

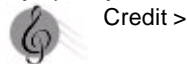
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Symphony in Three Movements



Photo © Paul Kolnik

Music [Symphony in Three Movements \(1945\) by Igor Stravinsky](#)



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Choreography [George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust](#)

Premiere [June 18, 1972, New York City Ballet, Stravinsky Festival, New York State Theater](#)

Original Cast [Sara Leland, Marnee Morris, Lynda Yourth, Helgi Tomasson, Edward Villella, Robert Weiss](#)

Average Length [22 min.](#)

Introduced on opening night of the 1972 Stravinsky Festival, *Symphony in Three Movements*, a large ensemble work, is startling in its breadth of energy, complexity, originality, and contrasts. Balanchine responded to the jazz flavor in Stravinsky's score by using angular, turned-in movements and brisk, athletic walking sequences. Stravinsky composed the symphony's three movements at different times for three different films, although they were never actually used on screen. He said the music expressed his impressions of World War II, but he vigorously denied that the composition was programmatic in any way – a denial shared by Balanchine. "Choreographers combine movements, and the ones I arranged for this music follow no story line or narrative," Balanchine said. "They try to catch the music and do not, I hope, lean on it, using it instead for support and time frame." Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), born in Russia, is acknowledged as one of the great composers of the 20th century. His work encompassed styles as diverse as Romanticism, Neoclassicism and Serialism. His ballets for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes included *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, *The Rite of Spring*, and *Apollo*. His music has been used in over 30 ballets originating with New York City Ballet from 1948 through 1987, including *Danses Concertantes*, *Orpheus*, *The Cage*, *Agon*, *Monumentum pro Gesualdo*, *Rubies*, *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto*, *Concerto for Two Solo Pianos*, *Suite from L'Histoire du Soldat*, *Concertino*, and *Jeu de Cartes*.

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— Peter Martins

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