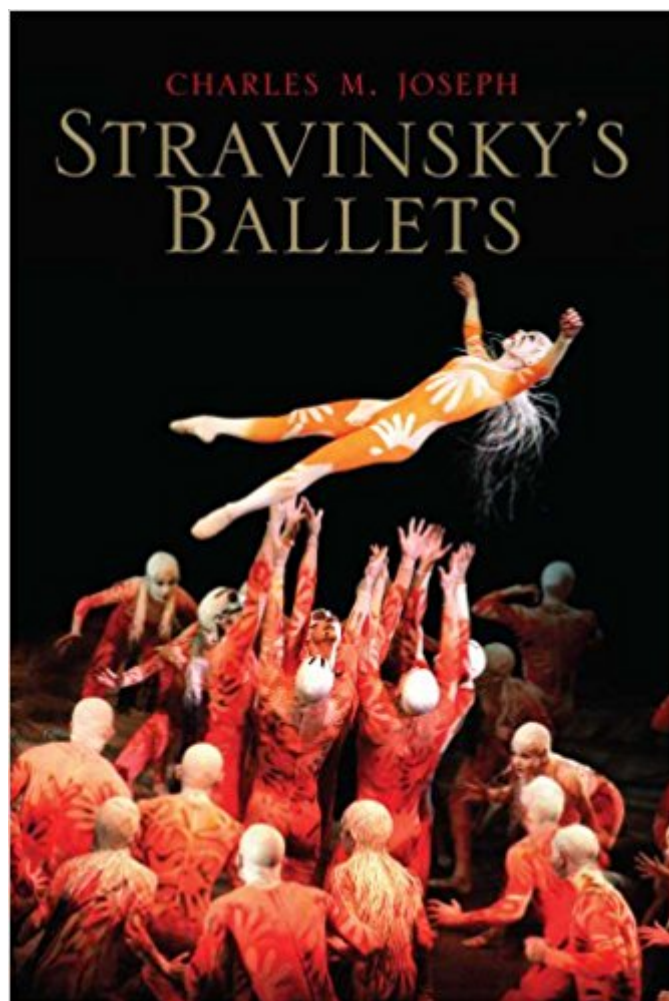


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# Stravinsky's Ballets (Yale Music Masterworks)



## Synopsis

Igor Stravinsky, a towering composer of the twentieth century, was closely linked to dance. His early commissions for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes—*The Firebird*, *Petrouchka*, and *The Rite of Spring*—put him on the international map and propelled both ballet and music into the modern age. Even so, these brilliant pieces were but a prelude to Stravinsky's lifelong exploration of dance and dance idioms, as Charles M. Joseph convincingly demonstrates in this penetrating survey of all of the composer's ballet music. Joseph provides superb analyses of each of Stravinsky's ballet pieces, examining the composer's own drafts, notes, and sketches to discover how he conceived of and developed each work. The book also explores how Stravinsky's unorthodox new music energized colleagues, among them George Balanchine, and attracted a glittering array of artists including Tamara Karsavina, Vaslav Nijinski, Picasso, and Jean Cocteau. Joseph creates an intense, intimate portrait of Stravinsky and offers a fresh perspective on the musical revolutionary who changed the definition of music made for dance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This excellent source offers a unique approach to analysis of ballet, recording its history—as seen through the life and work of Stravinsky—and reflecting the impact of Russian culture on ballet and music of the 20th century. With its 33 pages of endnotes and 4-page bibliography of primary sources, this book is a scholarly delight."—C.T. Bond, Choice (C.T. Bond Choice)

Charles M. Joseph is professor emeritus of music and the former dean and vice president of academic affairs, Skidmore College. He is the author of two previous books published by Yale University Press, *Stravinsky and Balanchine*, the winner of an ASCAP Award in Biography, and *Stravinsky Inside Out*. He lives in Saratoga Springs, NY.

I found this to be academically written with very detailed knowledge used to describe various ballets. I was interested in what he had to say about *FIREBIRD*. interesting, but based too much on information he absorbed from sources. *NIGHTINGALE*, I was interested in to see how he described that . . . missed the point that it was written as an opera, originally to be produced in Moscow, cancelled due to money. Diaghilev acquired it free of charge and staged it as an opera with mime dancers performing with singers on pews on the side of the stage for Thomas Beecham and Covent Garden that followed Diaghilev's firing of Nijinsky in 1914 for getting married. Disaster! Because Beecham owned the scenery in London due to the breakout of the First World War, Diaghilev decided to do a new production later by using his lover Massine to stage it as a ballet, again not paying Stravinsky for it's use but with singers again. Then when Balanchine had joined the company and Massine had broken off with Diaghilev as his lover, Diaghilev replaced Massine with Balanchine, who was not his lover but only hired to do choreography. Diaghilev was able to get Stravinsky to re-orchestrate the score without singers to be staged as another version (this time Stravinsky got paid). A lot of sex was involved in many of these productions, which is simply passed over, not to be mentioned, which is a VERY interesting aspect to the many ballets produced by Diaghilev. When *FIREBIRD* was being invented, Pavlova made it known early that she would not participate in the 1910 season from the end of the '1909 Saison Russe'. Nijinsky, hearing that Pavlova refused to perform for Diaghilev, than went to Fokine and asked to be used in the Firebird role, which Fokine refused to go along with.

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