

Chopin. However, this also formed the basis of a ballet, Chopiniana, which took different forms, even in Fokine's hands. As Les Sylphides, what we consider the work was premiered by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes on 2 June 1909 at Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris. The Diaghilev premiere is the most famous, as its soloists were Tamara Karsavina, Vaslav Nijinsky (as the poet, dreamer, or young man), Anna Pavlova, and Alexandra Baldina. The long white tutu that Pavlova originally danced in, and that the entire female corps de ballet adopted soon after, was designed by Léon Bakst and inspired by a lithograph of Marie Taglioni dressed as a sylph.

The London premiere, in the first season of the Diaghilev Ballets Russes, was at the Royal Opera House. With more sylph-like elusiveness, the North American premiere might be dated by an unauthorized version in the Winter Garden, New York, on 14 June 1911 (featuring Baldina alone from the Diaghilev cast). However, its authorized premiere on that continent, by Diaghilev Ballets Russes, was at the Century Theater, New York City, 20 January 1916, with Lydia Lopokova (who also featured in the unauthorized production five years earlier). Nijinsky danced it with that company at the Metropolitan Opera on 14 April 1916, where it was paired with a similar work to a piano suite (by Robert Schumann), Papillons, also choreographed by Fokine. Fokine also set the ballet for several other companies, and he and his wife, Vera Fokina, danced its leading roles themselves for some years.

Ballet Music by *Tchaikovsky* *Chopin*

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Orchestra Of The Royal Opera House,
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Tchaikovsky was approached by the Director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg, Ivan Vsevolozhsky on 25 May 1888 about a possible ballet adaptation on the subject of the story of Undine. It was later decided that Charles Perrault's *La Belle au bois dormant* would be the story for which Tchaikovsky would compose the music for the ballet. Tchaikovsky did not hesitate to accept the commission, although he was aware that his only previous ballet, *Swan Lake*, met with little enthusiasm at that stage of his career.

The ballet scenario that Tchaikovsky worked on was based on the Brothers Grimm's version of Perrault's work entitled '*Dornröschen*'. In that version, the Princess's parents (the King and the Queen) survived the 100-year sleep to celebrate the Princess's wedding to the Prince. However, Vsevolozhsky incorporated Perrault's other characters from his stories into the ballet, such as Puss in Boots, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Bluebird, Bluebeard, Ricky of the Tuft and Tom Thumb. Other French fairy tale characters to be featured are Beauty and the Beast, Pretty Goldilocks and The White Cat. Regardless, Tchaikovsky was happy to inform the Director of the Imperial Theatre that he had great pleasure studying the work and had come away with adequate inspiration to do it justice.^[citation needed]

The choreographer was Marius Petipa, ballet master of the Imperial Ballet, who wrote a very detailed list of instructions as to the musical requirements. Tchaikovsky worked quickly on the new

work at Frolovskoye; he began initial sketches in the winter of 1888 and began orchestration on the work on 30 May 1889.

The ballet's focus was undeniably on the two main conflicting forces of good (the Lilac Fairy) and evil (*Carabosse*); each has a leitmotif representing them, which run through the entire ballet, serving as an important thread to the underlying plot. Act III of the work, however, takes a complete break from the two motifs and instead places focus on the individual characters of the various court dances.

The *Les Sylphides* ballet, described as a "romantic reverie", is frequently cited as the first ballet to be simply about mood and dance. *Les Sylphides* has no plot but instead consists of several white-clad sylphs dancing in the moonlight with the "poet" or "young man" dressed in white tights and a black tunic.

Its original choreography was by Michel Fokine, with music by Frédéric Chopin orchestrated by Alexander Glazunov. Glazunov had already set some of the music in 1892 as a purely orchestral suite, under the title *Chopiniana*, Op. 46. In that form, it was introduced to the public in December 1893, conducted by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

Identifying the premiere of the fuller ballet poses a challenge. One might say that it premiered in 1907 at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg as *Rêverie Romantique: Ballet sur la musique de*

Ansermet conducts Ballet Music Vol II with the

The Orchestra Of The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Tchaikovsky Sleeping Beauty

1 Introduction - The Lilac Fairy - Prologue 19:04

2 Rose Adagio - Pase D'Action - Act 1 16:10

3 Waltz - Act 1 4:31

Chopin Les Sylphides

4 Overture: Prelude In A Major, Opus 28, No. 7 1:50

5 Mazurka In C Major, Opus 67, No. 3 1:57

6 Grande Valse Brillante In E Flat Major, Opus 18 5:41

Total Time: 49:13

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Producer: Michael Williamson Engineer: Kenneth Wilkinson**



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