

Stravinsky



Life, Music, and Activities



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Stravinsky: Life, Music, and Activities





Life and Accomplishments Summary

Igor Stravinsky was born in Oranienbaum, near Saint Petersburg, Russia, in 1882. He grew up in a musical family. His father, Fyodor Stravinsky, was a famous bass singer, and music was part of family life from an early age.

Although Stravinsky first studied law at the University of Saint Petersburg, he became increasingly devoted to music. He studied composition privately with the Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who helped him develop his skills in orchestration and musical form.

Stravinsky became internationally famous through three early ballets written for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes: *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*. The first performance of *The Rite of Spring* in Paris caused a famous uproar, but the work later became one of the most influential compositions of the twentieth century.

Stravinsky's music changed greatly during his long career. His early works often used Russian folk ideas and brilliant orchestral color. Later, he explored neoclassicism, drawing inspiration from older musical forms, and still later he used serial techniques. He was especially admired for bold rhythms, changing meters, surprising accents, and inventive orchestration.

During World War I, Stravinsky lived in Switzerland. He later settled in France and moved to the United States in 1939, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1945. Other important works include *The Soldier's Tale*, *Pulcinella*, *Symphony of Psalms*, and the opera *The Rake's Progress*.

Stravinsky died in New York City in 1971 and was buried in Venice, Italy. Today he is remembered as one of the most important and innovative composers of modern music, whose ideas about rhythm, color, and musical style continue to influence composers and performers around the world.

Comprehension Questions

Use the summary page to answer each question in complete sentences.

1. Where and when was Igor Stravinsky born?

2. What kind of family did Stravinsky grow up in?

3. What subject did Stravinsky first study at the university?

4. Which composer became Stravinsky's important teacher?

5. Name the three early ballets that made Stravinsky famous.

6. Who commissioned Stravinsky's early ballets for the Ballets Russes?

7. What happened at the first performance of *The Rite of Spring*?

8. What are two musical features for which Stravinsky is especially admired?

9. In which country did Stravinsky live during World War I?

10. To which country did Stravinsky move in 1939?

11. Name one important work Stravinsky wrote besides his three early ballets.

12. Why is Stravinsky remembered as an important composer today?

Crossword Puzzle: Grid

Use the facts from this workbook to complete the crossword.





Comprehension Answer Key

Use the summary page to review the correct responses.

1. ➔ Igor Stravinsky was born in Oranienbaum, near Saint Petersburg, Russia, in 1882.

2. ➔ Stravinsky grew up in a musical family.

3. ➔ Stravinsky first studied law at the University of Saint Petersburg.

4. ➔ His important teacher was Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

5. ➔ His three famous early ballets were *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*.

6. ➔ Sergei Diaghilev commissioned Stravinsky's early ballets for the Ballets Russes.

7. ➔ The first performance of *The Rite of Spring* caused a famous uproar in Paris.

8. ➔ Stravinsky is especially admired for bold rhythms, changing meters, surprising accents, and inventive orchestration.

9. ➔ During World War I, Stravinsky lived in Switzerland.

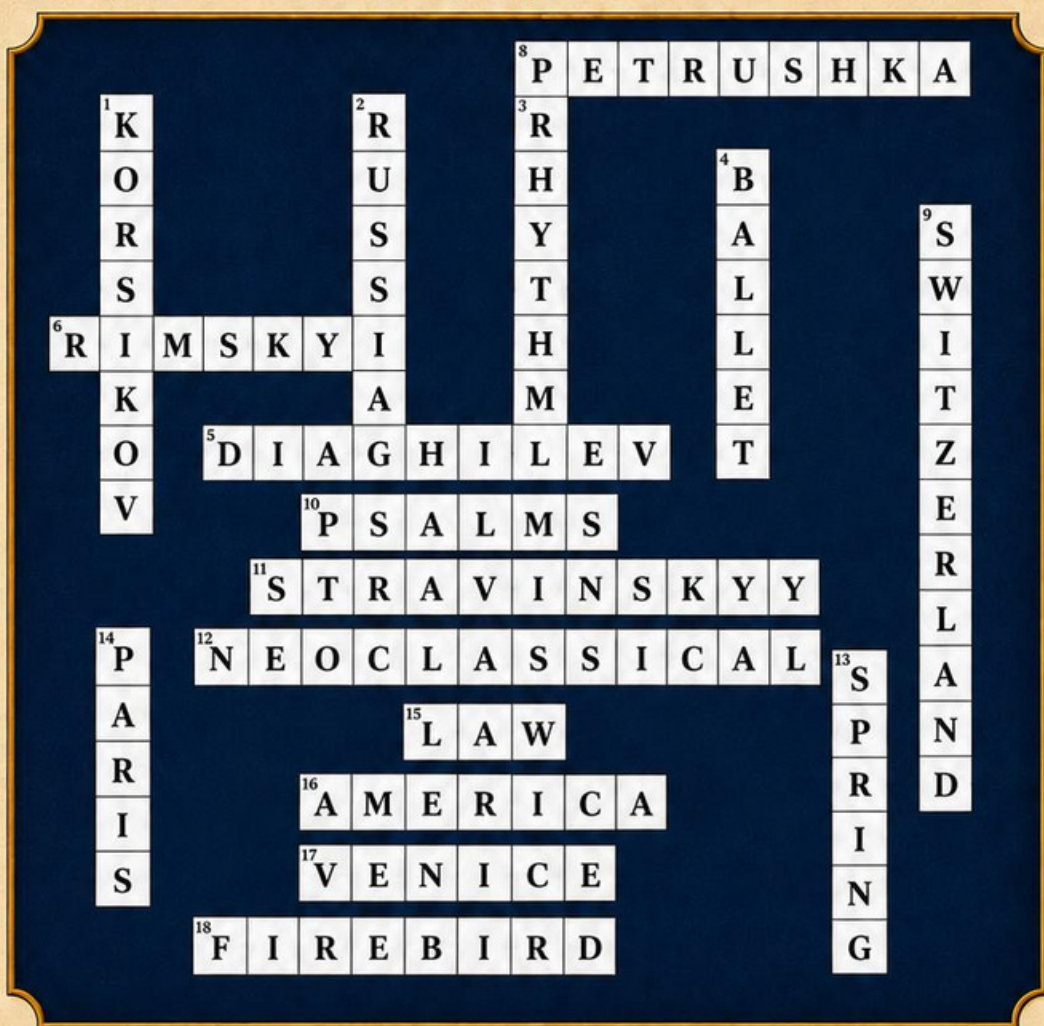
10. ➔ In 1939, he moved to the United States.

11. ➔ Accept one: *The Soldier's Tale*, *Pulcinella*, *Symphony of Psalms*, or *The Rake's Progress*.

12. ➔ Stravinsky is remembered as an important composer because he helped transform modern music and still influences composers and performers today.



Crossword Solution Grid





Crossword Answer Key

Across

- 5. DIAGHILEV
- 7. SERIAL
- 8. PETRUSHKA
- 10. PSALMS
- 11. STRAVINSKY
- 12. NEOCLASSICAL
- 15. LAW
- 16. AMERICA
- 17. VENICE
- 18. FIREBIRD

Down

- 1. KORSAKOV
- 2. RUSSIA
- 3. RHYTHM
- 4. BALLET
- 6. RIMSKY
- 9. SWITZERLAND
- 13. SPRING
- 14. PARIS