



THE RITE



preceded by : I. TUMULTE, II. POUR IGOR

choreographies

Jean-Claude Gallotta

creation

the 7th October 2011 at MC2: Grenoble

production

Centre chorégraphique national de Grenoble

coproduction

Théâtre national de Chaillot - Paris

with the support of

MC2: Grenoble

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THE RITE

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Tour 2014-2015

THE RITE AND ITS REVOLUTIONS

choreographies by **Jean-Claude Gallotta**
direction musicale **Michel Tabachnik**
with **the Brussels Philharmonic**

JONCHAIES by Iannis Xenakis (creation)

SIX PIECES POUR ORCHESTRE, OP. 6 by Anton Webern (creation)

Homage to Angela Davis

THE RITE by Igor Stravinsky (created in 2011)

> The 14 and 15 March 2015
La Philharmonie - **PARIS**

THE RITE PRÉCÉDED BY I-TUMULTE, II-POUR IGOR

> from the 18 to the 21 March 2015
Théâtre
CAEN (FRANCE)

> the 14 April 2015
Le Volcan
LE HAVRE (FRANCE)

> the 16 April 2015
Théâtre municipal
CHARLEVILLE-MÉZIÈRES (FRANCE)

> the 24 and 25 April 2015
Grand Théâtre de Provence
AIX-EN-PROVENCE (FRANCE)

> the 7 May 2015
Le Quai
ANGERS (FRANCE)

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Intention

Each choreographer has a *Sacre* within him. Jean-Claude Gallotta's is carved with a compass in a schoolboy's desk. Only just a teenager, hunched up in his grey overall and sad boarding school, the future choreographer was one day listening to his music teacher talking about Igor Stravinsky, the Russian Ballet, Nijinsky, the «scandal» of its first performance (at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 29 May 1913) and heard the work for the first time on an old Teppaz record player, no doubt slightly scratchy. Slumped on his wooden bench, he immediately started to daydream and was carried away by the images. He can still remember them today. seraphic figures, sensual shadows, tormented bodies, forbidden awakenings, unexplained agitation, disturbing palpitations. These are the images that he wants to try to reassemble today into a choreography that will form the second part of the diptych begun with *l'Homme à tête de chou* the same dancers, the same moon-like light, the same energy that comes directly from the music.

Because *Le Sacre* is without doubt one of the frameworks in which he has found the impetus required to invent his choreographic journey, Jean-Claude Gallotta has chosen to work on the first version of the work, which he considers to be one of the best: raw, unaffected, without any decorative brilliance, directed and recorded by Igor Stravinsky himself.

Le Sacre was preceded by two short works:

I - *Tumulte*, in which the choreographer invites you to take notice of the primitive silence of the dance that precedes the musical explosion.

II - *Pour Igor*, a solo performed by Cécile Renard in homage to the composer, who is heckled and addressed familiarly like a God being thanked endlessly for having «picked music's nose» and, a century later, to have remained the «wild young man» of 1913.

Claude-Henri Buffard
March 2011

THE RITE

preceded by : I. TUMULTE, II. POUR IGOR

Distribution

<choreographies> **Jean-Claude Gallotta**

<choreography assistant > **Mathilde Altaraz**

<dramatist> **Claude-Henri Buffard**

<costumes> **Jacques Schiotto and Marion Mercier assisted by Anne Jonathan**

<music> **Igor Stravinsky**

version directed and recorded (1960) by Igor Stravinsky with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra

<soundscape (*I - Tumulte, II - Pour Igor*)> **Strigall**

<light> **Dominique Zape assisted by Pierre Escande**

<decor> **Jeanne Dard**

<performer *Pour Igor*> **Cécile Renard**

<performers *Tumulte* and *Le Sacre du printemps*> **Alexane Albert, Agnès Canova, Ximena Figueroa, Ibrahim Guétissi, Mathieu Heyraud, Georgia Ives, Bruno Maréchal, Cécile Renard, Gaetano Vaccaro, Thierry Verger, Stéphane Vitrano, Béatrice Warrand, Thalia Ziliotis**

<light technician> **Benjamin Croizy**

<sound technician> **Antoine Strippoli**

<set technician> **Marion Mercier or Anne Jonathan**

<duration> **1h**

<production> **Centre chorégraphique national de Grenoble**

<coproduction> **Théâtre national de Chaillot – Paris**

<with the support of> **MC2 : Grenoble**

The Centre chorégraphique national de Grenoble is financed by the Drac Rhône-Alpes / Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, the Ville de Grenoble, the Conseil Général de l'Isère, the Région Rhône-Alpes and supported by the Institut français for international tours.

THE RITE

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Jean-Claude Gallotta's biography

After a trip to New York in which he discovered the work of Merce Cunningham, Lucinda Childs, Steve Paxton, Trisha Brown, Stuart Sherman and Yvonne Rainer, Jean-Claude Gallotta – with Mathilde Altaraz – founded the Émile Dubois Group in Grenoble in 1979, which, in 1981, joined the Grenoble Arts Centre as a dance creation unit. This was where *Ulysse* was born, a playful ballet using both classical and modern vocabularies.

The Émile Dubois Group became the National Choreographic Centre and took up *Ulysse* again in 1984 for the Olympic Games Festival in Los Angeles, the American Dance Festival, the Holland Festival and the Avignon Festival.

This was followed by: *Les Aventures d'Ivan Vaffan*, *Les Louves and Pandora*. In 1986, Jean-Claude Gallotta was asked to be the director of the Grenoble Arts Centre – renamed “Le Cargo” -, thereby becoming the first choreographer to be appointed to run this type of institution.

In 1987, the ballet *Mammame* was performed at the Montreal International Festival of New Dance: the Canadian press (dance and theatre) awarded him the prize for the Best Foreign Performance of the Year. In 1989, after some ten audiovisual collaborations with, for example, Claude Mouriéras and Raoul Ruiz, Jean-Claude Gallotta produced his first full-length film: *Rei Dom – La Légende des Kreuls*. This was followed by *Docteur Labus* and *Les Mystères de Subal*.

Jean-Claude Gallotta then resigned as director of the Grenoble Arts Centre and published his first book, *Mémoires d'un dictaphone*.

During the 1991-1992 season, two choreographic creations combining dance, words and music were performed: *La Légende de Roméo et Juliette*, performed in November 1991 for the Albertville Olympic Arts Festival, and *La Légende de Don Juan*, performed in June 1992 for the Universal Exhibition in Seville, as a joint production with the Avignon Festival. Jean-Claude Gallotta then shot his second full-length film: *l'Amour en deux*.

1993: publication of *Les Yeux qui dansent* (interviews with Bernard Raffalli).

In July of the same year, Jean-Claude Gallotta recreated *Ulysse* at the Châteauvallon Festival. This was followed by a long international tour.

1994: *Prémonitions*, a new choreography created in Grenoble. 1995: at the request of ‘Lyon Opéra Ballet’, Jean-Claude Gallotta composed *La Solitude du danseur*, four solos performed to music by Erik Satie. Gallotta then worked with Nicholas Hytner and Sir Charles Mackerras to produce *La Petite Renarde Rusée*, an opera by Leos Janacek, performed by the Théâtre du Châtelet.

At the Châteauvallon Festival, Jean-Claude Gallotta choreographed and performed the solo *Hommage à Pavel Haas*. In Grenoble, he created *La Tête contre les fleurs* for the company. This was followed in 1996 by *Rue de Palanka*, and in 1997, *La Rue* (an event for 3,000 spectators) and the creation of *La Chamoule ou l'Art d'aimer*.

A longstanding collaboration was set up with Japan, at the invitation of the director Tadashi Suzuki: from 1997 to 2000, Jean-Claude Gallotta ran the dance department at the new Shizuoka Performing Arts Centre, training and directing a permanent company of eight Japanese performers. In 1998, Jean-Claude Gallotta also directed *Le Ventriloque* by Jean-Marie Piemme and *Le Catalogue* by Jean-Bernard Pouy, and wrote *Pierre Chatel* for "l'Adieu au siècle".

Jean-Claude Gallotta created *Les Variations d'Ulysse* for the Paris Opera Ballet, which was performed at the Opéra Bastille in 1995, and repeated in 1998. He also created *Nosferatu* in May 2002 to music by Pascal Dusapin; the ballet was performed again in spring 2006 at the Opéra Bastille.

In 1999, he created *Presque Don Quichotte* at the Douai Hippodrome; the piece was also performed in Shizuoka, Japan. In 2000, he created *l'Incessante*, a solo for Mathilde Altaraz, at the Avignon Festival as part of *Le Vif du Sujet*. In 2001, he created *Les Larmes de Marco Polo* for the Lyon International Biennial.

In 2002, he created *99 duos* at the Chaillot National Theatre, the first part of a trilogy on 'People'. In 2003, he prepared *Trois générations* for the Avignon Festival, which was eventually cancelled. The piece, which includes children, former dancers and the Company, was performed at the Rampe d'Echirolles in March 2004. It was performed in May of the same year at the Chaillot National Theatre and was repeated in November 2005. The same year, he worked with the director Hans-Peter Cloos to produce a show combining dance, theatre and music, *Les sept péchés capitaux* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill. In 2006, he created *Des Gens qui dansent*, the third part of the trilogy initiated by *99 duos* and *Trois Générations* and, in 2007, he repeated his flagship piece from the 80s, *Ulysse*, under the title *Cher Ulysse*.

In 2008, *Bach dance experience* with Mirella Giardelli and "L'Atelier des Musiciens du Louvre"; *Armide* by Lully with the conductor William Christie and the director Robert Carsen at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris; *Chroniques chorégraphiques - season 1*, a sort of "stage movie" that allowed him to pursue his poetic research into genres and people.

In 2009, he created *l'Homme à tête de chou*, with the original words and music by Serge Gainsbourg in a version recorded for the show by Alain Bashung. In April 2011, he performed a solo with *Faut qu'je danse !* as a prelude to the recreation of his trio *Daphnis é Chloé* in Grenoble.

In October 2011, again in Grenoble and with a piece for thirteen dancers, he took on Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*, which he presented in April 2012 at the Chaillot National Theatre, Paris, along with *Tumulte* and *Pour Igor* in the first part.

At the end of 2012, he is to present *Racheter la mort des gestes - Chroniques chorégraphiques 1* at the Théâtre de la Ville, then at MC2; in early 2013, his recreation of *Ivan Vaffan* (first performed in 1984) will enable him to continue his work on the repertoire, alternating with his creations and thereby pleading for a certain "continuity in art" and seeking patiently to share with his audience the same story: the story of a shared artistic history and future.

In October 2013, he directed the singer Olivia Ruiz in *El Amor Brujo* by Manuel de Falla, a piece presented together with Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, a show on which he worked together with the conductor Marc Minkowski and the director Jacques Osinski.

For the 2014-2015 season, he is presenting *The Rite and its Revolutions* (including the first performance of Xenakis's *Jonchaies* and *Six Pieces for Orchestra, op. 6* by Webern (*Homage to Angela Davis*) at the Philharmonie de Paris, and in June he is giving the first performance of *The Stranger*, based on the novel by Albert Camus at the MC2 in Grenoble.

THE RITE

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Jean-Claude Gallotta's interview with Claude-Henri Buffard

Le Sacre du printemps will be a hundred years old in 2013. Choreographers have been puzzling over it and feeling great affection for it for a century. Almost all of them seem to carry a Sacre inside themselves.

Undoubtedly *le Sacre* is a sort of magic mountain for choreographers. From one moment to the next one inevitably wants to climb it, pit oneself against it and take a close look at it.

You are tackling this «mountain» late in your career (after having choreographed more than sixty other works), but you actually «noticed» it very early on.

That dates from my childhood and a music lesson at the boarding school I attended where events that filled us with enthusiasm were rare. The teacher told us about Stravinsky, the Ballets Russes, Nijinsky, the «outrage» at the first performance (at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 29 May 1913) and then put a 78 on the class record player. This music, which was new to me at the time, immediately transported me to areas I had thought forbidden, those of sensuality, tortured bodies, unexplained emotions and unsettling palpitations.

And then several years later, when I was no longer dancing, I rediscovered Stravinsky on my journey. Frank Zappa was my idol. I wanted to know everything about him, and I knew that he had been taught by Stravinsky. That was when I started to become familiar with *le Sacre*.

Once you became a choreographer, you had an inescapable desire to confront it.

Through George Balanchine, who taught many choreographers and for whom teaching was the main thing. He had created around twenty ballets with Stravinsky, almost all of which, with the exception of *le Sacre du printemps*, he considered «undanceable». At that time I dreamt of presenting a *Sacre* in two parts, with my choreography in silence, and the music, either before or after it, on its own on the darkened stage. It was radical, on a par with Stravinsky's audacity. But it didn't happen.

Was the inner need not yet there?

That's it! I needed to feel equipped to confront this work and I wasn't at that time. I needed to find my own musicality for my dance to start working its way up - let's put it like that - to the level of Stravinsky's music. And

THE RITE

preceded by : I. TUMULTE, II. POUR IGOR

that didn't come out until 2009, during rehearsals for *l'Homme à tête de chou*. I wonder whether the fourteen dancers, with their extraordinary vitality, encouraged me to use their energy. Partly, no doubt. It was then that I saw *le Sacre* as a second part of *l'Homme à tête de chou*. I immediately thought that the final image - the dancers stretching out at the front of the stage - ought to become the first image of *le Sacre*.

Did you continue to be overwhelmed by the supposed «undanceability» of this work or did you conceive your choreography as you usually do?

I was a bit anxious, of course: how do you interact with such powerful music choreographically? What more can I bring that hasn't been done already? Now, with maturity, I know how to develop what I will call here «the dramatic art of abstraction». So I worked with the dancers as usual, in silence. The difference with my other productions is that since the music preceded the choreography I was able to test my body movements sequence by sequence as it went along.

Up until now, choreographers who have set the Sacre to dance were classically trained, including Pina Bausch when she produced the work in 1975. It was no doubt more natural for them to turn to le Sacre one day.

There's no doubt about it. And Merce Cunningham, the master of abstraction, has clearly never approached *le Sacre*. That's exactly what interested me. How I, a child of classical dance as well as abstraction, was able to find my path through the music, without either following it or ignoring it, of course; finding what I called at the time «the real musicality» of my dance.

The dancers found their own musicality too. And it seems as if this choreography requires inspiration from them.

Right, even if it doesn't last very long, the effort required is constant and intense, with no time to rest. The dancers are like instruments of visual music here, always vibrant, like the shadow of an orchestra on the stage, having to control and communicate the same energy it does. With them, in my own way, I interpreted Igor Stravinsky's famous phrase «it isn't enough to hear the music, you have to see it too.»

You have chosen the version Igor Stravinsky himself recorded in 1960 with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, which is not the best known version nor the best played, but is the most often «used», in preference to those conducted by Bernstein, Boulez and Karajan.

I wanted first and foremost to pay tribute to Stravinsky; I wanted to «hear him». There are more brilliant interpretations than his but I did not want to make my choice based on that criteria. Even if his interpretation had

THE RITE

preceded by : I. TUMULTE, II. POUR IGOR

been considered antiquated, which is not the case, quite the opposite in fact, I would have chosen it. It suits me well. As the conductor, Stravinsky had to move fast, trim the fat and pare it down. It is rhythmic, instinctive, occasionally violent. His *Sacre* is very «rock-and-roll»!

You have also pared down the original detail of his work. The «chosen one» is not personified by a single dancer.

The same as I did in *l'Homme à tête de chou* where the character of Marilou, Gainsbourg's «chosen one», was played by each of seven dancers in turn, all the girls in *my Sacre* are chosen or may be considered as such. I like this idea that each of my performers has her chance to be the chosen one. It is a way for me to take a topical look at this work. The social and cultural mix has changed. We are no longer in the «pagan Russia» era as indicated in the work's subtitle. Nowadays, we are all «chosen ones», or at least eligible.

In 1913, the programme specified: «The earth is covered with flowers. The earth is covered with grass. Great joy reigns over mankind...» The violence of the rhythm does not transport us back to the same images today.

Indeed, the music led me more towards the city, to asphalt and stony ground. The dancers no longer «rapturously trample the ground». In some sequences, they form an explosive, angry, combative group. The music and dance sometimes seems to have come from West Side Story.

That being the case, as the work is short, you have preceded it with two similarly short works, Tumulte and Pour Igor.

Yes, the first one, *Tumulte*, is where I invite the audience to take notice of the primitive silence of the dance that precedes the musical explosion. It's a foretaste of the *Sacre* dance that will be revealed a few minutes later; a little as if one discovered the dancers practising a few minutes before the start of the performance.

Then *Pour Igor*, a solo-tribute to the composer, danced by Cécile Renard, in a soundscape by Antoine Strippoli. It is a way of addressing Stravinsky familiarly, whilst offering him a chosen one as if she has escaped from his music.



Gallotta's «Sacre du printemps» is a wholehearted success Philippe Gonnet – 9 October 2011

Jean-Claude Gallotta has not therefore departed from the tradition that expects great choreographers to tackle Igor Stravinsky's *Sacre du printemps* at some point.

It was done - and successfully - on Friday night, in front of Catherine Tasca, the former Culture Minister, and Jean-Jack Queyranne, Socialist Party Chairman of the Region.

Prior to *Sacre*, the audience enjoyed two «little» pieces, *Tumulte* and *Pour Igor*, devised for the occasion by Gallotta.

Not only do they add satisfactorily to the length of this show, the way they slotted in both intellectually and sensitively with the main work of the programme soon became clear.

With *Tumulte*, the thirteen dancers (six boys and seven girls) of the National Choreographic Centre of Grenoble (CCNG) painted an initial outline of what this *Sacre* would go on to reveal.

Without music, and using video in a calculated and distinctive way, these sequences set the pace, delivering a declaration of intent which was harmoniously enhanced by *Pour Igor*.

And all in a totally poetic Gallotta-like way...

This approach could only make people think of *Faut qu'je danse!* the choreographer's most recent solo prefacing his revival of *Daphnis é Chloé*. It was, however, more immediately explicit...

Then a recording of *le Sacre* burst forth, or more precisely, its musical rhythm. Not the best version maybe, but the one conducted and recorded in 1960 by Igor Stravinsky with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra.

Because it is this rhythm, the very heart of this powerful driving force, that you need to experience in order to find the energy underlying this choreography.

From chaos to duets, and the rising and falling harmonies that surround the chosen ones, a new treatment appeared on the Grand Théâtre stage in the scansion of these nervous and tense sweeping gestures that, nevertheless, were always combined with an almost ethereal gentleness...

Although the artist's style was well and truly present, Jean-Claude Gallotta was not content to do a «Gallotta».

Whilst recapturing or evoking his customary forms, and certainly drawing inspiration from them, the choreographer went a lot further in his constantly innovative fashion, specifically creating a new language.

And that is precisely what makes this *Sacre du printemps* a success.

Apart from the fact «it works», Gallotta and his team have produced a deeper treatment of a work that is both poetic and daring, offering a new version of this difficult anthology.

It's as if *L'Homme à tête de chou* inspired Gallotta in the same way that *L'Oiseau de feu* had inspired Stravinsky.

Le Monde

With Gallotta, the Sacre becomes a whirlwind
Rosita Boisseau – 14 October 2011

An umpteenth reinterpretation of a classic? This is a good deal more: a fairy with claws, charging along with its head down.

Everything runs about and swirls around at great speed. Everything happens in pairs at great speed, even though gusts of wind regularly break up the «love affairs» going on. With choreographer Jean-Claude Gallotta, dancing pairs have been making the world dizzy with their dances since the 1980s. His version of the *Sacre du printemps*, to the music composed in 1913 by Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) and choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky (1889-1950) does not get away from the original idea, to the point where the show becomes too predictable in a sense.

On the stage of the MC2 in Grenoble, where the choreographer from Grenoble has worked since 1984, thirteen dancers (seven women and six men) jostle each other back-to-back and avoid each other face-to-face, having fun and ultimately finding themselves. From the first bars of the score, as a kind of magnificent musical monster, with its scratching violins and trumpeting brass, they surge forward in a torrential wave with their heads down. This vital explosion of group leaps, head-butts and heaving, the sudden languidness and the kick that starts it all off again is total Gallotta. Manes of hair flow through the air as if the music of the *Sacre*, which the choreographer has chosen to embrace even though it disturbs him, can only leave him face to face with himself and his obsessions. Gallotta's version adds to the two hundred or so revivals that have appeared since the work's creation – one of the most strikingly controversial of the 20th century at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. Most have fallen into obscurity. Others, such as those by Maurice Béjart in 1959 and Pina Bausch sixteen years later, stand up well alongside the original masterpiece.

Musically and choreographically revolutionary, *Le Sacre du printemps* presents a pagan rite during the course of which a young virgin, Elue, is sentenced by the old sages to dance herself to death. With the broken body, pigeon-toed, clenched fist and insistent stamping movements, the savage beauty of these village scenes still gives one goose-bumps.

Gallotta's scenario distances itself from Nijinsky's by drawing on his problem with pairs and embracing a long tradition of revision. Although Stravinsky did say there was «no sex» in his music, this is the theme that is regularly brought up with the *Sacre*. Besides, with Gallotta, it is less a question of sex as of desire and mystery, the one encircling the other, and the irresistible attraction that it arouses. This, basically, is typical Gallotta, even if the treatment presented in his *Sacre* seems curiously modest with regard to the rest of his work, which is often more crude and direct.

The production lacks a certain terror, even dread between the living and humanity, which *Le Sacre du printemps* savagely electrifies. The hungry energy running through Gallotta's dance resembles youth, first love, romance and magic. In acknowledging the secret forces that keep us on track, Gallotta gives us his version of spring, and makes the rite a ritual of life.

Libération

**Gallotta shakes up «le Sacre»
Marie-Christine Vernay – 19 October 2011**

The choreographer presents a conclusive, leaping version of Stravinsky's work

Innumerable versions of le Sacre du printemps, Stravinsky's famous composition, have appeared. Some have been memorable such as the ones by Maurice Béjart (1959) and Pina Bausch (1975). The most recent and most resourceful have been those by David Wampach, « simply radiant », and Thierry Thieu Niang with the over-fifties as well as the original by Nijinsky (1913). This «pagan ceremony» as the composer described it, works choreographers hard. It hammers away until they lay down their arms and find themselves constrained to succumb to its telluric force.

Jean-Claude Gallotta, Director of the National Choreographic Centre of Grenoble, starts it at a gallop. It came out of nothing save the energy unleashed during rehearsals and performances of l'Homme à tête de chou to the music of Serge Gainsbourg, revised and sung by Alain Bashung before his death. Le Sacre appears as the second part of a diptych, with the same cast, moon-like lighting and uncontrollable energy in its adolescent surges. There is not a chosen one here but several – including men struck down and shivering in their pants. If there was a chosen one, however, she was called Marilou and she crossed the stage a solitary figure making bowing movements. Gallotta chose her as a surprise element among his teenage idolatrous agitations and planted her there to wander about. As a result, everything started very low down, from the floor itself, so as to let the sap rise. Le Sacre itself was preceded by Tumulte, where the dancers moved silently about in almost total darkness, when a woman's cry pierced the night. Then came Pour Igor, where the choreographer took on a familiar tone and shouted at Igor as if he was an old mate, while the group of thirteen dancers (an odd number, denying any lasting attempt at pairing off) appeared lying down, lined up at the front of the stage before the music burst forth. There is no real set, just school chairs like the ones in Tadeusz Kantor's Classe morte, one of the childhood memories of Jean-Claude Gallotta himself, who discovered Stravinsky at boarding school.

The choreographer has chosen the recording of the first version of the score, conducted and recorded by Igor Stravinsky himself in 1960. It is clear-cut, rough and works well with choreography that rises and falls. The dancers seized the space frenetically, leaping and shouting vociferously. There are elements of some of Gallotta's earlier works here: the popular step with shoes and ankle socks that brought the flood of children in Hommage à Yves P; the passionate love trio from Daphnis é Chloé; and the surges and stampedes of Ulysse or Mammame. Le Sacre du printemps was already nestling, quietly, in amongst the choreographer's work. It has just burst forth, in true rock style.