



## Ballet Music: The Soul of Movement

*Dr. Rachel Franklin*

Tuesday, October 7-28, 2025 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET

### Ballet Music: The Soul of Movement

#### **Week 2, Oct. 14th: Tchaikovsky Changes Everything**

Tchaikovsky declared, “I totally fail to understand how the expression ‘ballet music’ can be something disapproving!” He fought for his dance scores to be taken as seriously as his other works. His exquisite vision of fairytale beauty demanded an entirely new level of choreographic expression, and both dancers and choreographers struggled to match his dramatic sweep. Surveying the history of *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and *The Sleeping Beauty* offers us insights into a new tradition of dance music that laid the groundwork for our richest ballet experiences today. We draw links between Giselle and Swan Lake, and also enjoy dazzling technique and acting from Mikhail Baryshnikov in Ludwig Minkus’ *Don Quixote*.

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#### **Works explored, media used**

Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917): Don Quixote, 1869

- American Ballet Theatre, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Cynthia Harvey, 1983  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n14w-KkEXww&list=RDn14w-KkEXww&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n14w-KkEXww&list=RDn14w-KkEXww&start_radio=1)

Analysis of Baryshnikov technique

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhN4\\_vSPyAl&list=RDEhN4\\_vSPyAl&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhN4_vSPyAl&list=RDEhN4_vSPyAl&start_radio=1)

Minkus: La Bayadère, 1877

- Marcelino Sambé, Royal Ballet  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9S3Du31Au4c>

Adolphe Adam (1803-1856): Giselle, 1841

- Royal Ballet, Natalia Osipova and Carlos Acosta, Act II pas de deux, 2015  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ql3o-1eSdbQ>

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

Billy Elliot final scene, Adam Cooper, 2000

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

Swan Lake: Ratmansky reconstruction of Petipa choreography, La Scala, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTFAfYIJE0>

Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake, early 2000's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvMT5MblXX4>

Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty, 1889

- Bolshoi, Mariinsky Theatre, Act 1 garland waltz, Petipa revised Sergeev, 2015  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBEqq2HO-yI>

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker, 1892

- Bolshoi Ballet: Grigovovich choreography, after Petipa, Nina Kaptsova, 2010  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Wz4cG5phfA>
- Arabian Dance, Sergey Chumakov and Elena Petrichenko, 2014  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sEgjXxjxlw>
- Post:ballet: Waltz of the Snowflakes  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ru5H3LHiU1M>