

Debussy's music; what few glimpses of discreet melodies the movement affords (such as the glassy violin solo that arrives some sixty bars into the piece, or the brief horn gesture soon after the metric change to 6/8) are soon subsumed into the complex orchestral fabric. There are passages during which the rhythmic and metric scheme is obscured, perhaps intentionally so, by as many as six or seven different layers of simultaneous activity. The movement ends with one of the most striking of the composer's musical affirmations: In an enigmatic gesture, the final forte-fortissimo brass attack dies away to piano as the movement draws to a close.

The scoring of "Jeux de vagues" is, on the whole, more austere than that of the first movement. Frequent trills and bursts of rhythmic vitality vividly bring to life the movement's frolicsome, unpredictable subject matter, while the extremely quiet ending purposely fails to resolve any of the musical expectations set out in the preceding, more active sections. The scoring of this passage (solo flute and harp harmonics) recalls the identical orchestration as used by the composer at the end of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (*Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*; 1894). Indeed, these parallel passages are quite similar in dramatic purpose.

The final "Dialogue" is a tumultuous juxtaposition of an urgent, articulated rhythmic gesture -- first introduced pianissimo by the cellos and basses and ingeniously manipulated throughout the movement -- with a grandiose legato idea that many have likened to the melodies of César Franck (an important influence upon the young Debussy). A sustained forte-fortissimo brings this violent, elemental work to a powerful close.

Stravinsky

Le Sacre Du Printemps

Debussy

La Mer



LEONARD BERNSTEIN / NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC



The Rite of Spring, original French *Le Sacre du printemps: tableaux de la Russie païenne en deux parties*, English in full *The Rite of Spring: Pictures from Pagan Russia in Two Parts*, ballet by Russian modernist composer Igor Stravinsky that premiered at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris on May 29, 1913. It is considered one of the first examples of Modernism in music and is noted for its brutality, its barbaric rhythms, and its dissonance. Its opening performance provided one of the most scandalous premieres in history, with pro and con members of the audience arguing so volubly that the dancers were unable to take their cues from the orchestra. The Rite of Spring still strikes many contemporary listeners as a startlingly modern work.

The piece was commissioned by the noted impresario of the Ballets Russes, Serge Diaghilev, who earlier had produced the young composer's *The Firebird* (1910) and *Petrushka* (1911). Stravinsky developed the story of *The Rite of Spring*, originally to be called *The Great Sacrifice*, with the aid of artist and mystic Nicholas Roerich, whose name appears with the composer's on the title page of the earliest publications of the score. The production was choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky, and its sets and costumes were designed by Roerich.

Like Stravinsky's earlier works for the Ballet Russes, *The Rite of Spring* was inspired by Russian culture, but, unlike them, it challenged the audience with its chaotic percussive momentum.

In the mid-20th century, Stravinsky revised the orchestration for concert performance, and that version of the score remains the version that is most commonly performed. In 1987, however, the ballet as it was first conceived

and performed, with original set and costumes and Nijinsky's choreography (which had been seen for only seven performances before it was superseded by new choreography from Léonide Massine), was painstakingly reconstructed and re-created by the Joffrey Ballet. The centenary of the ballet's premiere prompted other ballet companies, notably the Mariinsky in St. Petersburg, to also revive the work in its original form.

Debussy's *La Mer* (*The Sea*; 1903–1905) is one of the most famous non-symphonic orchestral pieces ever written. During the 1890s, oceanic imagery had proven a recurrent source of inspiration for the composer. *Sirènes*, the third of the *Nocturnes* (1897–1900), and passages from the opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1893–1905) at once bear testament to a certain nautical bent. *La Mer*, however, goes a great deal farther than any previous work -- by Debussy or any other composer -- in capturing the raw essence of this most evocative of nature's faces. *La Mer* is no mere exercise in musical scene-painting, but rather a sonic representation of the myriad thoughts, moods, and basic instinctual reactions the sea draws from an individual human soul.

La Mer comprises three distinct movements: "De l'aube à midi sur la mer" (From Dawn to Noon on the Sea), "Jeux de vagues" (The Play of the Waves), and "Dialogue du vent et de la mer" (Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea). "De l'aube à midi sur la mer" unfolds in 6/8 following a *Très lent* (very slow) introduction. As in so much of the composer's mature music, it is not always possible to draw a clear distinction between thematic material and accompaniment and texture. Indeed, texture itself is often paramount in

Stravinsky Le Sacre Du Printemps Debussy La Mer

Leonard Bernstein - The New York Philharmonic Orchestra

Le Sacre Du Printemps (The Rite Of Spring)

1 Adoration Of The Earth 15:49

2 The Sacrifice 18:45

La Mer

3 I—De L'Aube À Midi Sur La Mer (From Dawn To Noon On The Sea) 9:09

4 II—Jeux De Vagues (Play Of The Waves) 6:44

5 III—Dialogue Du Vent Et De La Mer (Dialogue Of The Wind And The Sea) 8:21

Stravinsky Released by Columbia Records 1958

Debussy Released 1965 - Producer John McClure



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