

ABSTRACT

A Conductor's Perspective on Stravinsky's *Danse sacrale* from *Le Sacre du printemps*:
Evaluation of Revisions, Analysis and Considerations for Conducting

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The final dance, *Danse sacrale* from the ballet *Le Sacre du printemps* by Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) presents various challenges for conductors: both textual and technical. For the textual challenges, this research paper focuses on the comparative studies of various revisions, the early sketchbook, and the autograph full score. The study of correspondence between Stravinsky and the early conductors of *Le Sacre* (Pierre Monteux and Ernest Ansermet) also offers important clues for solving the puzzle with which Stravinsky himself had struggled for decades.

Both the 1943-revised version and Nicholas Slonimsky's re-barring of the *Danse sacrale* will be closely examined. Despite Stravinsky's wish that the 1943 version was to supersede the previous versions, it failed to become part of the final 1967 version; it was virtually ignored and not accepted as substitute performing material. Similarly, Slonimsky's re-barring was used by only two conductors: Serge Koussevitzky (for whom the re-barring was made) and Leonard Bernstein. This research paper will discuss the purposes and benefits, as well as problems of both Stravinsky's 1943 revision and Slonimsky's re-barring of the *Danse sacrale*.

In this research paper, an in-depth rhythmic analysis of the *Danse sacrale* will also be included. Following Pierre Boulez's rhythmic cell analysis, the author will go even further to find the hidden rhythmic structures that are symmetrical and transformational.

Finally, two important considerations for conducting the *Danse sacrale* will be discussed. First, determining the correct metrical groupings and the correct divisions for asymmetrical meters, according to the rhythmic structure, is key to finding an efficient way to conduct the rhythmically complex score of the *Danse sacrale*. Second, an important performance practice regarding the tempo issues in the *Danse sacrale* will be discussed with examples from various recordings, especially the three recordings that Stravinsky conducted in 1929, 1940, and 1960.