



Smithsonian Associates

The Best of Ballet Music: The Soul of Movement

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Thursday, January 12, 2023 - 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. ET

We love the spectacle and the sets, we adore the costumes, we thrill to the brilliance and beauty of the choreography and the performers, and above all we are moved and exalted by the music. But while dance is as old as we are, ballet is a much more recent evolution. By tracing ballet's rapid journey from French courtly dance to an internationally beloved artform, we find its path travels directly through the magnificent scores of composers like Debussy, Stravinsky, Copland, and of course, Tchaikovsky.

WK 1. SYLLABUS & WORKS

JAN 12 From the *Ballet de la Nuit* to *Swan Lake*

Ballet is a unique experience in performance art, but what really takes it to its greatest heights is the musical score. It's a bald but undeniable fact that the finest ballets are driven by the finest music. But finding composers who understood how to write for dance wasn't always easy. Today we illuminate ballet's origins in the French court of the Sun King, its long-standing partnership with opera, and celebrate its first great scores by Adolphe Adam, Léo Delibes, and Tchaikovsky. Ballets include *Giselle*, *Coppélia*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*.

British-born concert pianist Rachel Franklin has been a featured speaker for organizations including the Library of Congress and NPR, exploring intersections among classical and jazz music, film scores, and the fine arts.

Works explored, media used:

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687): Ballet de la Nuit, 1653

- Entrée d'Apollon, la Compagnie l'Eventail, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l09uJkHJI8g>

- Excerpt from film, "Le Roi Danse," 2000

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqMIUoeubLI>

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714- 1787): Don Juan, 1761

- la Compagnie l'Eventail, 2006

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8bjlCzIwic>

- Malandain Ballet Biarritz, 2005

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdktG6Wa5fk>

Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864): Robert le Diable, 1830

- Royal Opera House, clip from Ballet of the Nuns, 2012

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fwehe3L6D1g>

- Teatro Juarez, Guanajuto, Mexico, Alicia Alonso and Jorge Esquivel, 1972

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUt3VnRs2Tc&t=362s>

Adolphe Adam (1803-1856): Giselle, 1841

- Royal Ballet documentary, Marianela Nuñez and Vadim Muntagirov in rehearsal with choreographer Peter Wright, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6E24RojO4vI&t=16s>

- Royal Ballet, Marianela Nuñez, Mad Scene, Act I finale, 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySHiD3-zDi0>

- Royal Ballet, Natalia Osipova and Carlos Acosta, Act II pas de deux, 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ql3o-1eSdbQ>

Léo Delibes (1836-1891): Coppélia, 1870

- École de Danse de l'Opéra National de Paris, Charline Giezendanner, 2001

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBZ05MGb1RQ&t=501s>

- Royal Ballet, choreography Ninette de Valois. Marianela Nuñez, Gary Avis, 2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDYKDFM5A5s>

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893): Swan Lake, 1877

- Mariinsky Theatre, Ulyana Lopatkina & Danina Korsuntsev, Swan Lake Act II pas de deux (love duet), 2007

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SKgGF4v8_c

- Billy Elliot final scene, Adam Cooper, 2000

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=989pUycUqAg>

- Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake, early 2000's, Adam Cooper, Scott Ambler

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prms4ZqA_N4

Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty, 1889

- Bolshoi, Mariinsky Theatre, Act 1 garland waltz, Petipa revised Sergeev, 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBEqq2HO-yl>

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker, 1892

- New York City Ballet: Dance of the Flowers, Balanchine version, Ashley Bouder, 2011

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKcZL8q1eBw>

- Bolshoi Ballet: Grigovovich choreography, after Petipa, Nina Kaptsova, 2010

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Wz4cG5phfA>