

STRAVINSKY IN CONTEXT

Stravinsky in Context offers an alternative to chronological biography. Thirty-five short, specially commissioned essays explore the eventful life tapestry from which Stravinsky's compositions emerged. The opening chapters draw on new research into the composer's upbringing and education in St Petersburg. Stravinsky's early, often traumatic family experience is examined in depth, particularly in the context of his brother Roman's death and religious sensibilities within the family. Further chapters consider the composer's many years in exile at the centre of dynamic and constantly evolving cultural environments, Stravinsky forever refining his idiom and redefining his aesthetics against a backdrop of world events and personal tragedy. The closing essays review new material regarding Stravinsky's complicated relationship with the Soviet Union, while also anticipating his legacy from the varied perspectives of publishing, research and even, in the iconic example of *The Rite of Spring*, space exploration. The book includes previously unpublished images of the composer and his family. Each chapter concludes with the author's personal recommendation to the reader to explore one particular Stravinsky work in the light of the reading experience.

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COMPOSERS IN CONTEXT

Understanding and appreciation of musical works is greatly enhanced by knowledge of the context within which their composers lived and worked. Each of these volumes focuses on an individual composer, offering lively, accessible and concise essays by leading scholars on the many contexts – professional, political, intellectual, social and cultural – that have a bearing on his or her work. Biographical and musical influences, performance and publishing history and the creative afterlife of each composer's work are also addressed, providing readers with a multifaceted view of how the composers' output and careers were shaped by the world around them.

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EDITED BY
GRAHAM GRIFFITHS
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Preface

There is scarcely another composer who emerged from such sharply contrasting contexts, and so many, as Igor Stravinsky while remaining entirely faithful to his own version of artistic and personal truth. His long life, most of which was spent as an exile in foreign lands, requires some contextual explanation if one is to comprehend his extensive, often paradoxical, musical odyssey. Indeed, how else is one to understand Stravinsky's music? Outwardly it is the work of three composers – Russian, neoclassical and serial – yet Stravinsky's immense catalogue remains defiantly recognisable, inwardly, as being the unified conception of its sole creator.

The present volume aims to explore and reveal Stravinsky's broad engagement with external worlds, all the better to enrich one's understanding of this most universal composer, this most extraordinary phenomenon.

The experience of collaborating with thirty-three academic authors from around the Stravinskian world, each with their own expertise, perspective, and flair, has been an enormous privilege and pleasure. I offer my unbounded thanks to all concerned.

Dates relating to events up to 31 January 1918 are given according to the Julian (Old Style) calendar. Events after this date are given according to the Gregorian (New Style) calendar. In some cases both dates are given. For consultation regarding Russian-to-English transliteration I am indebted to Prof. Dr Natalia Braginskaya, Vice-Rector (Research) at the 'N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov' State Conservatoire of St. Petersburg. My thanks, also, to the Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, and to Heidy Zimmermann for the provision of images from the Stravinsky

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Abbreviations

- Conv.* Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (London: Faber and Faber; New York: Doubleday, 1959)
- Dial.* Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Dialogues and a Diary* (New York: Doubleday, 1963; London: Faber and Faber, 1968)
- Expo.* Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Expositions and Developments* (London: Faber and Faber; New York: Doubleday, 1962)
- Mem.* Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (London: Faber and Faber; New York: Doubleday, 1960)
- Poetics* Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingold Dahl (New York: Vintage, 1956 [1947])
- SCC* Robert Craft (ed.), *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, 3 vols (London: Faber and Faber, 1982, 1984, 1985)
- SPD* Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978; London: Hutchinson, 1979)
- T&C.* Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Themes and Conclusions* (London: Faber, 1972)

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June 1900. The Stravinsky and Nosenko cousins in an autographed cast photo for a home-theatre production of Viktor Krylov's *The Angel of Innocence and Kindness* (Ангел доброты и невинности, 1873) performed at Ustilug or Pechisky, possibly both. Standing (left to right): Igor Stravinsky; his older brother Yuri (1878–1941, who later qualified as an architect and remained in Russia following the 1917 Revolution); Lyudmila Nosenko (1878–1937, Igor's cousin, sister of Ekaterina, remembered by the family as 'a very musical person'); Vera Nosenko (1882–1969, Ekaterina's niece who became a doctor); and Guri (1884–1917, Stravinsky's younger brother. Taking after his father, Guri was an extremely gifted opera singer to whom Stravinsky dedicated *Two Poems of Verlaine*, op. 9, in 1910). Seated (left to right): Ekaterina ('Katya') Nosenko (1881–1939, Stravinsky's cousin whom he married in 1906); Olga Nosenko (1878–1953, older sister of Vera).

Image courtesy of the Estate of Fyodor Ignatyevich Stravinsky, with thanks to Anastasia Kozachenko-Stravinsky and the 'Stravinsky Family Fund', Moscow (Фонд семьи Ф. И. Стравинского и его сыновей)

*How about that! There is a man living in Paris who says ottenteleva
[‘there-from’]. I can tell you, when I heard that I could almost smell
the birch trees.*

Teffi (Nadezhda Alexandrovna Lokhvitskaya, 1872–1952).

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