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IGOR

STRAVINSKY

L'OISEAU DE FEU

The Firebird - Suite 1919

Edited by R. Mark Rogers

FULL SCORE

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PREFACE

The 1919 version of Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* has become one of the most often performed works in the 20th Century classical repertoire. This all-new edition by Mark Rogers is a vast improvement over any other published previously. It is the first completely redone modern engraving of the score and parts. Meticulous care has been taken in comparing it with all prior publications and correcting errors that have persisted for over 100 years. Many rehearsal numbers have been added in musically significant locations, allowing time to be utilized most efficiently by the conductor. In addition, clarinet and trumpet parts in B flat have been added to allow this masterpiece to be more readily performed by amateur, student and professional orchestras alike.

PROGRAM NOTES

All creative artists are affected by the times in which they live, but European composers whose creative periods extended both before and after the two World Wars were especially subject to forces beyond their control. Consider the case of Igor Stravinsky, who emerged from study with Rimsky-Korsakov in Tsarist Russia to explode on the international stage with three Russian-themed ballets, *L'Oiseau de feu* (The Firebird-1910), *Pétrouchka* (Petrushka-1911) and *Le Sacre du printemps* (The Rite of Spring-1913), all written for Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

While international fame was secured by these three scores, financial security was not. Stravinsky went into exile in Switzerland during the first world war, where he composed *L'Histoire du soldat* (The Soldier's Tale), an ill-fated theater piece, which he hoped would bring much needed money to support himself and his family. When the war ended, the communist regime in the newly-formed Soviet Union made it unthinkable that Stravinsky would return to his homeland, and in desperate need of funds he looked for ways to capitalize on earlier success. Though Stravinsky was a capable pianist, he was not a virtuoso like his countrymen Rachmaninoff and Shostakovich, so he became a conductor, largely of his own works. Concert versions of the famous ballets were needed, and the most efficient way to transform theater pieces such as ballets and operas into concert pieces was to extract a suite from the larger scores. This is relatively simple in operas such as Bizet's *Carmen* or ballets such as Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* which are composed as a series of stand alone pieces that can be assembled and rearranged into suites; but this is more difficult with operas such as Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* and Stravinsky's ballet *The Firebird*, in which the music flows continually as it underscores the action.

In 1911, Stravinsky constructed a suite from *The Firebird*, but the suite has two significant drawbacks: 1. It concludes with the *Demonic (Infernal) Dance of Katschei* (omitting the popular *Berceuse and Finale*), and 2. The suite was compiled from the original printing plates, calling for an immense orchestra (quadruple woodwinds, standard brass section, large percussion section, three harps, and strings). Stravinsky launched his conducting career as Europe emerged from the wreckage of the first world war in somewhat tighter financial circumstances, so a suite was needed that included most of the more brilliant sections of the ballet, but scored for a much smaller orchestra, thus causing the composer to create the 1919 suite which has become his most often performed score.

Coda: Stravinsky was plagued by copyright problems with the Diaghilev ballets through his life, so in 1945, shortly before he acquired American citizenship, he agreed to revise the orchestration of these scores, resulting in the creation of a third suite from *The Firebird*. This somewhat more lengthy suite incorporates several additional sections of pantomime omitted from the 1919 suite while retaining the smaller orchestra. The 1945 *Firebird Suite* has thus far failed to replace the ever-popular 1919 rendition. In 1947, he revised the scoring for *Petrushka* and reduced the size of the orchestra, but a suite from the ballet was never produced. Although Stravinsky continued to revise *The Rite of Spring*, with new editions appearing as late as 1965 and 1967, he never issued a version with reduced orchestration (the original calls for quintuple winds, enormous brass section including two Wagner tubas, massive percussion and strings, but neither harps nor piano). A reduced orchestra version of the ballet has been authorized by the publisher, but is restricted to performances as a ballet and forbidden for use in concert settings. A concert suite of excerpts from *The Rite of Spring* therefore remains undone.

Mark Rogers, Editor

CONTENTS

1a. Introduction	5
1b. L'oiseau de feu et sa danse.....	10
1c. Variation de l'oiseau de feu.....	12
2. Ronde des princesses	29
3. Danse infernale du roi Kastcheï.....	40
4a. Berceuse	82
4b. Final	89

INSTRUMENTATION

2 Flutes (2nd d. Piccolo)
 2 Oboes (2nd d. English Horn)
 2 Clarinets in A or B flat
 2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
 2 Trumpets in C or B flat
 3 Trombones
 Tuba

Timpani
 5 Percussion

Piano
 Harp

Strings
 (9.8.7.6.5)

Full Score
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L'OISEAU DE FEU

The Firebird

Suite - 1919

1a. Introduction

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)
edited by R. Mark Rogers

Throughout movements 1a., 1b. and 1c., the parts are notated without key signature, using accidentals only.

$\text{♩} = 108$

The score is arranged in systems for various instruments. The woodwinds (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons) and brass (Horns, Trumpets, Trombones) are mostly silent in this section. The percussion section includes Xylophone, Tambourine, Cymbals, and Bass Drum. The strings (Violins, Violas, Violoncellos, and Contra Basses) play a rhythmic pattern. The piano and harp parts are also present.

Violins 1
Violins 2
Violas
Violoncellos
Contra Basses

Violoncellos: *con sord.*, *pp*, two players, *senza sord.*, *pizz.*
Contra Basses: *pp*, all other players, *con sord.*, *arco*

Violins 1 and 2: $\text{♩} = 108$

Violas: *con sord.*, *pp*

Violoncellos and Contra Basses: *pp*

1 2 3

9

Clars. 1 2

Bsns. 1 2

Horns 1 2 3 4

Trbns. 1 2

Bs. Dr.

Vlins. 1 2

Vlas.

Vcls.

C. Bs.

7 8 9 10 11 12

pp *p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

2nd 4th

ppp *ppp*

pp *pp*

9 10

senza sord. *senza sord.* *(con sord.)* *(con sord.)*

11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2

Clars. 1 2

Bsns. 1 2

Vlins. 1 2

Vlas.

Vcls.

C. Bs.

p *p*