

FRST 101: Freshman Studies II Winter 2011
Instructor: Stoneking
Handout #1: STRAVINSKY THE RITE OF SPRING

Monday 7 February 2011

Before coming to class:

- Watch the 1987 Joffrey Ballet reproduction of Nijinsky's choreography for the 1913 premiere of *The Rite of Spring*:
 - <http://moodle.lawrence.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=58869> or
 - On YouTube in three segments:
 - 1) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jF1OQkHybEQ>
 - 2) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iH1t0pCchxM&feature=related>
 - 3) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_7ndqgwxcM&feature=related
- Consider the following sets of issues:
 - Nijinsky famously rejected many of the traditional values of classical ballet. Identify these values and then describe how Nijinsky's choreography, as best as we can tell, rejected these values. Also identify specific aspects of Stravinsky's music that reinforced Nijinsky's rejection of traditional ballet aesthetics. (borrowed from E. Scheinberg)
 - Was the Chosen One "a passive victim who succumbed to her community without conflict" or "a subject who experienced deep animosity toward her peers"? Is the dance "a physical expression of a critical spirit of opposition"? In other words, does the Chosen One have any choice? Do we have a sense of how she feels about being chosen to sacrifice herself for the sake of the collective? Does the musical score, as several musicologists and critics have suggested, oppress the Chosen One with its driving rhythms and rapidly changing meters? Does the choreography reinforce the music, or are they at odds in their representation of the sacrificial act? (borrowed from E. Scheinberg)