

**Stravinsky the Global Dancer:  
A Chronology of Choreography to the Music of Igor Stravinsky**

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**Introduction: Parameters**

The ‘Stravinsky the Global Dancer’ database, a record of premiere information on potentially all the dance works choreographed to Stravinsky’s music, now numbers over 1,200 entries, featuring 99 different scores and over 680 choreographers. A *comprehensive* database of choreographies to the music of Stravinsky, arguably the most important dance composer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? Whilst we never believed that such a thing was a possibility, we had no idea as to the sheer number and complexity of entries that we would have to make. So often, initial clues led to not only one work for entry but an array of others, a culture of Stravinsky dances by a choreographer of whom we had barely any knowledge and perhaps in a part of the world for which we had little access to information. The scope of this enterprise was broadly international, and we were heartened by the commitment of new contacts abroad, choreographers, dance writers and enthusiasts eager to help with information and language problems. There is every sign too that works will continue to be made: across the planet. Stravinsky was and remains a truly global dancer as much as he was the prime global composer of the twentieth century.

So often, writers have declared surprise that anyone should still want to make yet one more Firebird, Petrushka or Sacre. We were astonished to discover the extent to which the popular ballet scores have maintained their profile over the decades. However, we cover in the database not only the ballet scores as such, but also the many concert scores borrowed for dance, not only classical ballet usages, for which Stravinsky is most renowned, but also a wide range of contemporary and postmodern approaches.

Not only are there far more entries today than could be envisaged at the outset of the project, but also far more different kinds of entries than we expected. Original database fields and methodologies were established, later modified as we turned up works using several Stravinsky scores, or involving several choreographers. We had to find ways of expressing the use of selections from scores, and of collage soundscapes by a variety of composers, also Stravinsky’s inclination to re-arrange some of his work for new instrumentations.

The size of this project could be discomfiting at times. We have had to acknowledge the limits of what could be achieved within time and geographical restraints (a project centre in the UK and funded blocks of archive time in selected archives and libraries abroad). Furthermore, the systematic collecting and recording of data ended December 2002 and works premiered after that date are included on a more ad hoc basis. But we look forward to the future input of readers from all over the world who can fill holes in our bank of information. Our contact details are highlighted, and the database will be updated as new, firm information is received.

To explain in more detail, the main resource bases for this project were the range of London dance libraries, including the Roehampton University collection, the New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division, the Harvard Theatre Collection, the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basle (home of the main Stravinsky archive in the world), and the Tanzarchiv in Cologne. Valuable contributions of data were received from colleagues in the following countries: as well as the UK, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Switzerland and the USA. Yet it soon became obvious that our geographical spread was uneven, and our data particularly strong as it represented the English-speaking world, with Western Europe next in line for strong coverage. Information on Stravinsky dances has become increasingly globalised in recent years, nevertheless, beyond the bounds of the UK, North America and Germany, what we had access to in the libraries and archives used was frequently disappointing. Despite the good holdings of foreign language dance journals in the major British and American collections, the solid primary source base was missing.

Even for the central geographic domain of this project, there are surely some omissions. The major listing Stravinsky on Stage (1982) by Alexander Schouvaloff and Victor Borovsky covers itself with the reference to ‘major productions’. We decided that it was important to get beyond the very public picture and well beyond established canons of work, and thus to welcome the inclusion of student and non-professional productions: for instance, Jennifer Jackson’s 1991 Les Noces, a youth project stemming from the Education Department of Birmingham Royal Ballet, or the 1964 Pulcinella by John Begg for the Ballet Guild of Cleveland, Ohio, which was performed in a hospital and a community centre. These enterprises too have interesting points to make about the spread of Stravinsky’s music. But if there is no review available of a work or other document to merit its appearing in the more established Stravinsky choreography listings, how could we find out about such a production? In this regard, Stravinsky’s publishers’ records have proved useful (those of Boosey & Hawkes, publishers of the main body of Stravinsky scores, Schott and Chester). The publishers hold lists of performances for which copyright fees have been paid, potentially the most complete charting possible of the history of a dance work across the years, although, in actuality, their listings are not complete (ref. Reading the Database). Having said that, we have every reason to believe that our records are less complete for non-professional productions and small companies.

In summary, we recognise the time and geographical restraints on our achievement to date, yet are convinced that we have gained enough information to have the grounds for suggesting certain trends with confidence. Future expansion of the database will enable us to refine our view of these trends.

A decision was made to limit our project in terms of what we believed a dance database should prioritise. A number of Stravinsky’s ballet scores have been used as opportunities for jugglers, puppets, marionettes and animation (Disney’s Fantasia (1940), the most celebrated example of the latter), movement forms allied to dance. We have not included these. But we have included oddities like Balanchine’s 1942 Circus Polka for 50 elephants, 50 ‘beautiful girls’ and a ballerina and a 2000 staging of Le Sacre du

printemps and Symphony of Psalms by the Zingaro troupe (for the Expo in Hanover), which introduced horses alongside the dancers. Where the borders between dance, mime and theatre are blurred, we have happily strayed across them. Also included is work made for film, television and opera, and, in the latter case, going beyond the traditional incorporation of incidental dances, the weight of choreography has often been considerable. This was so for the first Le Rossignol (1914), which featured dancers on stage and singers in the orchestra pit, as did later stagings of the opera Mavra by Aurel Milloss (1942) and Tatiana Gsovsky (1955). The later Ashton choreography in the Hockney/Dexter production of Le Rossignol (1981) had a dance 'line' provided by the characters of Nightingale and Fisherman throughout the work. Many Stravinsky theatre works, it turns out, have tended towards a strong dance component.

The full theatre piece The Soldier's Tale (as opposed to the Suite drawn from it) holds an unusual place in the repertory. Partly because of its modest resource requirements, it has received hundreds of productions, ranging from full staging to concert performance with a token gesture towards theatre. Many of these minimised the dance component that was a part of the original conception and it has not always been possible to distinguish dancers from actors in cast lists. We have not attempted a documentation beyond what readily appears in the standard dance listings. Listing the productions of The Soldier's Tale is a project in itself. It was not considered a first priority for detailed documentation in a database focusing on dance.

It is irksome on the other hand that a number of pieces that do foreground dance could not be entered into the database because listings fail to identify either the musical score or the choreographer. We have kept a separate list of these in the hope that further information will be revealed in the future. Such data can already be used to supplement the narrative that emerges from the database.

We had originally intended to account for revivals of works, and indeed, to compare just how much Stravinsky repertory confronted audiences at different times or places would be a fascinating task. However, this was soon considered beyond our reach. Existing chronologies rarely provide revival information. We have instead noted revivals simply where we have come across them. The New York City Ballet bank of information is exceptional. Because the full repertory data on Balanchine and other NYCB choreographers is easily accessible (from card files and from company and Balanchine Trust databases), we made this a case study, and here readers can trace how Stravinsky works have lived (and died) in the repertory. Annotations provide summary information about the life of individual works in the repertory, for those that lasted more than one season, within the NYCB repertory, and in the case of Balanchine, within the repertory of other companies as well. Other studies of this nature will hopefully take place in the future.

Recording the factual data of premieres has been the first priority of the project, over and above descriptive annotations of works. Working within time and geographical constraints, we made decisions to prioritise works using the scores written specifically for dance and those for which material was most readily available in the UK.

Despite the number of settings (the largest of any Stravinsky work other than Soldier's Tale), the Sacre offered by far the best opportunity for documentation. In 1987, at the time of the Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer reconstruction of the original Nijinsky work, Joan Acocella, Lynn Garafola and Jonnie Greene undertook a project to document all the Sacres created, premiere information supplemented with references to literature and visual sources (Acocella et al, 1992). Since then, Ada d'Adamo (1999) has updated their catalogue. She, Shelley Berg (1988) and Susan Manning (1991) have also undertaken important work comparing numerous versions of Sacre. Many questions remain about a number of Sacre productions, nevertheless we welcomed the considerable groundwork that had already been undertaken. It was possible to annotate an unusually high proportion of entries here. For all ten Agons, annotation was possible. But these are rare cases. Often, we have not accessed enough information for any kind of annotation.

The reader can, however, make certain assumptions: narrative scores (e.g. Firebird and Petrushka), especially those with text (e.g. Renard and Persephone), are likely to invite narrative treatment, using or modifying an original scenario. Similarly and hardly surprisingly, Jeu de Cartes tends to prompt dances on the theme of a card game. Cast lists identifying characters tell their own tale. Those choreographies that adopt the title of their musical score tend (as in the case of Balanchine's work) to be plotless and to draw attention to musical structure.

### **Reading the Database: Documentation Methodology**

The database offers short listings under the following categories: by dance, by choreographer, by musical composition, by country and by company. Each item listed is also given in a full record format, comprising more detailed factual data and a short annotation. Full record format listings can be viewed for the complete list of entries, and for a particular choreographer, musical composition, country or company. Most of the time, we have inserted information where it is known to be secure, otherwise have left data fields empty. The 'Find' facility on the browser's Edit menu enables other searches to be made (for instance, for the title of a ballet when the score title has not been used or for the Stravinsky repertory of a particular theatre). However, readers should be aware in using this that in many cases the language of the ballet title remains to be verified, and that consistency has not always been possible in the naming of a company or theatre. Often we have had to negotiate with conflicting information, and we have also been aware that, as one source preys on an earlier one (as is the case with most dictionaries and chronologies), inaccurate as well as accurate information can be passed on.

The major Stravinsky dance listings used were Acocella et al. (1992), d'Adamo (1999), Lederman (1949), Lenton and Marshall (1998), Schouvaloff and Borovsky (1982), Stravinsky and the Dance (the 1962 New York Public Library publication), CATNYP and Dance on Disk (the on-line and CD-ROM catalogues of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts). Collating information from these lists was our starting point, after which we undertook literature searches of other chronologies (such as of companies and choreographers), perused film/video and

photographic material and witnessed live performance whenever we could. Programmes of premieres were viewed as an ideal source, but it was not always considered a priority to track these down if data clearly concurred across a range of what were assessed as reliable sources, or indeed from one standard source (like the Acocella et al. listing of Sacres), or if programme information was included in a review. Likewise, for certain annotations, we have relied solely upon what we consider highly reliable scholarship, for example, the work undertaken by Berg and Manning on the Sacres. The thrust of their work is to make comparisons in any case, which suits our project. Another example is Nancy Reynolds' repertory listing and edited compilation of New York City Ballet reviews in Repertory in Review (1977). It seemed sensible to grasp the opportunity that these resources offered and to privilege for searches of primary source material those works that are far less well documented.

Relatively late in the process, we visited publishers and scrutinised their performance listings. The latter were most useful as a checking device against other sources. Often, they provided more precise date information. They also offered up surprise gems, for instance: that a major figure Bella Lewitsky had choreographed to Stravinsky, unrecorded in all the standard listings (making new sense of a St. James Press dictionary entry (1998) that gave a list of her works with dates but no musical information); that, in the 1980s, Douglas Dunn staged a Pulcinella in the US after an earlier staging in France; confirming that Todd Bolender's Folktale to Baiser (which emerged from the Larousse dictionary Stravinsky listings) was the Kansas City Ballet Baiser of 1984.

However, publishers' records are incomplete, some missing, many indicating the place of a performance whilst omitting the name of the choreographer. In the latter case, only further evidence clarifies whether a work was commissioned by a dance company or theatre in the town recorded, or was a re-staging of an existing work, or if it simply made a fleeting appearance on a touring company. Yet, on a number of occasions, it was a publisher's sketchy record that provided the vital piece of evidence needed to create an entry. We need to note that pre-1923 works do not enjoy copyright protection in the US, thus there will not necessarily be any publishers' records of recent US performances of Firebird, Sacre and Petrushka where the original version of these scores has been used. Furthermore, if a dance company fails to register a usage, no record appears (for instance, if a musical recording is used rather than live music, and no hire costs – of orchestral parts -- are documented).

Another treasure of the Boosey archives in both New York and London and of the Chester archives in Bury St. Edmunds was their collection of reviews and programmes, which supplemented and often clarified the data listings, revealing further information about the less publicised usages of Stravinsky's music. The most recent Boosey Stravinsky performances are now documented in an international database representing the company branches all over the world. Likewise Chester and Schott hold information on recent performances in a database. This data too is incomplete, and for our purposes (for which it was of course never intended), haphazard, but there are hints of works in these databases to which there is no other reference readily available.

We have also used the Internet on a number of occasions, especially useful for the more recent entries. Company websites may even include video clips, as in the case of the Sacre choreographed in 2001 by Claudio Bernardo. Online databases are increasingly seen as a useful tool for documenting dance activity in Europe. We have made use of those on the websites of the Theatre Institute of the Netherlands and the Finnish Dance Information Centre. Via the Internet too, we have been able to contact companies directly, to request answers to specific questions. We recognise that, where we do not have named contacts, an email does not always find the person with the time or resources to answer our questions, but this method has offered up information unobtainable elsewhere, for example to solve some long standing queries about a version of Orpheus choreographed by Toer van Schayk (1984) and to give us details of a production of Sacre by Jiri Kyselak in the Czech Republic (1999).

### **Reading the Database: The Full Individual Entry**

The following notes pertain to the full record format of a single entry in the database, referring back, where appropriate, to the shortlists:

1. The title of the dance is given according to the programme (if accessed), and thus in its original language, otherwise, in English format. Square brackets *around* a title designate uncertainty about the title. In some cases we have added a square bracket *after* the original title, giving an English translation. In the case of Petrushka spelling, if there is no reliable programme source, our policy has been to adopt the spelling that would reflect the country where the work was premiered.
2. In the case of the Fokine ballets Firebird and Petrushka we have summarised the many versions falling into the category 'after Fokine' within the annotations for the original ballets. The exception is the Petrushka by Leontiev, after Fokine, which is allocated its own entry, because there is a significant, known contribution here by Leontiev. We are also aware that in the cases of these two Fokine ballets, there may well be further entries recorded here that should be in the category of 'after Fokine', stemming as they do from times when borrowing choreography without full acknowledgement was common practice.
3. The title of the music appears as it does in the current Boosey & Hawkes listing (1997). In general, we have given the dates and instrumentation of the first version of the music, where possible clarifying in the annotation (labelled Note) if a choreographer has used a different version. In a few cases, however, that did not seem sensible if it appeared that choreographers were most likely to use a later instrumentation. Thus, we have listed the orchestral version of Scherzo à la Russe rather than the slightly earlier jazz ensemble version. Where a transcription is significantly different from the original (as in the case of the Eight Instrumental Miniatures, transcribed, re-ordered and developed from the piano pieces Les Cinq Doigts) or its existence is significant in terms of this research (as in the piano version of Rite of Spring), it has been listed separately. We are aware that,

because of lack of information, we have probably not yet pulled out under the separate Suite heading all the uses of the Firebird Suites as opposed to the full ballet score, or of the piano duet as opposed to orchestral score of the Sacre. Dates showing both the writing of the score and its first performance are included, the latter being used in the shortlists. However, if there is no first performance date available, the date of score completion appears in the shortlists. Where there has been disagreement on dates between sources, we have used those provided by Stephen Walsh (2001 and 2006). Music premiere dates in St. Petersburg are given in the New Style of the Western Gregorian calendar (Russian Old Style dates appear 13 days before those in New Style). ‘Commissioned score’ is the broad term used to indicate the first setting of a score that was conceived for dance, or with a major dance component in mind (though The Soldier’s Tale was not written as a commission as such and Renard was commissioned well before any decision was made as to who would first choreograph it).

4. In the case of partial use of a score, the dance title is indicated with an asterisk \*. There are undoubtedly a number of cases where we do not yet have enough information to indicate this. In the case of a score forming part of a collage of scores (by Stravinsky or involving other sources), the indication is a cross †. In some instances, both indications are needed.
5. The authors of the scenario are given where included in accessed programmes.
6. First performance information varies in detail, at best the full day, month and year, at worst, only the year. In the shortlists, the works with incomplete date information appear first in the lists for any given year. If a company name is not provided, but a theatre is indicated, it can be assumed that the company is the one in residence at the theatre, as in the case of many opera houses. A conductor’s name is specified when the information is available and in the case of live musical performance. We have not designated the use of recordings.

A schema for the annotations in the Note was created for ease of comparison between entries. It was devised to indicate the following:

1. the size of the dance ensemble, ‘large’ when the number is over 15, otherwise the precise number is indicated, or wording to indicate that the figure is uncertain.
2. whether the work has a plot, prevailing mood, or is based to some degree on an existing scenario (which is briefly described for the entry when the scenario was first used).
3. the movement style, for which a range of terms have been selected as a basis for comparison: classical; neo-classical (if referring to a past danse d’école tradition, like much Balanchine); modern (indicating a stylised form, probably with stretched feet, one of the codified styles, like Graham- or Cunningham-based, or a mixture of such styles); mixed modern/classical; physical theatre; Ausdruckstanz and Tanztheater. Mime content is assumed if a work is story-based.
4. a number of extra points that may be appropriate, for instance: major changes in choreography, design, or editing of the musical score during the history of a work;

a significant change of title; if the work is full-evening in length (otherwise one act length or less is assumed and the reader is encouraged to refer to the length of a musical score); the name of the director if the work is a theatre piece or opera; if the work was created as part of a Stravinsky festival; revival information; where appropriate, the portion of the score has been selected or an indication of other music if the score is a collage; a cross-reference to other uses of the same music by the choreographer.

Where quotations appear, they represent the choreographer's own words or have been drawn directly from programme notes.

Movement style was particularly difficult to describe, especially if we had not seen a work ourselves. We had reason to be particularly cautious about written information on this topic; in some cases we preferred not to make any comment at all. Sometimes, with regard to movement style, a choreographer's name speaks for itself, but not invariably. We can assume for a classical choreographer creating a Sacre that the weighting of the choreography is more likely to be towards the modern rather than the classical in style, because of the nature of the music and the tradition of the work as a dance piece (anti-tradition and anti-grace). We admit that the style words chosen are highly reductive, for instance, the three settings of Le Baiser de la Fée by Nijinska, Ashton and Balanchine sound similar in the notes, whilst being clearly distinctive, we can be sure. It would take considerable space and time to elucidate these distinctions in a convincing manner. All the same, it did seem appropriate with regard to the larger picture offered by the database to make some kind of broadly defining statement on movement style.

The borderline between new works (requiring separate entries) and revisions of existing works is often not straightforward. We had to research and determine each case as best we could, cross-referencing uses of the same music by the same choreographer in the case of separate entries.

We decided that referencing the relevant dance literature and visual records of works was beyond the scope of this project. Readers are recommended to use the on-line catalogue of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (CATNYP, or the CD-ROM database Dance on Disk) and, for sources on the various versions of Sacre, Acocella et al. (1992).

Readers of the database may find it useful to consider the three main periods of Stravinsky's music that it encompasses: broadly, the 'Russian' period from 1902-c. 1919, covering the early cluster of Diaghilev ballet scores; then, from c. 1920, the 'neo-classical' period, during which he reworked in his own terms styles of previous periods and composers; finally, from the mid 1950s, the period when he embraced the serial or twelve-tone compositional method of the second Viennese school (Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern).

The works for which the ballet scores were commissioned are highlighted, 'to commissioned score', in the database. Extracted as a group, they are as follows:



The Firebird (1910)  
Petrushka (1911)  
The Rite of Spring (1913)  
Le Rossignol (1914 – opera conceived at the first performance with dancers onstage in the main roles)  
The Soldier's Tale (1918) (theatre piece with dance component)  
Le Chant du Rossignol (1920)  
Pulcinella (1920)  
Renard (1922)  
Les Noces (1923)  
Apollon Musagète (1928)  
The Fairy's Kiss (1928)  
Perséphone (1934)  
Jeu de cartes (1937)  
Circus Polka (1942)  
Scènes de ballet (1944)  
Orpheus (1948)  
Agon (1957)  
Noah and the Flood (1962)

Not included in the database are Stravinsky's orchestral arrangements of other composers' music for ballet: of Chopin, two pieces for Les Sylphides (1909), of Grieg, Kobold (1910), of Tchaikovsky, a partial re-orchestration of The Sleeping Beauty (1921) and a re-orchestration of the 'Bluebird' pas de deux from Beauty (1941).

**The process of creating the database** raised a number of fundamental questions about the nature of historical enquiry and documentation, such as: on what basis are decisions made during the process of research for a database, or regarding its format? What issues does the database elucidate in terms of our understanding of dance history?

We have been regularly reflexive about our process of gathering information for the database. We were deliberately seeking information about work beyond the accepted Stravinsky canon of Diaghilev/Balanchine, which the composer himself promoted, and more broadly the Russian émigré and Anglo-American lineage. We were actively looking for trouble. That said, a number of factors have shaped the database, many of them pragmatic, the UK base for the project, the funding of research in New York, Basel and Cologne. At other times, we were led by curiosity: the Russian search, for instance, conditioned by a belief that the political and cultural angle on Stravinsky there, his homeland, would be an important story. In these circumstances, understanding the limits of our quest for information, we have to ask ourselves: what parts of the world, and what areas of work does the database not tell us about? The research process here seemed unusually open, a large amount of data collected before any hypothesis could be ventured, no framework within which to speculate, very little written on the subject beyond Sacre, and always new data chasing away the glimmer of an analytical idea. Only at the late moment of printing out the data listings were there patterns to talk about,

suggesting still further patterns lying beneath. But then, the database is still incomplete, still provisional.

The different ordering of information in the shortlists has enabled different narratives to emerge, just as the different contextualising of historical events reveals different emphases. Thus, decisions about how to present the data have been crucial in determining how we and others construct narratives about Stravinsky usage by choreographers. At a relatively late stage, the decision was made to create additional lists under the 'country' heading, because existing lists suggested that this could be revealing. We might now ask what else we would wish the database to project. If the 'Find' facility enables us to study the narrative of different cities and companies, what about the number and proportion of pieces by women, or the number of works set on modern dance as opposed to ballet companies?

The database process has also raised questions that our language limitations will never allow us to answer. It has been a salutary reminder of our place in the world – for Stravinsky was truly a global dancer -- and of the insularity of our approaches to dance history. Furthermore, if making the database revealed the problems of its own provisional status, that the tales it tells will change as it changes in the future, of one thing we can be certain, that it will move us in an increasingly global direction.

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For an analysis of trends revealed by the database, see Chapter 2 of Jordan, Stravinsky Dances: Re-Visions Across a Century (2007); Jordan, 'The Demons in a Database: Interrogating 'Stravinsky the Global Dancer'', Dance Research, 22/1 (Summer, 2004), pp. 57-83.

### **Pointing to the Future**

Readers of the database are warmly invited to submit further information, corrections to and additional data on existing entries, also details for new entries. We request that data is mailed to us in hard copy, in the form of xeroxed programmes and/or reviews and it must include the following as minimum data for making an entry: name of dance/ballet, name of choreographer(s), name of piece or pieces of music, year of premiere. Please check the full record format for the range of data fields that we use.

Information should be mailed to: Professor Stephanie Jordan (Stravinsky database), Roehampton University, Froebel College, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PJ. E-mail attachments including scanned programmes or reviews are also welcome: to [stravinsky@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:stravinsky@roehampton.ac.uk)

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Theatre Institute of the Netherlands: <http://www.tin.nl>

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We are pleased to include the following Web links to Stravinsky's publishers:

Boosey & Hawkes: <http://www.boosey.com/stravinsky>

Chester: <http://www.chesternovello.com>

Schott: <http://www.schott-music.com>

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