doorstep":



Then, just because he can, Stravinsky combines both melodies (plus the background crowd music) as the Wet-Nurses split into two groups and dance up a storm.

A big noise and heavy, thudding notes announce the arrival of a trained bear. The Wet-Nurses' dances dissolve and a piercing high-pitched clarinet portrays the sound of the Bear Trainer. The Bear (represented by solo tuba) follows the Trainer's lead, and the crowd noise returns as the bear act slowly lumbers off into the distance.

New music, as a Merchant enters with two Gypsy Girls and hurls fake banknotes into the crowd. General pandemonium leads to a vigorous dance for Coachmen and Stable Boys. "Down the Petersburg Road" returns as the Wet-Nurses dance with the Coachmen — and Stravinsky superimposes their melodies. The stage is enveloped in a swirl of sound as everyone dances in high spirits.

A group of Mimmers and Masqueraders enter. A man in a devil mask tries to frighten the crowd. Other masked revellers pretend to be goats and pigs (with appropriate sound effects from Stravinsky's orchestra). Everyone parties.



Benois' costume design for the Devil-Masker

Suddenly a scream is heard from inside the puppet theater. The dancing stops as the stunned crowd sees Petrushka run out of the theater pursued by the Moor, who brandishes his scimitar. The Ballerina—in a last-minute change of heart—tries to restrain the Moor. But she fails and the Moor, with one swing of his blade, kills his rival. The crowd, believing that what they see is real, surrounds Petrushka's body as someone runs to call the police. (In reality, the crowd surrounds Petrushka's body to mask the swap of a dummy for the dancer!)

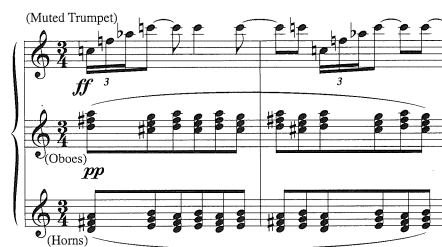


The stars of *Petrushka*:  
Karasavina (Ballerina), Nijinsky (Petrushka),  
Cechetti (Charlatan), Orlov (The Moor)

A Policeman arrives, surveys the scene, and goes in search of the Charlatan. The Charlatan, annoyed,

comes out of the theater, goes to Petrushka's corpse, picks him up in one hand, and shakes. Sawdust falls from the wound. See? He's just a puppet after all!

The crowd disperses into the night, snow begins to fall, and we hear the music of the fair softly winding down as the Charlatan walks back to his theater dragging Petrushka's body behind him. Suddenly, with the faint fair music in the background, we hear an angry fanfare:



It's Petrushka's ghost, standing on the roof of the puppet theater, cursing and threatening the Charlatan.

Terrified, the Charlatan drops the puppet and rushes away as the curtain falls.

Wow! Hard to top that.

## The Rite of Spring

Music composed 1911-1913. Scenario by Stravinsky and Nicholas Roerich. Choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky. Scenery and costumes by Nicholas Roerich. Premiered by Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*, Paris, May 29, 1913 with Marie Piltz as The Chosen One and Pierre Monteux conducting.

In 1910, while at work on *The Firebird*, Stravinsky had a vision: "I saw in my imagination a solemn pagan rite: wise elders, seated in a circle, watching a young girl dance herself to death. They were sacrificing her to propitiate the god of spring." This was the generating idea of *The Rite of Spring*, the ballet that stunned the world and confirmed — if anyone was still wondering — that the

Modern Era in music and dance was underway.

Everything about *The Rite of Spring* was novel. The music was filled with irregular meters, dense webs of rhythms superimposed on each other, and riotous dissonances. The dance was crude and primal, based on Nijinsky's exploration of eurhythmics, a new theory of movement to music developed by the French pedagogue and composer Emil Jacques-Dalcroze.

Throughout the long rehearsal period, rumors spread through the Paris dance and music grapevines. Something truly shocking was brewing. No one in the public had seen a step of Nijinsky's choreography. No one in the public had heard a note of Stravinsky's music. Battle lines were drawn, nevertheless. The opening night audience came anticipating — maybe even itching for — a scandal.

They got one.

From the very first notes...

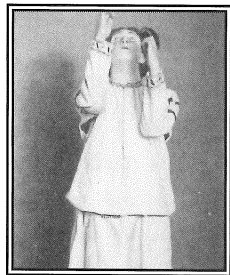


...played by a solo bassoon up where no bassoon had gone before, the catcalls began. A cry of support answered each catcall. The battle of *The Rite of Spring* was on.

That opening night has been described as an audience riot, which seems about right. Fistfights broke out. There seem to have been projectiles. (Though the reports of produce-stained walls of the Champs-Élysées Theater seem to have been false, unless they had been cleaned by the time I checked in the mid-1970s!) As loud as Stravinsky's score

gets, the audience made almost as much noise. Monteux kept his cool and calmly led the orchestra through the thorny intricacies of the score. But the dancers could barely hear the music from the pit for all the noise coming from the audience. In rehearsal, they had struggled to find the melody in Stravinsky's music and learned the choreography purely by counting. Nijinsky stood in the wings shouting the counts at the top of his lungs, trying to keep everything onstage in sync. Between the ballet's two scenes, Diaghilev sent his assistant out to speak to the audience and beg for calm.

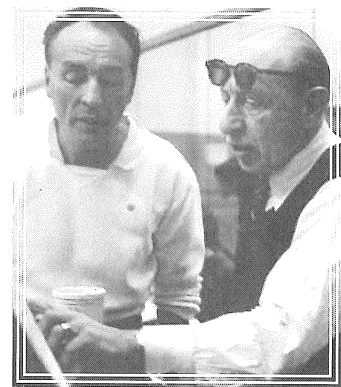
No such luck. Somehow everyone ended together, with Marie Piltz's Chosen One collapsing to the floor, dead, just as Monteux gave the downbeat for Stravinsky's final, jarring chord.



Marie Piltz, The Chosen One

*The Rite of Spring* has gone down in history as the most revolutionary piece of music ever written. And the hardest. I must disagree. Sure, it's difficult. But once you learn how to count the tricky meters, it's actually a straightforward piece. Today's orchestras play it perfectly on a fraction of the rehearsals Pierre Monteux had back in 1913. Though some passages can still shock even the modern ear, there are long stretches of the piece where I can only wonder, "They didn't like *this*?"

In fact, I believe that *Petrushka* is far more difficult — and more revolutionary. Stravinsky's desire to portray simultaneous, musically contradictory events in the score makes it much trickier to execute. *The Rite of Spring* is like a finely geared machine. You wind it up and it goes. *Petrushka*, good-natured and tuneful though it is, has tricks, traps, and dangers on every page.



Balanchine and Stravinsky

Stravinsky's career as a ballet composer did not end in 1913 with *The Rite of Spring*. He wrote ballets for all the great choreographers of the 20th century and helped make ballet one of the driving forces in contemporary music. Once he moved to the United States, Stravinsky entered into a long collaboration with George Balanchine for whom Stravinsky wrote new ballets (*Apollon Musagète*, *Orpheus*, *Agon*) and who created dances to many Stravinsky concert works including *Duo Concertant*, the Violin Concerto, the Symphony in Three Movements, and *Requiem Canticles*.

Ballet styles will come and go. But there will always be two constants, no matter what happens: Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky. Tchaikovsky's ballets defined the art form. Stravinsky's pushed it into a new century.



Tchaikovsky:  
19th century  
ballet master



Stravinsky:  
20th century  
ballet master

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## The Great Reviser: Behind the Scenes with Igor



In the middle of *Petrushka*'s First Tableau, an organ grinder accompanies a girl with a triangle as she dances to a jaunty tune which was known to many in the audience at the ballet's 1911 premiere:

Elle a - vait une jambe en bois, Et pour que ça n'se voie  
pas, Elle a - vait mis par des - sous Une ron - delle de caout - chouc.

("She had a wooden leg, And to make sure it wasn't seen, She put a rubber tip on it." Sure, it doesn't make sense, but think of French movies. They don't make sense, either!) Stravinsky thought it would be a cute inside joke for his audience of Paris sophisticates to put this French folk song in the midst of his quotations from various Russian folk songs.

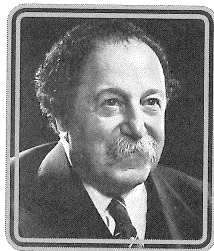
He was right about the sophisticates.

He was wrong about the song.

It wasn't a folk song. It was a popular tune. And copyrighted, no less! Words by Plebus and Maubon, music by Emile Spencer.

So began Igor Stravinsky's lifelong struggle with intellectual property law. In the case of the *Petrushka* tune, there was no question of rewriting the music, so Stravinsky had to make a financial settlement with Monsieur Spencer.

You'd think that he would have learned his lesson. But in 1955, Stravinsky decided to write a little present for the 80th birthday of Pierre Monteux — the conductor who had premiered both *Petrushka* and the *Rite of Spring*.



Monteux, ready to blow out 80 candles

*Greeting Prelude* is a lively, 45-second gem with the notes of "Happy Birthday" jumping all over the page.

♩ = 102 you...  
(Happy birth-day to...)

Monteux was pleased with the gift, but, when Stravinsky published the piece, he received a little gift of his own in the form of legal action from Mildred and Patty Hill, the Kentucky sisters who owned the copyright on the tune. (The melody of "Happy Birthday" has since passed into public domain — where Stravinsky thought it had been all along — though the words are still under copyright.)

Despite those debacles, Stravinsky's real copyright woes were with his own copyrights, not other people's. All of Stravinsky's early ballet scores — including *Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring* — were copyrighted not by Stravinsky, but by the publishing arm of Sergei Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*. After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, chaos in copyright law meant that Stravinsky lost all control over the rights and royalties to his most important works.

As a result, Stravinsky became dogged in his pursuit of control over all his compositions.

A perfect example occurred in 1939 when Walt Disney used several excerpts from *The Rite of Spring* in *Fantasia*. Under U.S. law, the music was in public domain, and Disney was legally entitled to use it without permission or compensation. By then, however, Stravinsky had re-acquired the overseas copyright, so he sued Disney over the foreign distribution of *Fantasia*, resulting in a settlement whereby Disney got full distribution rights in return for a one-time \$6,000 payment to Stravinsky. (Postscript: In 1997, Boosey and Hawkes, now Stravinsky's publisher, filed suit against Disney over video sales of *Fantasia* — which they argued were

not covered in the 1939 agreement. That case has since been settled, too.)

One of Stravinsky's principal strategies to regain copyright protection was to make revisions of works that he no longer controlled. Sometimes he'd change only one or two notes — just enough to create a "new", copyrightable version. But this wasn't his only incentive to revise. The scores and orchestra parts to *The Firebird* and *Petrushka* were riddled with errors, and Stravinsky's publishers refused to spend the money to put out new, corrected editions. In addition, Stravinsky found that the massive ensembles required for *Firebird* and *Petrushka* made orchestras reluctant to program them since many extra musicians had to be hired.

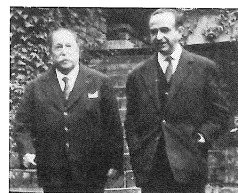
In 1919 Stravinsky took a first step, creating a concert suite of music from *Firebird*. Though scored for a significantly smaller orchestra, in many passages the suite actually sounds fuller due to improvements in Stravinsky's orchestration technique between 1910 and 1919. The 1919 suite solved some of Stravinsky's copyright problems. But there were hundreds of errors in the score and parts — errors which persisted in printing after printing until a new, corrected edition was released in 1985!

Stravinsky created a revised version of *Petrushka* in 1947 for both copyright and efficiency reasons. The 1947 version reduces the personnel count by seven musicians, which can add up to thousands of dollars in payroll over a run of rehearsals and performances. It's also easier to squeeze the slimmed-down orchestra into the pit for ballet performances. But the fundamental reason behind the *Petrushka* revision had to do with the piece itself.

There were many small details in *Petrushka* that dissatisfied Stravinsky during the rehearsal process. This is no surprise, particularly because of the intricacies in the music and the ground-breaking experiments he was undertaking in the score. During rehearsals, Pierre Monteux, working in conjunction with Stravinsky, made numerous changes in the parts, mostly to help bring out melodic lines that were getting lost in the dense, busy textures. These changes were never put into print, but were simply passed on by Monteux to his students.



Stravinsky and Monteux



Monteux and Bruck

A close examination of a "Monteux score" to *Petrushka* reveals that all of these fixes were incorporated into the 1947 version. So why, you may wonder, is the DPO performing the 1911 version?

The short answer is that we're not, really. My conducting teacher was Charles Bruck (1911-1995), who was Monteux's first conducting pupil and who took over Monteux's conducting school in Hancock, Maine after his death. Monteux's *Petrushka* corrections went to Bruck, and then from Bruck to his students — including me.

In 1995, when I first conducted *Petrushka* in Dayton, I made a concession to the DPO budget and agreed to use the 1947 version. But I wasn't pleased with the result. Not because of the orchestra's performance — which was great — but because of the sound.

In preparing the 1947 version, Stravinsky didn't just insert Monteux's

changes. Eliminating one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon, one trumpet, one harp, and one percussion player meant that almost every aspect of the orchestration had to be reworked — especially in the woodwinds. The result is a much "cleaner" sound. This is in keeping with Stravinsky's later compositional style, which featured dry, sharp sonorities. But I think that the precise, clinical sound of the 1947 *Petrushka* lacks something compared to the original. Having those extra instruments makes a real difference, especially in the crowd scenes of the first and fourth tableaux. The 1911 orchestration is both fuller and warmer, which seems to me more in keeping with the good-natured feeling of those scenes. I think the 1947 version is OK, but it's the 1911 version that sounds as *Petrushka* should sound. So after playing the revised version in 1995, I vowed, "Next time, we play the original."

This is the next time. So I've purchased my own set of 1911 *Petrushka* parts, and DPO Librarian Bill Slusser and I will insert all the Monteux changes. That will give us the best of both worlds: the fixes from 1947 plus the sound from 1911.

Only one person could possibly be upset. Igor Stravinsky. His estate will get no royalties.

Sorry, Igor.

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