

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Finale from The Firebird

(1882–1971)

BIOGRAPHY: A quintessentially cosmopolitan Russian, Stravinsky was one of the most influential composers and artists of 20th century music, both in the West and in his native land. He grew up in St. Petersburg in a musical family. He was named by Time magazine as one of the most influential people of the century. His music was transformational, even sometimes controversial, due to its modern and challenging nature, yet it still showed influence of the classical era. Despite his love for composition, he spent some time studying law until luckily the success of *The Firebird* launched his career. He was a student of Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and was admired by other composers such as Claude Debussy. Following *The Firebird*, Stravinsky wrote other works that are now frequently performed including *Petrushka*, *Rite of Spring* and *Perséphone*. With compositions that cross a variety of musical styles, he is considered the creator of neo-classicism and later in his career, he embraced twelve-tone technique. After World War II and surviving tuberculosis, Stravinsky relocated to the United States.



REPERTOIRE NOTES: Stravinsky's first important work was the music for the ballet, *The Firebird*, which made him famous overnight. The premiere of the work was in Paris in 1910 and was well received. The success shown upon Stravinsky and also several of the Principal dancers whose careers flourished in the wake of the premiere. The ballet tells the story of Prince Ivan and a magical Firebird battling the demon Koschei. The climax of the story occurs during *Infernal Dance* and the Finale represents the resolution where Prince Ivan and the Firebird rejoice. This premiere helped propel Stravinsky's career forward, allowing him to compose more- not all of which would be as immediately positively received. The finale, which follows the *Infernal Dance*, begins with a pristine horn solo and builds ever so slightly through the orchestra until a grand, triumphant conclusion. Use the listening guide on pg. 20 to follow through the piece (answers: soft, loud).

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FIREBIRD FOLLOW-ALONG

Listen for these instrumental entrances and cues to follow along in *The Firebird Finale*. In the right column, write an adjective to describe that moment.

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0:00 seconds Horn solo Strings accompaniment  <p><i>p</i></p>	Example: "regal"
:24 seconds Harp glissando Clarinet, then flute entrance	
~:57 seconds Strings switch from accompaniment to melody	
~1:10 min Full brass join Timpani rolls 	
~1:22 min Everything but strings drops, tempo increase	
~1:26 min Full orchestra joins Triangle enters 	
1:50 min Tempo change	
2:28 min Ending finale <p><i>ffff</i></p>	

Circle the correct answer:

The beginning is: **SOFT** or **LOUD**

Circle the correct answer:

The ending is: **SOFT** or **LOUD**

FIREBIRD: AS TOLD BY YOU

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Without looking up *The Firebird*, create your own story for the music while you listen. Who are your characters? What is the conflict and how is it resolved? How is the setting described?

For assistance, reference the elements of a plot [here](#)

Now illustrate your story of *The Firebird*:



Now [WATCH](#) and learn about the origins of the Russian Folktale *The Firebird* and don't forget to take the quiz!