Revisiting Modernism and the Ballets Russes: What Contemporary Choreography Can Learn from Diaghilev

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I. Introduction

The time is 8:30pm on May 29th, 1913. Dressed in elegant evening gowns and flaunting their finest top hats, the most fashionable Parisians, international travelers, reputable critics, writers, artists, and musicians alike, have taken their seats in the new Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in Paris, France. In fifteen minutes, the curtain will open on one of the most anticipated performances Paris has seen since the arrival of the Russian Ballet in 1909—the premiere of the Ballets Russes's *Le sacre du printemps*. Throughout the months, days, and moments preceding the premiere, Paris is rife with anticipatory excitement and buzzing with rumors of an unprecedented artistic collaboration: Sergei Diaghilev, impresario of the Ballets Russes and co-founder of the Russian art magazine *Mir iskusstva*, is planning a daring collaboration between Igor Stravinsky, Vaslav Nijinsky, and Nicholas Roerich. Stravinsky is composing an original score that calls for a huge, ninety-nine-player orchestra. Nijinsky has the near impossible task of choreographing dances that will complement Stravinsky's polyrhythmic, dissonant composition. Roerich is painting massive sets and designing intricate costumes for an entire troupe of dancers. News spreads that Nijinsky has held over one hundred rehearsals with the dancers, the orchestra has rehearsed seventeen times, and the entire ensemble will rehearse five times before the premiere. In short, the curtain opened that night on one of the most ambitious, not to mention costly, productions the Ballets Russes ever attempted.¹

¹ These details from the premiere of *Le sacre du printemps* are outlined and expounded upon in Thomas Forrest Kelly's *First Nights: Five Musical Premieres*. 
The ballet was as controversial as it was expensive. It told the story of a pagan ritual in prehistoric Russia wherein a virgin is selected by her tribe for sacrifice and forced to dance herself death. Even more controversial than the subject matter was Nijinsky’s choreography, which combined violent stomping with awkward, turned-in positions, sharing no resemblance to any step in classical ballet. Gossip about the financial risks, Stravinsky’s groundbreaking score, the barbaric subject matter, and the unconventional choreography of the production, managed to secure the Ballets Russes a sold out performance on the night of May 29th at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées (Kelly 282). The beau monde of Paris came in droves, equipped with whistles and other noisemakers, primed for scandal. Yet for all the suspense that Le sacre created, no one could have predicted the chaos that would ensue when the curtain went up. The theatre was split between those who cheered, applauded, and cried “bravo!” and those who hissed, laughed, blew whistles, and catcalled the performers. Despite an audience approaching a riot, Diaghilev ordered his dancers and the orchestra to keep calm. His dancers recall him saying, “Whatever happens, the ballet must be performed to the end.” (Grigoriev 83)

Predictably, Le sacre was a financial flop. The Ballets Russes only held five subsequent performances over the remainder of their Champs-Elysées season (Kelly 293). “The whole thing has been done by four idiots,” proclaimed Enrico Cecchetti, “first, M. Stravinsky who wrote the music. Second, M. Roerich who designed the scenery and costumes. Third, M. Nijinsky who composed the dances. Fourth, M. Diaghilev who wasted money on it.” (Kelly 257) Despite clear financial failure and an ongoing rift in critical reception, Le sacre traveled to London for four more
performances in 1913, and the scandal did not prevent the company from traveling to the United States in 1916. For all the uproar, *Le sacre* is easily the Ballets Russes's most famous production over one hundred years later. It is reconstructed for major ballet companies, discussed in university classrooms, and scrutinized by scholars and devotees alike. In 2013 *Le sacre* was performed by an exceptional number of orchestras and ballet companies worldwide in centennial celebration of the ballet's premiere. The truth is that these so-called “four idiots” came together for a monumental collaboration that remains one of the most significant contributions to music, art, and dance to date.

Why is this story relevant today? To begin answering this question it is useful to consider the final chapter in Jennifer Homans' *Apollo's Angels*, “The Masters are Dead and Gone.” Homans concludes her comprehensive history of ballet with the discouraging assertion that “ballet is dying.” She argues that the art form has entered an irreversible decline since the death or retirement of a great number of artists who, in her opinion, were the geniuses responsible for the success and widespread popularity of ballet throughout the twentieth century (549). George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Anthony Tudor, Igor Stravinsky, Frederick Ashton, and Agrippina Vaganova are among the select few that Homans mourns, insisting that “their students and heirs have been curiously unable to rise to the challenge of their legacy.” (540-541) She also blames the weak connection between the general public and the “ballet world” for the imminent death of the art form. “Dance today has shrunk into a recondite world of hyperspecialists and balletomanes, insiders who talk to each other... and ignore the public,” She says. “The result is a regrettable
disconnect: most people today do not feel they ‘know enough’ to judge a dance” (548). Despite citing these two key issues—a lack of innovators and a disconnection between the public and the ballet world—Homans offers no solution to the death sentence she has given ballet, and Apollo’s Angels ends on a somber note.

In a piece for The Hopkins Review titled “New Ballets for a Silver Age,” Jay Rogoff disputes the negative conclusion to Jennifer Homans’ history of ballet, asserting, “Homans, however, forgets that ballet endures such crises cyclically.” He references the rise of Marius Petipa in Russia after the decline of ballet in the French courts of Louis XIV and the dramatic transition from Tchaikovsky to Stravinsky that “propelled Serge Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes to world renown” as evidence of ballet’s historically cyclical nature. Rogoff furthers his disagreement with Homans by pointing out that “we can’t, in fact, predict the coming of the next ballet genius, or how such a figure might make dance simultaneously traditional and new... a new messiah might or might not now promenade among us” (582).

However, Rogoff does go on to predict the “next genius,” joining a chorus of contemporary dance critics that praise the artistic vision of former New York City Ballet dancer turned choreographer, Christopher Wheeldon. Wheeldon lends credence to Rogoff’s “cyclical nature of dance” theory as an heir to Balanchine’s legacy at City Ballet and by frequently referring to his admiration of Sergei Diaghilev’s knack for spearheading artistic collaborations. The mission statement for Wheeldon’s former company, “Morphoses,” alludes to the Ballets Russes’s impact on the director. The company’s artistic vision is to “revitalize the art form of dance by fostering cutting-edge artistry and collaboration among various media to present
theatrical experiences that challenges assumptions and moves ballet forward into the 21st century.” Wheeldon also seeks to “build an audience for dance by presenting a multi-media experience that bridges the gap between artists and our audience.” (morphoses.org) These excerpts from Wheeldon’s mission statement could hardly contradict more directly Homans’ contention that ballet is going nowhere in the twenty-first century and that the gap between “balletomanes” and the general public only continues to widen.

In two of his articles, “New Ballets for a Silver Age” and “Christopher Wheeldon, Between Ballet’s Past and Future,” Rogoff struggles to decide whether to let praise or criticism reign in his reviews of Wheeldon’s ballets. In the latter article, he alludes to his support of Wheeldon’s collaborative mission, and advises him to continue deriving “structural guidance” from the Ballets Russes (Rogoff 283). However, Rogoff is not convinced that Wheeldon has followed through with his “gospel of artistic collaboration” since he has failed to commission a librettist, which would thereby complete the Diaghilev-style quartet (Cecchetti’s “fourth idiot”). The ballet that Rogoff fails to acknowledge when he makes this criticism is Christopher Wheeldon’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, the first full-length ballet commissioned by the Royal Ballet of London in nearly twenty years, which premiered in February, 2011 (a year and a half before the publication of Rogoff’s most recent article on Wheeldon). Wheeldon collaborated with famous playwright, Nicholas Wright to adapt Lewis Carroll’s timeless children’s story. Joby Talbot composed an original score for the ballet, and Bob Crowley created original sets and costumes. Wheeldon had a choreographer (himself), a librettist (Wright), a
composer (Talbot), and a designer (Crowley). By emulating Diaghilev and bringing artists from a variety of media together, Christopher Wheeldon clearly brought his mission of artistic collaboration to fruition. The result was a critically acclaimed, full-length production that redefined the use of multi-media in ballet.

With the viewpoints of Homans and Rogoff in mind, it is appropriate to return to the question, "Why is this story [of the premiere of *Le sacre du printemps*] relevant today?" I will argue that the story of *Le sacre* is relevant today because it represents a model with the potential to remedy the "irreversible decline" of ballet that Jennifer Homans and other dance critics lament. The buzz that *Le sacre* created at the epicenter of Paris and elsewhere in Europe and the United States helped to bridge the gap between, as Jennifer Homans puts it, "hyperspecialists" or "balletomanes" and the general public. *Le sacre* and other Ballets Russes productions attracted diverse audiences of individuals who could be considered external to the "dance world." How can we engage the general public and artists from other disciplines with dance in 2014 and beyond as the Ballets Russes did in Paris from 1909 to 1929? The answer is, as Wheeldon shows us, in part by using Diaghilev, his Ballets Russes, and the ideals of modernist collaboration as a model for public engagement and artistic success. While contemporary critics acknowledge Wheeldon's triumphs in innovation, they fail to acknowledge the importance of modernism and the Ballets Russes to his art, an oversight that inhibits other choreographers and artists from learning from Diaghilev's methodology.

**
In order to discover some of the features of what contemporary choreographers, dancers, artists, and musicians can learn from the Ballets Russes and the defining artistic movement of which they were a part—modernism—we must first take a journey back to Paris in the early twentieth century and work to unravel modernism’s meaning in relation to different artistic media. We must ask complicated questions: What is modernism? What defines artistic success? What does it take to make something truly new? By asking such questions we can come to a deeper understanding of the conditions necessary to create a thriving artistic environment on a global scale. Furthermore, these questions may illuminate how artistic collaboration can be productively facilitated and how it can enhance the quality of productions, extend public engagement, and ensure the lasting impact of a ballet, propelling the art form forward into the twenty-first century.

Unlike many artistic and cultural movements of the twentieth century, there is no single, unified definition of modernism, whether in terms of its scope, timeframe, or impact. Therefore, in order to make sense of the term it is helpful to define the modernist movement by analyzing parallels between the different arts that constituted modernism, including literature, music, visual art, and dance. To reach a more unified definition of modernism, I will focus on two artistic spheres of activity in the early twentieth century—the self-declared “modernist” and transnational literature and art magazine, Rhythm, and of course, Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes. Rhythm, a magazine that frequently reviewed and published illustrations of Ballets Russes productions, demonstrates how the company attained a wide audience in the age of print media, when the little magazine and
advertisements were skyrocketing to popularity. The characteristics that the works featured in *Rhythm* and the Ballets Russes shared were threefold: 1) the equal expression of artistic elements within a work; whether it be a balanced use of line, color, shape, or movement in one of *Rhythm*'s visual artworks, or an exhibited unity between music, costumes, scenery, and movements in a ballet, 2) the fascination with primitive and exotic themes, and 3) a shift away from aestheticism and towards expressionism. Through a thorough examination of these parallels, the idealistic principles that existed at the forefront of the modernist movement are exposed, allowing for a deeper appreciation and understanding of the movement and revealing that an interdisciplinary ideological connection between artistic fields spearheaded the modernist movement.

In my search for a more integrated definition of modernism I arrived at the following, larger conclusion: that the interdisciplinary interaction that defined modernism has increasing relevance in a world where many critics, such as Jennifer Homans, argue that ballet is dead or dying. While Jay Rogoff disagrees with Homans and alludes to a solution, he fails to perceive the solution being realized right in front of him in Christopher Wheeldon’s artistic vision, which shines through in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. I propose that if contemporary choreographers apply the modernist ideology of interdisciplinary interaction to their own productions, as Wheeldon has begun doing, they will be equipped to survive in a dramatically changing artistic world, reach a wider audience, and, as Ezra Pound put it nearly eighty years ago, “make it new.” (Scholes 26)
II. Part One: The Development of Modernism in Visual Art and Dance

Before an examination of the ideological parallels between *Rhythm* and the Ballets Russes may commence, it is crucial to know where their artists, writers, and thinkers came from and what defined their philosophies prior to their interaction with one other. What were the conditions in place that brought so many artists to France, establishing Paris as the epicenter for innovation at the turn of the twentieth century? Answering this question sets the stage for an analysis of how they interacted and affected one another, working together to shape the modernist movement.

*a. Background: Rhythm Magazine*

*Rhythm* is a magazine with a purpose. Its title is the ideal of a new art, to which it will endeavor to give expression in England.

--*Rhythm,* “Aims and Ideals” (1:1, 36)

Oxford students John Middleton Murry and Michael Sadler founded London-based *Rhythm* magazine in 1911 (Snyder). This “ideal of a new art” they speak of in “Aims and Ideals,” a manifesto published in the first issue of the magazine, takes cues from “Fauvism,” an avant-garde movement that first emerged in early twentieth century France and directly translates to “the wild beasts.” It is so named for the characteristic unnatural color choices and wild brushstrokes of Henri Matisse and André Derain, who spearheaded the movement. In praising Fauvism, Murry and Sadler claim that Fauvist artwork is essentially “rhythmic” in quality. In this respect, the title of the magazine reflects what Murry and Sadler deemed the most important element in an artistic work. After dismissing Post-Impressionism as “futile and misleading” on the grounds that it implies a chronological connection
between Post-Impressionism and Fauvism that Murry and Sadler feel is irrelevant, they declare that if the new art they wish to promote in their magazine must be labeled, only Fauvism is appropriate, though they hope to promote art that has no predetermined associations, that is completely new and free from the limitations of past artistic movements.

Sadler and Murry define this new artistic movement as “a reaction on the one hand against the lifeless mechanism of Pointillism, on the other hand against the moribund flickerings of the aesthetic movement.” (1:1, 14) Pointillism, popularly known as Georges Seurat’s method of Neo-Impressionism, employs a technique in which tiny brushstrokes and dots of contrasting light and color are applied to form huge, detailed compositions. The aesthetic movement, which enjoyed widespread popularity in nineteenth century England, was grounded in the belief that art should only communicate “beauty.” Stating that Fauvism is distinct from these two artistic methods distanced the movement from artistic creation that utilized either a mechanical process (Pointillism), or only embarked on the quest for beauty (Aestheticism).

This was an early declaration of the magazine’s revolutionary disapproval of any artistic style that was lifeless, mechanical, aesthetically driven, or realistic. In many ways, this disapproval was a reaction on the one hand to the rapidly industrializing Europe that many artists found to be alienating and impersonal. With the rise of factory labor, mass transportation, and cold, self-serving capitalism, it was difficult to feel connected to others amongst the masses. As a result, artistic focus shifted towards the primitive, savage, or prehistoric in an effort of flee from
refinement and civilization as well as everything that was connotative of the industrial or mechanical. The “Rhythmists," as they were called, believed that a successful work of art required an expression of what it feels like to exist as a human being in a mechanical world. This deeper understanding of the human experience is what *Rhythm* attempted to manifest in print, and what Murry and Sadler sought to “give expression to in England." The principles of this new artistic style that *Rhythm* attempted to present to an educated elite laid the foundation for the magazine’s success.

During a Christmas vacation to Paris in 1910, John Middleton Murry became fascinated with the art scene he encountered there and the many people he met who shared in his artistic philosophy. He became obsessed not only with French artists, but French philosophers, musicians, choreographers, and enthusiasts as well. The substantial number of French contributions to the magazine is largely attributable to this first French excursion. There are so many French contributions in fact, that one might easily mistake *Rhythm* to have Parisian origins, emphasizing the transnational nature of the magazine’s credo. The magazine proudly displayed itself in select Parisian shops (Demoor 130). In this vein, one of the most important influences over the magazine’s credo came from the ideology of French philosopher Henri Bergson. Murry interprets Bergson’s philosophy of creativity in the very first issue of the magazine.

The philosophy of Bergson has of late come to a tardy recognition in England. In France it is a living artistic force. It is the open avowal of the supremacy of the intuition, of the spiritual vision of the artist in form, in words and meaning. (Murry, 1:1, 9)
Later in the first issue, in one of the earliest uses of the term, Murry goes on to define modernism in a manner that alludes to the underlying influence of Bergson’s creative philosophy on the magazine.

Modernism is not the capricious outburst of intellectual dipsomania. It penetrates beneath the outward surface of the world, and disengages the rhythms that lie at the heart of things, rhythms strange to the eye, unaccustomed to the ear, primitive harmonies of the world that is and lives. (Murry, 1:1, 12)

Bergson’s philosophy emphasizes the power an artist’s intuition has to reflect spiritual or elemental truths about him/herself. This corresponds with Murry’s definition of modernism as something that pursues an elemental understanding of the human experience. He believes the best way to capture the experience of humanity is through the abstracted concept of “rhythm.” Hence, the title of the magazine reflects not only the artistic quality that the magazine believes is the most important in a work of art, but is also representative of the magazine’s philosophy on art as a means of communicating the human experience.

b. Background: The Ballets Russes

One of the most significant facets of Murry and Sadler’s endeavor to share a budding French artistic style—Fauvism—with their native Britain, is that it reflected their belief that their ideas would be best expressed and developed through transnational artistic interaction. A similar transnational spirit occurred simultaneously with a band of Russian artists. Sergei Diaghilev, Alexander Benois, and Léon Bakst, a ballet and theater impresario, a designer, and a painter, respectively, shared an enthusiasm for art criticism and promotion of the arts in Russia. In 1899 Diaghilev, Benois, and Bakst founded the Russian art magazine *Mir*
iskusstva, which translates to "world of art," establishing Diaghilev as Chief Editor and effectively setting up the Russian equivalent of *Rhythm*, which would find its way onto international shelves only twelve years later.

Before falling out of favor with Imperial management, this trio of critics worked together on productions at the Imperial Theater, also known as the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg (Homans 297). The status of ballet in Russia, combined with the revolutionary ideas escalating amongst much of the general Russian public, played a large role in Diaghilev and his affiliates' decision to leave their homeland.

Prior to the revolution, classical ballet was performed only as an elite form of entertainment for the tsar and his Imperial court. It was an art form imported from, ironically, the court of Louis XIV in Paris, where Diaghilev would return the art form in later years. Almost all the dancers on the Russian stage were foreigners, a detail that the Imperial court encouraged as it wished to model itself after Paris (Demidov 1). The tradition of strict Imperial management of the theaters in St. Petersburg and Moscow continued for some two hundred years, and ensured that every production satisfied the tastes of the tsar and wealthy theater attendees (Demidov 6). Without Imperial support to finance the ballets, productions would be impossible. As a consequence, artistic growth was often stunted, and artists began protesting their lack of voice. The extent to which Imperial management controlled the theatres went well beyond the choice of repertoire. Alexander Demidov explains the degree of Imperial involvement in his book, *The Russian Ballet: Past and Present*.

Externally, the Russian ballet of the nineteenth century was enchanting for its splendor and glitter. But backstage aspects were not harmonious.
Basically, the artists were on a condition of servile dependence on the whims of the management, which imposed fines for whatever faults the artists committed and controlled the ballerinas' and danseurs' lives. Even marriages among artists were regulated by the management of the imperial theaters, and were effected under its strict control. (7-8)

This authoritative control over both the creativity of Russian artists and their personal lives resulted in the emigration of many Russian artists before, during, and after the revolution.

Fearing the breakdown of the Russia he had grown up in as well as the loss of many Russian artistic and folk traditions, Diaghilev set out on a mission to preserve and protect “primitive” Russia, just as Rhythm set out to give voice to primitive humanity as a from of liberation from the industrial world. He felt that the only way to preserve the past was by embarking on a journey to share with the world Russia’s vast, hidden artistic heritage (Homans 299). Diaghilev, Benois, and Bakst departed for Paris in 1909 with just this ambition. After successfully showcasing Russian visual art in a Paris exhibition, Diaghilev was ready to move on to a bigger production. Unable to acquire the money to produce an opera, he decided he would try his hand at a ballet. Luckily, the tsar granted Diaghilev permission to borrow rising stars of the Imperial ballet, seeing an opportunity for increased cultural exchange with France. Amongst the dancers that followed Diaghilev, Benois, and Bakst to Paris were Michel Fokine, Anna Pavlova, Tamara Karsavina, and Vaslav Nijinsky (Homans 300). The dancers, along with many Russian citizens, desperately desired more control over their art form and more freedom to express what they pleased. Fokine, Pavlova, and Karsavina were personally involved in the organization of a strike at the Mariinsky Theatre protesting the tsar’s October
Manifesto in 1905 (Roslavleva 169). With this exceptionally talented company of Russian dancers, Diaghilev formed the Ballets Russes, and by 1911 most of the dancers established themselves as permanent company members and did not return home to Russia (Homans 300).

Once in Paris, Michel Fokine assumed the role of choreographer for the Ballets Russes, and it is thanks to him that much of the company's early artistic ideals developed. Even though Fokine had been classically trained at the Imperial Theatre School and worked with quintessential classical ballet choreographer, Marius Petipa, he questioned why strict rules of classicism even existed. As Homans explains,

The main impetus for his art came from outside ballet: from music, art, and theater. Fokine took painting lessons and spent hours at the Hermitage studying the techniques and styles of past artists, an exercise which led him to question the conventions that had defined ballet for so long (293).

This early interest in visual art and skepticism towards classical traditions effected Fokine's choreographic choices for the Ballets Russes. Fokine's choreography accentuated freedom of expression, aiming to convey the true feelings of the artists. Just as *Rhythm* had a mission to "disengage the rhythms that lie at the heart of things," the Ballets Russes, with the choreographic vision of Fokine at the head, felt the impulse to express a deep, driving force at the heart of their art form, within themselves, and of their beloved but struggling homeland, Russia.

With newfound freedom of artistic expression, the Ballets Russes joined an array of artists, including the Rhythmists, who found a haven of artistic liberation in Paris. The result was a thriving artistic community, full of artists that were eager to express themselves no matter how daring (and oftentimes controversial) their art
turned out to be. Many artists, including the Rhythmists and the Ballets Russes, had displacement in common, both political and ideological. Interaction helped them to survive in a foreign land. What follows is an exploration of how deeply interaction between artistic fields penetrated the works produced during the modernist movement.

c. The Equal Expression of Artistic Elements

A unified expression of artistic elements defined the art published in *Rhythm* and the methodology for creating a work for the Ballets Russes. The art of *Rhythm*, primarily Fauvist, incorporated a balanced use of line, color, shape, movement, and rhythm. Similarly, the Ballets Russes ensured that the choreography and movement was unified with the music, the costumes were relevant to the work, and the scenery was not an inconsequential backdrop. In both artistic spheres, equal emphasis was placed on each artistic element in a work, ensuring that no aspect overpowered another. The Rhythmists valued the inherent sense of unity that distinguished their art, just as the Ballets Russes criticized the Imperial Theatre’s failure to achieve unity in a theatrical work; the Imperial Theatre was known for re-using costumes even if they were irrelevant to the story and ignoring the ability of effective scenery to give a production context.

The Rhythmists believed that, if a work was sufficiently rhythmical, it was unified and balanced. C.J. Holmes, director of National Gallery in London, expounds upon this concept in the third issue of the magazine in “Stray Thoughts on Rhythm in Painting.” In taking up this subject, Holmes refers to the *Encyclopedia Britannica’s* definition of rhythm as “the measured flow of movement or beat, in verse, music, or
by analogy in other connexions" (1:3, 1). What is important is the phrase “or by analogy in other connexions,” as Holmes sees it as permission to take the basic definition of rhythm, and subsequent definitions of musical and poetical rhythm, and use them as an analogy for the type of rhythm he wishes to define: rhythm in painting. He believes that by replacing “inequality of time” with “inequality of space” in the encyclopedia’s definition of poetical rhythm, the definition of poetical rhythm can be turned into an effective definition of rhythm in painting.

Into the idea of poetical rhythm enters an element of life, or pulse, of a certain inequality of time based upon an equality of tone. To strike a bell twelve times at exactly equal intervals is to produce what may be called a rhythmic effect, but not to awaken anything resembling the sensation of poetical rhythm. (1:3, 1)

While Holmes’ distortion of the definitions of rhythm may be convoluted, he is trying his best to define the concept that while successful rhythm in music sometimes requires beats occurring at equal intervals, successful poetical rhythm and successful rhythm in painting requires inequality and contrast. The rhythm that defines a successful painting in Rhythm can only be achieved through inequality of space, balanced by other elements in the composition. This follows the magazine’s opposition to mechanical and metronomic techniques. Holmes reiterates that, “Our definition of rhythm appears once more to demand inequality rather than equality, and to condemn all methods of work which incline to mechanical repetition.” (1:3, 2) This sense of “rhythm” is essential to the magazine’s corresponding emphasis on the importance of unity and equality in a work of art. If a painting was rhythmically successful according to Holmes’ definition, it was also deemed balanced in terms of its “artistic elements.” The best way to make sense of this philosophy is to look at
how different contributors to *Rhythm* commented on the Ballets Russes. Throughout the Ballets Russes's stay in London, the magazine praised the equal emphasis on each aspect of a production that the Ballets Russes embraced, and reflected upon how this exhibited equality made the dance “rhythmical.”

In July of 1912, Georges Banks wrote and illustrated the first review of a Ballets Russes production for the magazine. She described *Petrushka* as an “exquisite imaginative fantasy,” having “extraordinary unity of sound and visual representation,” and “one of the most complete achievements in stagecraft seen in the modern theatre” (2:6, 58). Anne Estelle Rice, who supplied numerous illustrations of Ballets Russes productions to *Rhythm*, contributed a similar review in August of the same year in her piece titled “Les Ballets Russes.”

The genial and dominant idea of the Russian Ballets is based upon *line*. They have given a practical and artistic realization of what can be done with a fusion of theatrical elements, most successfully where the scenic decorator, costumier, musician, ‘maître du ballet’ and poet, by their harmonizing qualities, have created a scheme of one palette (2:7, 107).

While Banks and Rice do not possess the language necessary to analyze the ballets from a balletic or choreographic standpoint, they do have the language to analyze the productions as if they were moving paintings. The ideas of achieving unity through a fusion of artistic elements, balancing sound with visual representation, and harmonizing the entire production, made the Rhythmists feel as though their ideals of rhythm, balance, and equality in painting were being represented through dance. This accounts for *Rhythm*’s fascination with and admiration of the Ballets Russes; it was as if their philosophy of painting was applied to the stage before their eyes.
The Rhythmists were astute in recognizing the Ballets Russes’s emphasis on equality of expression—the Ballets Russes made it part of their core philosophy. Diaghilev saw Wagner’s complete “Ring Cycle” in Bayreuth and was captivated by Wagner’s concept of Gesamtkunstwerk in which poetry, art, and music are united in an effort to create an holistic, captivating synthesis of arts onstage, transporting an audience to a different world (Homans 296). While Wagner’s Gesamtkunstwerk is slightly different than Diaghilev’s vision as it applies to opera instead of ballet, his fascination with the “Ring Cycle” indicates an early enthusiasm for evoking the same sense of unity and cohesion in a ballet that theater or opera was capable of.

Likewise, Fokine expressed his desire to convey unity in his ballets by making certain that the parts made sense to the whole. As Jennifer Homans notes, Fokine “found it nonsensical for pink-tutued ballerinas to run around with Egyptian-clad peasants and Russian top-booted dancers. A ballet, he said, must have ‘complete unity of expression.’” (293)

To take this a step further, the Ballets Russes was famous for collaborations. Diaghilev brought together the most prominent artists, designers, composers, and writers in an effort to give equal weight to each aspect of a production. By putting experts in charge of each individual area of the whole production, the quality of the dance was just as high as the set and costume design, music, and storyline of the ballet. Diaghilev wanted all the elements of the production to make sense together, with no aspect of production overpowering another. One of the most famous collaborative efforts was Parade, which premiered in Paris on May 18th, 1917 at the Théâtre du Châtelet. With music by Erik Satie, a libretto by Jean Cocteau, set and
costume design by Pablo Picasso, and choreography by Léonide Massine, Parade had, as Lynn Garafola describes in "The Making of Ballet Modernism," "impeccable modernist credentials." (23) Eleven years later, famous fashion designer Coco Chanel would create the costumes for Apollo, a ballet choreographed by one of the Ballets Russes's most famous alums, George Balanchine (Homans 337). Equality in artistic expression was evidently ingrained in the philosophy of the Ballets Russes and artists who associated themselves with the company.

d. Primitive and Exotic Themes

Another trend developing in the art world when Rhythm remained in print was a newfound fascination with the primitive or exotic. The subject matter represented by the art published in Rhythm increasingly depicted non-European people and places. This desire to express the exotic may reflect a deeper desire to express elemental humanity as well as an effort to escape from lifeless industrialism. The cultures of the so-called primitive peoples of Africa and Asia contrasted with an industrial, rapidly urbanizing Europe. Alongside the distaste for impersonal, mechanical art—as well as the impersonal, mechanical nature of modern industry and capitalism—the Rhythmists expressed a preoccupation with an elemental understanding of humanity. In The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines, Peter Brooker claims that Rhythm's fascination with exoticism reflected the "popular" side of modernism.

Fluid harmonies once again combine with wild and stunning exoticism: the whole expressive of an ornamental, decorative, and androgynous art, which Peter Wollen maintains, comprised the more popular side of modernism. This mode Wollen views as shadowing the abstract machine art and functionalist aesthetic which came to dominate the narrative of modernism and, as such, effectively sidelined Fauvism and Matisse. (329-330)
The desire for “stunning exoticism” corresponds to the aversion to mechanical or aesthetic processes, just as “Fauvism and a Fauve” dismisses Pointillism and Aestheticism. In “Aims and Ideals” Rhythm declares that, “Before art can be human it must learn to be brutal” (1:1, 36). This concept of “brutal,” grotesque, primitive, and exotic again expresses a desire to grasp a fundamental truth about humanity through art in rejection of the impersonal industrialism that defined modernity.

Anne Estelle Rice’s “Scheherazade” is one of the first illustrations to appear in Rhythm. It depicts a topless woman clothed in exotic dress. Her voluptuous figure is evocative of sculptural representations of the ideal African woman that Picasso helped popularize in Europe. She is wearing what could be a ceremonial headdress and an ornate necklace. In the background another woman blends into the designs of a curtain and what appears to be a table full of fruit. These women are far from the likeness of Parisian women. They are completely foreign, exotic, and “primitive.” In the same vein, W.L. George’s poem, “The Negress,” appearing in the third issue of the magazine, expresses a sexual attraction to the idealized exotic woman.

Her breasts are smooth and black as ebony;
She sways, as she walks, on her hips.
There is ochre and garnet in her lips;
Her white but stained teeth are as chalcedony.

She lies in the shade of a palmtree
In the heat of the noonday sun,
Watching rainbow lizards run,
And lazy draws her greasy tresses free.

She moves, my negress, and her smell
Mingles fierce with the jungle airs
Of rotting herb, of leopards’ hairs

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\(^2\) See Figure 1
And of the swamp the leaden breath and fell.

Oh, maid with breasts as black as ebony,
Say, are for me the languors of your eyes?
Are you for me? or will you not despise
One who so fearful courts teeth of chalcedony? (1:3, 5)

This poem is teeming with images of sexual attraction. With “Breasts as smooth and black as ebony,” and repeated emphasis on the swaying of her hips, her lips, and her smell, this woman is presented as sultry and desirable in the heat of the noonday sun. A definite attraction is felt towards the foreignness and mystery of this woman. The speaker asks at the end of the poem whether this woman is “for him.” Is the speaker attracted to this woman because she is forbidden? The Rhythmists’ obsession with exotic peoples and places served to depict elemental humanity, as well as a strong fascination with the possibility of coming into contact with foreign mysteries.

Similarly, the Ballets Russes frequently used elements of exoticism to express the truths of their Russian past. The French came to identify the Ballets Russes for its essentially foreign subject matter. Homans claims that “Russian ballet in the sense that the French came to understand it—exotic, Eastern, primitive, and modern—did not exist until Diaghilev and his artists invented it.” (301) Diaghilev, hoping to create an inherently Russian ballet, turned to the exotic Russian folk tale of a prince, a princess, and a magical firebird. *The Firebird*, which premiered in Paris in 1910, tells the story of a young prince who falls in love with a captive princess. A mysterious firebird leads the prince to an egg that contains the soul of the princess’s captor, an evil sorcerer. The prince smashes the egg and the lovers are united (Homans 301-302). While some critics regard *The Firebird* as the first truly Russian
ballet, it is a folk story that would never have been permitted onstage in native Russia. The story of a magical realm, a mysterious, exotic bird, and souls contained inside eggs would not have appealed to the Russian aristocracy. The classical ballets the elite audience preferred depicted courtly life—scenes that allowed the aristocracy to see themselves onstage and relate to the characters. The Russian Imperial court was unlikely to relate to a Russian folk tale taking place in an exotic magical realm. With the freedom to tell this tale in Paris, the Ballets Russes brought this and other Russian folk stories and traditions to life, feeding the popular fascination with the primitive that the French craved.

Not only was the subject matter of The Firebird exotic, but the costumes, scenery, and choreography were acclaimed for their exoticism. Tamara Karsavina, the original Firebird, wore balloon-like pants and an elaborate headdress (Homans 302). Descriptions of her costume resemble the attire Anne Estelle Rice depicts on the “Scheherazade” woman in Rhythm. The Parisian fascination with primitivism further contributed to the popularity of the Ballets Russes and their primitive, prehistoric subject matter. Homans points out that “the years preceding the arrival of the Ballets Russes saw a growing interest in ‘primitive’ African art and masks, which seemed to embody elemental truths long abandoned by the ‘civilized’ West.” (315)

The primitive preoccupation of artists in Paris was already established when the Ballets Russes arrived. As a result, their choice in subject matter fit in to the interest of the art community as well as the general public. Just as the art scene allowed for these stories to be told onstage where they couldn’t be told in Russia,
they served as a source of inspiration for Parisian art. Fascination with exoticism and primitivism in both *Rhythm* and the productions of the Ballets Russes reflects the trend in a desire to express "elemental truths" about humanity that spanned across artistic fields. Both artistic spheres were absorbed in the idea that the primitive could offer relief from the alienating, impersonal clockwork of "civilized" urban existence.

e. Shift from Aestheticism to Expressionism

In a modernizing art world, there was no more room for art created purely for aesthetic purposes. The preferred "new art," showcased in *Rhythm* and elsewhere, was only considered successful if it expressed something powerful, abstract, and human. A work of art needed to produce a feeling in the viewer. The aspirations of the Ballets Russes were similar. In contrast to the classical ballets that existed only for courtly entertainment, the movements of Fokine's choreography expressed abstract ideas. This shift from aestheticism to expressionism is an essential trend in the development of modernism across artistic fields—expressionism made art personal, emotional, and meaningful.

Fauvism is a frank reaction from the precious. It stands for strength and decision, alike of line, colour and feeling. It remedies the formlessness of Impressionism but keeps the brilliance, it is art and not literature, it is erratically individual and not mechanical. (Sadler, 1:1, 17)

Here, Sadler describes Fauvism as a remedy for the "formlessness of Impressionism." When interpreting the title of the movement literally, impressionism served to "impress" something from the physical world onto the retina of the eye. The goal of impressionist art was to find the best way to translate something from real life into another visible format, such as a painting, drawing, or
illustration. This process can be mechanical in its focus on the literal and physical appearances of an object or scene. Fauvism, on the other hand, takes a physical reality and abstracts it. By doing so, the modernists believed they could come closer to understanding the deeper essence of life in its different manifestations. If one takes an idea and depicts only the essentials of its character, oftentimes through abstraction, its truth or essence may be more fully revealed.

The Ballets Russes similarly denounced the lifeless and mechanical rules of strict classicism that embodied the classical Russian ballets they left behind in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The choreography of the Ballets Russes took the movement vocabulary of classical ballet and abstracted it to convey emotion and feeling. For example, Fokine’s *Le Spectre de la Rose* was a moving interpretation of an abstract idea. The movements performed by the male role imitate what Fokine believed the actual “spirit of a rose” might look like were it to manifest in human form. The arm movements or “port de bras” of the male dancer are graceful, flowing, full of breath, and repeat circular shapes, mimicking rose petals drifting through the air and alluding to a spiritual, ethereal understanding of a rose.

Contemporary companies have a surprisingly historically accurate understanding of how Ballets Russes productions looked thanks to the stage illustrations that were published in magazines such as *Rhythm*. Anne Estelle Rice contributed an illustration of the set for *Spectre de la Rose* which, when compared to contemporary productions, indicates that much of the production’s original vision remains in tact today.³ *Le Spectre de la Rose* continues to be performed by ballet

³ See Figure 2
companies worldwide, and the authenticity of these productions is due in no small part to the illustrations and descriptions of Anne Estelle Rice and others publishing in little magazines. While *Rhythm* writers lacked the language to articulately critique the Ballets Russes’s movement as a dance critic might, they were able to evaluate what they saw on stage as a holistic visual art, particularly one that communicated an abstract idea about life. Additionally, the interaction between the Ballets Russes and visual art, represented here in *Rhythm*, ensured the lasting impact of the ballets. Companies would not be able to perform *Le Spectre de la Rose* without the interaction between the Ballets Russes and modernist illustrators that documented the details of the productions.

*f. Conclusion*

Upon examining these two concurrent artistic forces, their parallels and influences upon each other become quite clear. Both the transnational, British-based modernist magazine *Rhythm* and Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes incorporated 1) an exhibited equality in artistic expression, 2) an emphasis on elemental, primitive, and exotic life, and 3) a desire to shift away from aestheticism and towards expressionism into their artistic philosophies. As a result of the modernist movement, these two seemingly disparate artistic spheres crossed paths both directly and indirectly, amplifying public recognition of one another and ensuring accuracy of reproduction through sheer breadth of artistic representations. Ballets were painted, the paintings were written about, the art critics then saw the ballets, and so forth. Consequently, the conclusion can be made that the core artistic philosophies of the Rhythmists and the artists of the Ballets Russes were nearly
identical, and that the artistic principles outlined can potentially be applied to all artistic spheres of the modernist movement, not just visual art and ballet. With this in mind, a better sense of what a scholar means by the term “modernism” can be grasped. It is all of these artistic principles combined, which not only represented a change in what motivated the creation of “new art,” but in fact re-defined what constituted “new art” in any given artistic medium from the turn of the century on. The shared philosophies of artistic fields represents extensive interdisciplinary interaction, a methodology that modernist artists embraced, and which resulted in their success both in their time and into the twenty-first century.

III. Part Two: Contemporary Choreography and the Future of Dance

a. A Twenty-First Century World Premiere

The time is 7:15pm on February 28th, 2011. Clad in everything from fine evening gowns to dressy jeans, a diverse crowd of fashionable Londoners, critics, artists, balletomanes, newcomers, and tourists alike, both young and old, have taken their seats at the Royal Opera House, in London, England. An elderly theatergoer reads over the program, lamenting the absence of names she recognizes. All the dancers of her generation have retired from the stage. Next to her, students at the Royal Ballet School snap photos with their iPhones of themselves in front of the stage, which they immediately post to Facebook in hopes of making their classmates envious. In exactly fifteen minutes, the curtain will open on the world premiere of Christopher Wheeldon’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. The Royal Ballet has not commissioned a choreographer to create a full-length ballet for the company since
Twyla Tharp’s “Mr. Worldly Wise” in 1995, and the London Underground has been filled with *Alice* advertisements for weeks (Sulcas).

The curtain finally opens on a scene that is nothing out of the ordinary. A Victorian era Alice sits between her sisters, listening to Lewis Carroll (a photographer in Wheeldon’s production) read to them from a book and take their portrait. Devotees of the Royal Ballet would immediately recognize Alice and Lewis Carroll as two of the company’s leading Principal Dancers, Lauren Cuthbertson and Edward Watson. The ballet’s first act, centering around a garden party, remains conventional until Alice falls asleep as Lewis Carroll takes her photograph. As soon as the flash of the camera goes off, the stage goes dark with a spotlight on Alice, signifying her entrance into a dream. In her dream state everyone at the garden party continues to act normally as if she weren’t there, except for Lewis Carroll, who begins to show early signs of his transformation into the White Rabbit—he comically taps his foot on the ground and uses one of his legs to scratch the other, ducked underneath his focusing cloth. Next, a fluffy white tail abruptly sprouts from his pants, triggering a roar of laughter from the audience. His photography bag expands about five times its normal size, and Alice falls down into the bag after the rapidly transforming Carroll. Fifteen minutes into the ballet, the audience is taken aback by the unconventional presence of a massive digital screen, onto which an elaborate animation of Alice’s monumental fall into a magical realm is projected. The animation tricks the eye into thinking it is three-dimensional, making the audience fell as though they are falling *with* Alice. The theme of digital animation is
incorporated throughout the ballet, using projections to enhance what transpires onstage.

Although they premiered nearly a century apart, one cannot help but draw parallels between *Le sacre du printemps* and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Although *Alice* did not provoke a riot, the audience was genuinely flabbergasted by the performance. They laughed, gasped, and applauded, fully immersed in Wheeldon’s comical, horrific, beautiful, and engaging theatrical experience, aided by the incorporation of multimedia. Christopher Wheeldon broke the rules just as Diaghilev did, but he did so with a contemporary twist. He seamlessly bridged the gap between the seemingly odd couple of digital graphics technology and classical ballet—an art form that prides itself on being a technology-free tradition and its ability to survive as a verbal art passed down through generations. By incorporating a significant amount of technology into his ballet, Wheeldon symbolically brought classical ballet into the twenty-first century, the digital age. When Alice falls down the rabbit hole it is as if she leaves Victorian England behind and lands herself in the contemporary world, one where students tweet about a show, critics blog about performances, and audiences abroad watch the premiere via a live stream of the performance from comfortable seats in a movie theater four thousand miles away.\(^4\) This is the contemporary reality of classical ballet that Wheeldon has so keenly

\(^4\) This is a reference to Emerging Pictures’ “Ballet in Cinema” series, which brings alternate content, such as opera, ballet, and art films to a network of 400 movie theaters across the United States. Audiences can see performances by such renowned companies as the Royal Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, and Paris Opera Ballet. Visit www.emergingpictures.com/ballet for more information.
recognized and chosen to adapt to, using Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes as a model.

*b. The Relevance of “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”*

We must again ask ourselves, why is this story relevant? At the very least, the words of an array of critics support the relevance of *Alice*, with praise and excitement overwhelming the tone of reviews, accompanied by only minor critiques of the production. For example, Judith Mackrell wrote in a piece for *The Guardian* that was posted on premiere day, “watching the production lets us forget the hype. He [Wheeldon] and his team have created an Alice whose wit, speed and invention have lifted the whole story ballet genre into the 21st century.” Similarly, Roslyn Sulcas of the *New York Times* called Joby Talbot’s score, “the trump card for ‘Alice.’ It’s a dazzling array of melodies and shimmering percussion, usefully atmospheric and dancey, yet sophisticated enough to feel like more than a mere support.” The Royal Ballet revived *Alice* for spring performances in both 2012 and 2013. Two years after the ballet's premiere, praise for the production continued pouring in. In March of last year Sarah Crompton of *The Telegraph* described the ballet as “both recognisably traditional and joltingly contemporary at one and the same moment.” Wheeldon’s success with *Alice* earned him another commission for the Royal Ballet. The company will premiere another full-length Wheeldon story ballet in April, 2014, *The Winter’s Tale*, based on a Shakespeare classic. The most widespread criticism of *Alice* was the overwhelming length of the first act, which was originally a full seventy minutes. Wheeldon, listening to the complaints of audiences and critics, divided the two-act ballet into three acts.
With critics raving that Wheeldon has “lifted the whole story ballet genre into the 21st century” and created a production that is both “traditional and joltingly contemporary,” it is difficult to agree with Jennifer Homans’ argument that the world’s major ballet companies are stuck in the past and becoming “museums for the old.” (542) She firmly believes that there is nothing “new” in contemporary ballet and that “contemporary choreography veers aimlessly from unimaginative imitation to strident innovation.” (541) In October, 2013, Homans reviewed Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland in a piece for the New Republic titled “The Crisis in Contemporary Ballet: How emotion left dance.”

The objective, presumably, is family entertainment—nothing wrong with that—expect that Alice is a very long and very dull parade of sets and costumes, interspersed with trivial character dances, presumably in the tradition of English pantomime but utterly lacking in charm and wit. It is hard to see this ballet as anything but a sleight of hand and a dumbing down.

In asserting that Alice is trivial and that the dancing lacks charm and wit, Homans has missed the point (which she believe is mere family entertainment). She furthers her critique by claiming that Alice presents “no new ideas.” Her complaint is that the dancing lacks innovation and that the story ballet has become a sort of “tourist industry,” but in Apollo’s Angels she laments the so called inability of dancers to push the story ballet into the twenty-first century. As a result, she both contradicts herself and fails to recognize Wheeldon’s artistic innovation in collaboration, cynically dismissing what a chorus of critics have praised.

Unfortunately, Jay Rogoff fares no better than Homans in his oversight of Wheeldon. While he is one of the few critics to directly discuss the specifics of Wheeldon’s philosophical connection to the Ballets Russes, he claims that Wheeldon
has been unsuccessful in his desire to emulate Diaghilev, failing to take Alice into consideration when he critiques the choreographer a year after the ballet’s premiere.

The story of the premiere of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland is relevant today because, despite what Homans and Rogoff claim, Wheeldon has clearly met success in creating a full-length story ballet appropriate for the twenty-first century that engages a wide audience. How did he accomplish this? Breaking down the creation of Alice reveals a near identical method used by Diaghilev for the Ballets Russes. It only takes breaking down one scene from Wheeldon’s ballet, Alice’s entrance into a Kingdom of Cards, to see the strong connection between his artistic mission and that of Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, as well as the ideals of modernism.

c. Collaboration, “Primitivism,” and Expressionism for the Contemporary World

As outlined in part one, Diaghilev’s philosophy, consistent with the ideals that defined the modernist movement, was based on three fundamental principles: 1) unity of expression achieved through artistic collaboration, 2) embracing the fascination with primitivism and exoticism, and 3) moving away from aestheticism and towards expressionism. Alice’s entrance into the Queen of Hearts’ Kingdom of Cards in Wheeldon’s Alice is a perfect example of how Wheeldon’s philosophy fits into Diaghilev’s methodology.

In act two, after the Knave of Hearts/Jack, whom Alice loves, is accused of stealing jam tarts from the Queen of Hearts and must stand trial for his crime, there is a break in the music and action, and a blackout on stage to move the sets into the
wings. Next, a digital animation is seamlessly projected at the top of the stage, projecting a life-size deck of cards rapidly flipping across the stage, accompanied by dramatic drumbeats. Below, eight dancers, wearing tutus that have been shaped to literally look like hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs, mimic the hard-hitting drums and fast flipping of the digital cards with frenzied but exact movements occurring in a precise canon.

In this scene the audience can see and hear the choreographer, the designers, and the composer working together onstage to create this climactic moment. No artistic element on stage outweighs another: the audience is equally engaged with the choreography, the music, and the design at once. Additionally, these three elements are remarkably cohesive and unified; each aspect complements the others. The overall collaborative spirit of the production is highlighted in this way, letting each individual artist shine through simultaneously.

Diaghilev's embrace of primitivism satisfied the needs and demands of an audience already fascinated with primitive themes. Wheeldon similarly pinpointed what his audiences had in common—their participation in the digital age. Contemporary audiences are accustomed to constant digital stimulation, with the omnipresence of such technology as smart phones, the internet, and television. By choosing to include a digital aspect in the production—represented here by the digital deck of cards—Wheeldon acknowledges that the “digital” is what his audiences can relate to.

5 See Figure 3
Finally, like many choreographers and artists before them, Chris Wheeldon and Bob Crowley have discarded the classical ballet tutu and chosen to think outside the box. The tutus’ literal representation of cards, combined with the frenzied, hard-hitting choreography and music, give the audience the same sense of tension that Alice is feeling on stage. This evocation of a specific feeling in the audience indicates that Wheeldon is aiming towards the expressionism exemplified by the Ballets Russes. Thus, through an examination of merely one scene from Wheeldon’s ballet, evidence of the Ballets Russes legacy shines through, demonstrating Wheeldon’s success at achieving his own artistic mission using Diaghilev as a model.

d. Conclusion

Jay Rogoff theorizes that ballet “endures crises cyclically.” Instead, I believe that the art form is constantly transforming; adapting to an ever-changing world. Today’s world is defined by the digital age, technology ceaselessly at our fingertips. In order to allow classical ballet a future, choreographers like Christopher Wheeldon must find ways to adjust to the contemporary world, while keeping an eye on the successes and failures of the past. Wheeldon has done both of these things. He has seamlessly incorporated the rich new possibilities of multimedia digital art into his works, but done so in the model of Sergei Diaghilev’s revolutionary Ballets Russes and the modernists, embracing interaction between artistic disciplines with open arms. By breaking down the principles that defined the modernist movement—equality of expression, primitivism, and expressionism—an in-depth understanding of interdisciplinary artistic collaboration and its mutually beneficial nature is made possible. In discovering Diaghilev’s model and reviving it
with panache, Wheeldon has reinforced a century old idea that may help future
choreographers, artists, and innovators continue to create works that are genuinely
“new.”
Works Cited


Figure 1: Illustration of "Scheherazade" by Anne Estelle Rice (1:1, 15)
Figure 2: Illustration of “Le Spectre de la Rose” by Anne Estelle Rice (2:7, 93)
Figure 3: Photograph of Chelsy Meiss's costume, current Second Soloist with the National Ballet of Canada, taken by Aleksander Antonijevic for balletnews.co.uk in 2011.