

## Chapter 1 : Sergei Diaghilev - Wikipedia

*Vaslav Nijinsky was born in or in Kiev, Russian Empire (now Ukraine), as Wacław Niżyński, to ethnic Polish parents, touring dancers Tomasz Niżyński (b. 7 March ) and Eleonora Bereda (b. 28 December ).*

He will be remembered as an early 20th century ballet dancer who ushered in a modern era of dance. He was known for his gravity-defying leaps and en pointe, which is rarely performed by a male dancer who has to support all his body on the tip of fully extended feet in ballet shoes. He was Polish but lived in Imperial Russia as a child with his parents and two siblings; all were professional dancers. In , his parents separated. Starting in , he studied dancing at the St. Petersburg Imperial School of Ballet where he excelled in dancing but not so in other studies. While dancing in , he had a fall leaving him comatose for four days. His older brother was admitted to a mental hospital in for behavioral problems, which was reported as might being related to an old head injury. He graduated second in his class with his highest grades in music, art, and of course dancing. He had a near-death experience during a protest in a civil unrest in Russia. Diaghilev always wanted very traditional performances from him, yet Nijinsky did choreographed three ballets but stirred controversy by pushing the boundaries with modern sexual body movements. In October , his father died and shortly afterward, his depressed mother starved herself to death. It was an odd match as initially, the couple did not speak the same language. The marriage caused problems between him and Diaghilev resulting in him being dismissed without no means of support. He was never under contract or paid a salary while dancing. During World War I, he was placed under house arrest for being a Russian citizen in Budapest, Hungary, and only upon the insistence of U. He made an American tour and then one to South America, where he was barely able to performed his last ballet on September 30, The stress of his imprisonment, traveling during wartime, the responsibility of being a new father, and the poor attempt of being his own manager impacted his mental health. He was always a quiet, shy man but now he had paranoid thoughts and unable to function. The family settled in Switzerland and in he was committed to a mental hospital after being diagnosed with schizophrenia. This was his first time of many hospitalizations for his disease, which ended his dancing career. He died while in a clinic and was buried in London. In his body was moved to Cimetiere de Montmartre. He kept a diary and the complete unexpurgated diary was published in A heavily edited version was earlier published in

Chapter 2 : Vaslav Nijinsky - Wikipedia

*Vaslav Nijinsky: A Leap Into Madness [Peter Ostwald] on calendrierdelascience.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Recounts the life of the Russian ballet dancer from his ascent to fame to his leap to madness, and looks at his relationship with his sister.*

The family lived in Perm but had an apartment in Saint Petersburg and a country estate in Bikbarda near Perm. After graduating from Perm gymnasium in , he went to the capital to study law at St. Petersburg University , but ended up also taking classes at the St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music , where he studied singing and music a love of which he had picked up from his stepmother. After graduating in he abandoned his dreams of composition his professor, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov , told him he had no talent for music. Although not instantly received into the group, Diaghilev was aided by Benois in developing his knowledge of Russian and Western art. In two years, he had voraciously absorbed this new obsession even travelling abroad to further his studies and came to be respected as one of the most learned of the group. In , Diaghilev became special assistant to Prince Sergei Mikhaylovich Volkonsky , who had recently taken over directorship of all Imperial theaters. Diaghilev was soon responsible for the production of the Annual of the Imperial Theaters in , and promptly offered assignments to his close friends: The two collaborators concocted an elaborate production plan that startled the established personnel of the Imperial Theatres. After several increasingly antagonistic differences of opinion, Diaghilev in his demonstrative manner refused to go on editing the Annual of the Imperial Theatres and was discharged by Volkonsky in [5] and left disgraced in the eyes of the nobility. However, his homosexuality had been well known long before he was invited into the Imperial Theatres. Petersburg, having travelled widely through Russia for a year discovering many previously unknown masterpieces of Russian portrait art. In the following year he took a major exhibition of Russian art to the Petit Palais in Paris. It was the beginning of a long involvement with France. This led to an invitation to return the following year with ballet as well as opera, and thus to the launching of his famous Ballets Russes. His choreographer Michel Fokine often adapted the music for ballet. Together they developed a more complicated form of ballet with show-elements intended to appeal to the general public, rather than solely the aristocracy. The exotic appeal of the Ballets Russes had an effect on Fauvist painters and the nascent Art Deco style. Coco Chanel is said to have stated that "Diaghilev invented Russia for foreigners. In , he commissioned his first score from Stravinsky, The Firebird. Petrushka and The Rite of Spring followed shortly afterwards, and the two also worked together on Les noces and Pulcinella together with Picasso , who designed the costumes and the set. After the Russian Revolution of , Diaghilev stayed abroad. The new Soviet regime, once it became obvious that he could not be lured back, condemned him in perpetuity as an especially insidious example of bourgeois decadence. Soviet art historians wrote him out of the picture for more than 60 years. The first cast included the legendary ballerina Olga Spessivtseva and Lubov Egorova in the role of Aurora. Diaghilev insisted on calling the ballet The Sleeping Princess. When asked why, he quipped, "Because I have no beauties! The start of the 20th century brought a development in the handling of tonality, harmony, rhythm and meter towards more freedom. Until that time, rigid harmonic schemes had forced rhythmic patterns to stay fairly uncomplicated. Around the turn of the century, however, harmonic and metric devices became either more rigid, or much more unpredictable, and each approach had a liberating effect on rhythm, which also affected ballet. Diaghilev was a pioneer in adapting these new musical styles to modern ballet. When Ravel used a 5 4 time in the final part of his ballet Daphnis and Chloe , dancers of the Ballets Russes sang Ser-gei-dia-ghi-lev during rehearsals to keep the correct rhythm. Lifar is credited for saving many Jewish and other minority dancers from the Nazi concentration camps during World War II. After dancing with the Ballets Russes in , Ruth Page emerged as a founder of her own ballet troupes based in Chicago, including the Chigaco Opera Ballet. His most famous lover was Nijinsky. Ironically, his last lover, composer and conductor Igor Markevitch later married the daughter of Nijinsky. They even named their son Vaslav. What mad Nijinsky wrote Is true of the normal heart; For the error bred in the bone Of each woman and each man Craves what it cannot have, Not universal love But to be loved alone. Diaghilev was known as a hard, demanding,

even frightening taskmaster. Ninette de Valois, no shrinking violet, said she was too afraid to ever look him in the face. George Balanchine said he carried around a cane during rehearsals, and banged it angrily when he was displeased. Other dancers said he would shoot them down with one look, or a cold comment. On the other hand, he was capable of great kindness, and when stranded with his bankrupt company in Spain during the 18 war, gave his last bit of cash to Lydia Sokolova to buy medical care for her daughter. Alicia Markova was very young when she joined the Ballet Russes and would later say that she had called Diaghilev "Sergypops" and he had said he would take care of her like a daughter. Dancers such as Alicia Markova, Tamara Karsavina , Serge Lifar, and Lydia Sokolova remembered Diaghilev fondly, as a stern but kind father-figure who put the needs of his dancers and company above his own. He lived from paycheck to paycheck to finance his company, and though he spent considerable amounts of money on a splendid collection of rare books at the end of his life, many people noticed that his impeccably cut suits had frayed cuffs and trouser-ends. He died of diabetes [12] in Venice on 19 August , and his tomb is on the nearby island of San Michele , near to the grave of Stravinsky , in the Orthodox section.

**Chapter 3 : Vaslav Nijinsky: A Leap Into Madness - Peter F. Oswald - Google Books**

*Using Nijinsky's own notebooks to augment the existing medical evidence, Oswald examines the dancer's family history, the effects of his personal and professional subjection to Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev--his Svengali-like mentor and lover--and Nijinsky's troubled marriage to a woman perhaps nearly his equal in self-destructiveness.*

Vaslav Nijinsky The ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky electrified his audiences with a virtuosity directly related to the characterizations he forged by the genius of his imagination. Although his dancing and choreographic career was short, he remains a symbol of human artistic achievement. Vaslav Nijinsky was born in Kiev, Ukraine, on March 12, some sources say, others A brother, Stanislas, two years older than Vaslav, succumbed to mental illness in early adolescence. In her book, *Early Memoirs*, Bronislava describes the young Vaslav as lively, mischievous, and adventurous. He would stand on the knobs of a door and swing side to side with it, and could bounce just as high and forcefully as a rubber ball, and would sneak off to a nearby gypsy camp to enjoy and imitate the action he saw there. Petersburg by his parents. He was auditioned and accepted for both academic and ballet training. He was soon recognized as "remarkable" by his ballet teacher, N. Legat, although he was considered not very bright academically, except in geometry. The response to the company was spectacular, the success of Nijinsky dazzling. Again on leave for a season in, the troupe brought *Scheherazade* and *Carnaval* to Paris. The company with its brilliant music, decor, and dance was wildly acclaimed, and Nijinsky was adored. Petersburg, Nijinsky was dismissed from the Imperial Theatre when he refused to wear trunks over his tights in an appearance with Tamara Karsavina in *Giselle*. Diaghilev then determined to set up a permanent company in the West. From through the *Diaghilev Ballets Russes* was met with overwhelming enthusiasm throughout Europe. In, still as lead dancer, he also choreographed *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Jeux*, both controversial and breaking the molds of classic ballet. His dancing remained extraordinary. Marie Rambert, who worked with Nijinsky in the Jaques-Dalcroze method, made vital comment about his dancing in *Quicksilver* To that I answer: Who would watch the floor when he danced? He transported you at once into higher spheres with the sheer ecstasy of his flight. On the boat trip Nijinsky became interested in a young Hungarian heiress, Romola, who was in the corps de ballet, and when they landed in Buenos Aires they were married. Upon receiving the news of the marriage Diaghilev cabled Vaslav Nijinsky to inform him that he was dismissed from the company. Severed from his personal and professional ties with the ballet, the importance of Nijinsky as dancer and choreographer went into decline. While he was active as a ballet dancer he electrified his audiences with protean performances and a virtuosity that was never exhibitionistic, but always related to the characterizations he forged by the genius of his creative imagination. As choreographer, also briefly, he provided a daring and exotic breakthrough into the 20th century. His dancing was seen by relatively few audiences during the brief nine years of his professional dance activity, and there are no moving pictures of him. But there are photographs, and they are telling. Is it the same dancer who looks so unreal in *The Spectre of the Rose*, that grovels as the straw puppet in *Petrouchka*, that portrays the patrician Albrecht of *Giselle* and the sensuous harem slave of *Scheherazade*, the earthy Greek sculpture-come-to-life in *Afternoon of a Faun*? Each has a different weight, stance, movement, style. **Mental Illness Ends Professional Life** In the spring of Nijinsky made an unsuccessful attempt to start his own company, and signs of mental illness began to appear. In he rejoined the Diaghilev company and went with it to the United States with only tepid success. He tried another tour soon after with his own company, choreographing and dancing the lead role of *Til Eulenspiegel*. There was still another brief tour in South America. Then came the end of his professional life. He and Romola went to Switzerland, and for the next decade there was constant shifting from one clinic to another in the hope of finding a cure. Attempts to bring back his memory and interest in ballet were also futile. For the more than half of his life that remained he died at the age of 60 his mind and body were engulfed by a mental disease identified as schizophrenia. There was not a day of respite. Kirstein, who had never seen Nijinsky dance, was inspired by the photos. There was much scandal and controversy over the homosexual relationship with Diaghilev. Was it a Svengali situation? Was it that the artist needed the support of the sponsor? Would there have been no breakdown had

there been no break with Diaghilev? The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky , edited by Romola Nijinsky, includes drawings made during the years in mental institutions and has painful-to-read recitations of what is called "Reflections on Life, Death, and Feelings" in which Vaslav identifies himself with God and calls out for peace and love. Vaslav Nijinsky died in and is buried in Paris. Romola died in . Daughter Kyra Nijinsky, born in , painted many dance portraits of Vaslav, although she never saw her father dance. Daughter Tamara, born in , worked with puppets. Further Reading Most of what we know about Nijinsky comes from the vast literature, diverse and often controversial, that perpetuates the legend of his greatness. Some of this was written by those who knew him, much by those who never saw him dance but fell in love with the legend and were inspired to investigate and share their discoveries. Nijinsky by Richard Buckle provides a comprehensive account of casts, dates, descriptions, and details of negotiations based on definitive research and information from those who worked closely with him. The Denby essay is reprinted in the outsize Nijinsky Dancing, a compilation of over photographs with brilliant text and commentary by Lincoln Kirstein . Additional Sources Nijinsky, New York: Nijinsky, Romola de Pulszky. Simon and Schuster, Equation; New York, N. Distributed by Sterling Pub.

**Chapter 4 : The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky by Vaslav Nijinsky**

*In December , Vaslav Nijinsky, the most famous male dancer in the Western world, moved into a Swiss villa with his wife and three-year-old daughter and started to go insane. This diary, which he kept in four notebooks over six weeks, is the only sustained, on-the-spot account we have by a major.*

Psychiatry has been so demeaning when it has sought to classify those people who have suffered most acutely throughout their lives from spurious classification: At its best, it misrecognizes those who have the most to tell us about misrecognition. To treat the so-called mad as oracles is as diminishing in its own way as scapegoating them. But as the Diary poignantly shows, this very fascination also made people inattentive to him. Such daring and poise could never be sustained. The consoling myth of genius's fantasies of hubris and punishment that make us lump together the inspiringly mad Friedrich Nietzsche, Antonin Artaud, etc. It often sounds like *The Wasteland* , but written by Feodor Dostoevsky. The Diary is at once insistently tedious in its obsessions and endlessly fascinating in the cunning of its artfulness. Nijinsky intrigues us and puts us off—indeed, he intrigues us by putting us off, as though all the time he were daring the reader to be sufficiently interested in him, to find out what will happen if we follow him. The Diary , in other words, is clearly written by someone who knows that those around him—mostly his wife and her parents, his daughter and his doctor—are beginning to think of him as mad. It is the text of a terminally scrutinized man, a man adored as a great dancer who is gradually becoming the object of a different kind of concerned attention. So it is perhaps not surprising, given the glare of specialness he has lived under, that the abiding preoccupation of the Diary is what people want from him. He is writing about the paradoxes of perfectionism. It is a book by a perfectionist, in praise of mistakes. I wanted it to have mistakes and therefore put them in on purpose. He tells us he believes in his mistakes, but he will eventually correct them—without telling us what they are. There is a terrifying shrewdness about his logic. He writes like a man who has understood his audience so well that he can no longer perform for them. As though what they want from him reveals something impossible about wanting. If I write without mistakes, people will think that I am a madman. In this self-protective second-guessing of the audience, he is no longer free to make genuine mistakes. I am the spirit. Dance was the only place, apart from this Diary , in which he could explore the terrible nature of their demand. I will go to a brothel because I want to have an intuitive understanding of tarts. I have forgotten tarts. I want to understand the psychology of a tart. It was as though Nijinsky somehow realized that the response to him as a dancer was itself a symptom of something larger and more daunting. And once he could no longer use dancing to explore the problem his dancing had exposed, he had two options: The Diary becomes a last eloquent rant of the once-poised body finally humiliated. The rhythm of its obsessions is integral to its power—it is, again, a dramatic monologue and could easily be performed as such. The struggle to articulate is always a kind of madness. Nijinsky may have had to actually go mad because there was no one in the vicinity who could even acknowledge that fact. Nothing could be at once more belated, or more timely than this remarkable Diary.

Chapter 5 : Vaslav Nijinsky | calendrierdelascience.com

*In December , Vaslav Nijinsky, at that time the most celebrated male dancer in the Western world, moved into a villa in St. Moritz with his wife, Romola, and their three-year-old daughter.*

Yet was that really the case? A field of inquiry tabooed for so long, the homoshistory of Russia — or history of Russian homoculture, if you may — has not enjoyed a proper chance to be discussed or shown. To Russia With Love is a series of provocative compositions imbued with iconic symbolism. Diaghilev creates this hub for talent of all sorts like it was not seen before with Picasso , Balanchine , Stravinsky , Chanel. Paris is an extremely tough city and here is this Russian producer at the head of the avant-garde of the art world. That is an extremely rare phenomenon. The Rite of Spring , with its polarizing success, has become a rite of passage for choreographers to this day. He starts a tradition of male dancers followed by Nureyev and Baryshnikov. One has to wonder how much of their creative force was based on the strength of their love affair. Their internal torment has become like a crown of thorns, visible to all and a witness to the shame to a society that was not advanced enough to understand them and ready to crucify them on account of their sexuality. It is only paradoxical that they enjoyed so much success and that with that success they had the scrutiny of the gaze of the world. Let me preface my critique by saying that I understand how gay people hunger for role models; we all want to see the realities of our lives mirrored back to us and magnified for all the world to see in great stories, films and other artistic expressions. Young people especially, gay and straight, long for positive and affirming roles models; and for queer youth such role models are definitely out there. Yet it concerns me when this desire for someone or something to aspire to blinds us to personality traits, situations and relationships that in actuality may be far from worthy of admiration, from placement on a pedestal. With this in mind, I have to say that I see very little to admire or yearn for in the relationship of Nijinsky and Diaghilev. From my reading on Nijinsky pictured at left in , I think this description is not only overly romantic but in fact false. Dance critic Luke Jennings, for instance, notes that in Diaghilev: A Life , author Sjeng Scheijen presents Diaghilev as a "charming and ruthless tyrant, whose sexual and emotional manipulations of those around him were born of a need for absolute control. In creating Petrushka for Nijinsky, Fokine achieved a kind of malicious psychoanalysis. His repressed resentment, his self-pity — all the facets of a "trapped soul" were to surface and stun the audience with the force of his pain. As Petrushka, Nijinsky displayed the tragic facet of his genius. The rare balance between his stunning virtuosity and his impressive appearance had an almost surreal effect. His total identification with Petrushka, which stemmed as Fokine had intended from his sense of his relationship with Diaghilev and from his deep-seated inferiority complex, added an element of poignancy to the characterization which was further enriched by the resonance of Russian culture, with its time-honored theme of the spiritual superiority of the oppressed. Lucy Moore in her biography of Nijinsky, similarly notes: He did it for Pavlova with the Dying Swan, and he did it for Nijinsky with Petrushka, turning a wooden puppet into an existential hero, oppressed by his fate, scabbling for a vestige of dignity, meditating on the precariousness of freedom and the tragedy of its loss. The film Nijinsky conveys a similar message. It had no impact whatsoever on the success or failure of the ballets they created and presented. I actually think the most accurate word to describe what many of his contemporaries discerned as his sexual ambiguity, especially on stage, is queer. It was an ambiguity that made for unforgettable and groundbreaking performances, performances that audiences across the continent clamored to see. Spectre was a powerful metaphor for sexual ambivalence: For his ballet, Nijinsky, the choreographer, John Neumeier burrows deep into the mind of the great dancer to tell of his descent into madness. The audience can empathise with Nijinsky as he speaks through dance of his confusion and passions, while also observing his disintegration, as if they are watching a human exhibit in a gallery. Neumeier makes much use of intricate pas de trois and pas de deux. Among the best of these is a pas de deux for Nijinsky and Diaghilev that depicts Nijinsky, by turns, as a sacrifice, lover, and childlike being in the grasp of the impresario. The circled arms echo the large white illuminated circles of the set that, in turn, mirror the circles Nijinsky made in his drawings comprising concentric circles and eye shapes. I think his marriage to Romola is the greatest mystery around him. He was bisexual from the

beginning. I do not think that the relationship with Diaghilev was one-sided, that Diaghilev seduced him. It was a mutual, also physical situation between them. We know certain things from his diary, including his relations with prostitutes in Paris. At a certain point he just wanted to have this woman. There is a very interesting letter he wrote to Stravinsky, which is in Switzerland, in which he is quite confused at the reaction of Diaghilev to his marriage. I believe he thought that the two things could somehow continue at the same time. First, Diaghilev is the Devil. He seduced Nijinsky and that his madness was due to the relationship. Then there are those who consider his wife the Villainess. She is the one who took him away from his homosexual relationship and, therefore, brought on his madness. Even the situation of his being released from the Ballets Russes is quite complicated. He was not released immediately upon his marriage. He was released later during the South American tour when he failed to perform at an event where there was no understudy for him at that moment. He knew his wife was pregnant. She convinced him to stay with her that evening and, therefore, he was released. As the director of a company, I can well understand that. The last of these was, of course, compounded by the first two. Dancing was of vital importance to Vaslav Nijinsky. As Lucy Moore writes, "Nijinsky had a passionate connectedness to his work, identifying completely with his art. He was different in every role, submerging himself into the part he was playing without any sense of the post-war irony or detachment which characterized later twentieth-century performance. Eliot "a mystical combination of thought, sensation and experience that created a unified poetic whole. I therefore conclude this post by sharing the following from her biography of Nijinsky. There is an electric connection between the God with whom Vaslav identifies and the dieu de la danse he had been acclaimed as by audiences ever since his professional debut ten years earlier. The sense of the dancer-artist as a semi-divine figure, capable of attaining what Erik Bruhn called "something total " a sense of total being," has been beautifully expressed by Rudolf Nureyev, and I imagine that something like this is also what Nijinsky felt when he performed. An indescribable feeling of being everywhere and nowhere. He could not communicate it to Romola; even he could not always grasp it. It was no wonder people had always thought of him as inhabiting a different plane. Perhaps only Diaghilev had understood, in part at any rate. And without being a performer. Repeatedly he refers to living as working and death as not working, conflating the meaning of the words. For him "the working life was the only real life": Now that there was no sacrifice he could make, he could feel his art slipping away from him. The statue, donated by Serge Lifar, shows Nijinsky as the puppet Petrushka.

Chapter 6 : Chicago Tribune - We are currently unavailable in your region

*Vaslav Nijinsky >The ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky () electrified his audiences with >a virtuosity directly related to the characterizations he forged by the >genius of his imagination.*

Nijinsky was one of the most gifted male dancers in history, and he became celebrated for his virtuosity and for the depth and intensity of his characterizations. He could perform en pointe, a rare skill among male dancers at the time Albright, and his ability to perform seemingly gravity-defying leaps was also legendary. At 18 years old he had leading roles in the Mariinsky Theatre. A turning point for Nijinsky was his meeting with Sergei Diaghilev, a member of the St Petersburg elite and wealthy patron of the arts, promoting Russian visual and musical art abroad, particularly in Paris. The show was a great success and increased the reputation of both the leads and Diaghilev throughout the artistic circles of Europe. Diaghilev created Les Ballets Russes in its wake, and with choreographer Michel Fokine, made it one of the most well-known companies of the time. His partnership with Tamara Karsavina, also of the Mariinsky Theatre, was legendary. Nijinsky created revolutionary movements in his shows, moving away from the traditional flowing movements of mainstream ballet. His radical angular movements combined with heavy sexual overtones caused a riot in the Theatre de Champs-Elysees when *Le Sacre du Printemps* was premiered in Paris. In the Ballets Russes toured South America, and because of his fear of ocean voyages Diaghilev did not accompany them. An ardent fan of Nijinsky, she took up ballet and used her family connections to get close to him. Despite her efforts to attract him, Nijinsky appeared unconscious of her presence. Finally Romola booked passage on board a ship that Nijinsky was due to travel on, and had a friend set them up. Romola has often been vilified as the woman who forced Nijinsky to abandon his artistry for cabaret fare, her pragmatic and plebeian ways often jarring with his sensitive nature. This contributed largely to his decline into madness. In his diary, Nijinsky famously said of Romola "My wife is an untwinkling star Nijinsky tried to create his own troupe, but its crucial London engagement failed due to administrative problems. Diaghilev succeeded in getting him out for a North American tour in , during which he choreographed and danced the leading role in *Till Eulenspiegel*. Signs of his dementia praecox were becoming apparent to members of the company. He became afraid of other dancers and that a trap door would be left open. Nijinsky had a nervous breakdown in and his career effectively ended. He was diagnosed with schizophrenia and taken to Switzerland by his wife where he was treated by psychiatrist Eugene Bleuler. He spent the rest of his life in and out of psychiatric hospitals and asylums. It is actually part memoir, part diary, and part manifesto. It contains appeals for compassion toward the less fortunate, and for vegetarianism and animal rights. Nijinsky writes of the importance of feeling as opposed to reliance on reason and logic alone, and he denounces the practice of art criticism as being nothing more than a way for those who practice it to indulge their own egos rather than focusing on what the artist was trying to say.

**Chapter 7 : Vaslav Nijinsky - Biography**

*In Nijinsky made his debut as a choreographer with the Ballet Russe with his creations of L'Après-midi d'un Faun, Till Eulenspiegel and Le Sacre du Printemps, the latter causing fights to break out in the audience as Nijinsky's new methods caused great controversy.*

Therefore I choose Vaslav Nijinsky. I find him most fascinating what he did with his life, and the huge effect he has on dancing nowadays. As I am researching more into him I find him more interesting every minute. Nijinsky was NOT forced to be gay I don't know who put that statement up there but it is so far gone with ignorance it's sick. A good thorough rewrite is called for here, one with greater objectivity. She stayed with Nijinsky through an incredible series of misfortunes and hardships which would have defeated a lesser woman. During World War II, when they were trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe, she nurtured her husband and protected him against a regime which exterminated the mentally disabled. In spite of every difficulty, she never deserted him and never lost the conviction that she was married to an admirable and remarkable man, a rare soul. In the end, she and Nijinsky did find safe harbor in England and they enjoyed a few happy years before his death. Buckle personally knew and interviewed many of the people this couple came in contact with. Romola was not his only source of information. Buckle admired Romola for her steadfastness and enterprise through hair-raising difficulties, mentioning for example the fact that she literally sold copies of her memoir door to door when she and Nijinsky had no money. Her mother was the most famous and beloved Hungarian actress of her era. Romola preferred to stay with her penniless, insane spouse. The article which sneers at her "pragmatic and plebeian qualities" has missed the point that it was these very qualities which allowed the Nijinskys to stay afloat. In particular, the fact that Nijinsky survived the war is a sort of miracle. She was not interested in self-protection. The diaries are, at times, far from kind about Romola the "untwinkling star" but these painful references stayed in. Eliminate any bias and cite your sources. I say let it stand as he wrote it, for better or worse, even if it puts horse dung all over his face. But I also believe in loud and passionate corrections on the Discussion page. Also, every time I read the Harry Harlowe article I feel myself moving closer to editing that wanking apology for the monkey-murderer Nijinsky was essentially forced to be gay with Diaghilev. If anyone here bothered to read his diary or notebook, you should know that. If you commentators bothered to study Diaghilev Haskell, Buckle, Garafola, Karlinsky, Zlobin, etc., you would know more details about their sex lives. Krasovska and Ostwald biographies are good, I suggest you at least read them. So in discussing this, please consider which version we are talking about. Whatever reliance may be placed on notes made by someone in the process of being committed for insanity, over a six week period, is uncertain, but we can be clear Romola was not an impartial witness in what she wrote. Apart from her own feelings, apparently she was strapped for cash and needed a saleable story. In the diary Nijinsky says separately that he loves both his wife and Diaghilev. It also appears to detail feelings of betrayal by both, which could be indications of insanity but then again has some justification. I read some of the diary, and my conclusions were, firstly he was pretty mad when he wrote it, second, he certainly wasn't unwilling in his relationships. From what I have read thus far, it sounds to me as if he married Romola because he already believed Diaghilev was in the process of ditching him. Both were forceful characters capable of running his life for him, and I think this is exactly what he wanted. I don't know if he was right to run for cover with Romola and that Diaghilev really had abandoned him, but it sounds like the conflict in his feelings for Diaghilev after leaving him significantly contributed to his insanity. It seems possible far from being a tyrant, Diaghilev may have kept him sane while their relationship lasted. I read all of it. Nijinsky was an aesthete who intensely loved beauty. His description of Diaghilev as physically repulsive, and sex between them as disgusting, tells us something that is true to what we know of his character. He also said and wrote that he feared Diaghilev would break with him professionally, and do his best to ruin his career, if he rejected him sexually. Since this is exactly what happened, after Nijinsky married Romola, you can hardly claim his fears were unfounded. As for your extraordinary comment that "Diaghilev may have kept him sane while their relationship lasted After Diaghilev robbed him of this work--and the frame in which he could express

it--Nijinsky could no longer fight off insanity. He bitterly regretted his own vengeful actions. And he was right. It is also less than superficially homophobic. Janko Nijinsky was probably not gay--or, to be completely accurate, he was a bisexual who preferred women. His biographer Richard Buckle who WAS gay describes a cultural system in the early 19th century whereby homosexual Russian aristocrats felt entitled to help themselves to young male dancers. Of course, all the power was on the side of the aristocrats. Buckle describes what happened to the idealistic young Nijinsky by saying he was "passed around. He visited female prostitutes. They had a full and complete sexual life--Romola even recollecting later that she "felt she was with a god. His diaries reveal that he regarded Diaghilev as physically repulsive. Or, the degeneration which goes on as a relationship breaks down and lovers start to snap at each other. It does not sound to me as impartial, so certainly he feels a lot about Diaghliev. The photo of the tombstone can be found here: [And the new style equivalent of 28 December is 9 January](#) I must do some research on this. Even if the fifteen months is not accurate, it would be highly unlikely although possible for a mother to give birth to one child in March and another in the following January. The footnote on the page says: The birthdates of the Nijinsky children have been a subject of confusion in most biographies. However, Vera Krassovskaya, the Soviet ballet historian, has the dates correct in her recent Nijinsky On the basis of this document, it would seem to me more than likely that: I am not too surprised with these issues, as dates can be hard to track down, especially across such frontiers and time frames. And it further depends on who placed the tombstone. In the new Russian calendar, that would be 12 March On the other hand, researchers like Richard Buckle and Lincoln Kirstein put the year back to His wife gave the DoB as 28 February in her first book and 28 December second. The most research was probably done by Ian Ferguson and thinks that Nijinsky was born on 12 March Robert Greer talk Would be interesting to add more about this to the article. He suffered a severe fall, with a head injury, in childhood. Later, according to his sister Bronislava Nijinsky, he was placed for months with caregivers whom his mother thought were conscientious, but it turned out they were neglecting and abusing him. There was some violent incident which deeply shocked and traumatized the pregnant woman. All through his twenties Nijinsky was a highly functional and creative dancer, husband, father, and friend. He was thirty before he had a massive breakdown. Also, this happened after years of great frustration when he was essentially separated from the broader dance world by his dispute with Diaghilev. I have wondered if his breakdown was in part situational, and not because he was inherently unbalanced. Perhaps I should add this into the body of the article? The famous mathematician John Nash said his confused thoughts started when he was Schizophrenia can also relent in later years and this seems to have been the case somewhat with Nijinsky also. But I was told many years ago by elderly ballet people that in fact he spent most of that time cared for at home in Surrey. Any sources on this either way? Also, is there a post photo anywhere?

**Chapter 8 : Los Angeles Times - We are currently unavailable in your region**

*Other books on his life include "Nijinsky: A Life" by Lucy Moore, "Nijinsky: A Life of Genius and Madness" by Richard Buckle, and "Vaslav Nijinsky: A Leap Into Madness" by Peter Ostwald. His life's story has been told in ballet and movies; the film "The Red Shoes" is basically his story.*

Nijinsky in Krasnoye Selo , Nijinsky was christened in Warsaw. He identified himself as Polish although he grew up in the interior of Russia with his parents and he had difficulty speaking Polish. Teatr Wielki , becoming a full member of the company at age thirteen. In her talent was spotted and she moved to Kiev as a solo dancer. At age 18 he accepted a soloist contract with the Odessa Theatre. The two met, married in May and settled into a career with the traveling Setov opera company. Tomasz was premier danseur, and Eleanora a soloist. Eleanora continued to tour and dance while having three children, sons Stanislav Fomitch b. She suffered from depression , which may have been a genetic vulnerability shared in a different form by her son Vaslav. Thomas attempted to run his own company, but was not successful. He and his family became itinerant dancers, the children appearing in the Christmas show at Nizhny Novgorod. In Thomas and Eleanora separated after Thomas had fallen in love with another dancer, Rumiantseva, while touring in Finland. Eleanora moved to 20 Mokhovaya Street in St Petersburg with her children. She persuaded a friend from the Wielki Theatre, Victor Stanislas Gillert, who was at the time teaching at the Imperial Ballet School , to help get Vaslav into the school. He arranged for the noted teacher Enrico Cecchetti to sponsor the application. Bronia entered the school two years after Vaslav. Their older brother Stanislav had suffered a fall from a window when young and seemed to have suffered some brain damage. Vaslav and Bronia, just two years apart, became very close as they grew. He was admitted to an asylum for the insane in He studied mime under Pavel Gerdt ; all three men were principal dancers at the Imperial Russian Ballet. He appeared in supporting parts in classical ballets such as Faust, as a mouse in The Nutcracker , a page in Sleeping Beauty and Swan Lake , and won the Didelot scholarship. During his first year, his academic studies had covered work he had already done, so his relatively poor results had not been so much noted. He did well in subjects which interested him, but not otherwise. In he was warned that only the excellence of his dancing had prevented his expulsion from the school for poor results. He was teased for being Polish, and nicknamed "Japonczek" for his faintly Japanese looks at a time Russia was at war with Japan. Some classmates were envious and resented his outstanding dancing ability. In one of the class deliberately caused him to fall, leading to his suffering a concussion and being in a coma for four days. In music he studied piano, flute, balalaika and accordion, receiving good marks. He had a good ability to hear and play music on the piano, though his sight reading was relatively poor. The work was never performed due to the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. On Sunday, 9 January , Nijinsky was caught in the Bloody Sunday massacre in St Petersburg, where a group of petitioners led by Father Grapon attempted to present their petition to the Czar. Soldiers fired upon the crowd, leading to an estimated casualties. Nijinsky was caught in the crowd on Nevsky Prospect and propelled toward the Winter Palace. Imperial cavalry troops charged the crowd, leaving him with a head wound. The following day, he returned to the scene with a friend whose sister was missing. She was never found. His reserve and apparent dullness made him unappealing to others except when he danced. I have never seen such a public. You would have thought their seats were on fire. He was congratulated by the director of the Imperial Ballet and offered a place in the company although he was a year from graduation. Nijinsky chose to continue his studies. At his graduation performance in April , he partnered Elizaveta Gerdt , in a pas de deux choreographed by Fokine. He was congratulated by prima ballerina Mathilde Kchessinska of the Imperial Ballet, who invited him to partner her. He graduated second in his class, with top marks in dancing, art and music. These performances frequently included members of the Imperial family and other nobility, whose support and interest were essential to a career. Each dancer who performed before the Tsar received a gold watch inscribed with the Imperial Eagle. Nijinsky had a minor role, but it allowed him to show off his technical abilities with leaps and pirouettes. The partnership of Fokine, Benois and Nijinsky was repeated throughout his career. Shortly after, he upstaged his own performance, appearing in the Bluebird pas de deux

from the *Sleeping Beauty*, partnering Lydia Kyasht. The Mariinsky audience was deeply familiar with the piece, but exploded with enthusiasm for his performance and his appearing to fly, an effect he continued to have on audiences with the piece during his career. Nijinsky created a sensation in the role of the Wind God Vayou. Ballets Russes[ edit ] Vaslav Nijinsky in *Scheherazade* A turning point for Nijinsky was his meeting the Russian Sergei Diaghilev , a celebrated and highly innovative producer of ballet and opera, as well as art exhibitions. He concentrated on promoting Russian visual and musical art abroad, [19] particularly in Paris. The season of colorful Russian ballets and operas, works mostly new to the West, was a great success, leading him to plan a new tour for with a new name for his company, the now famous Ballets Russes. As a friend and as a leading dancer, Nijinsky was part of the group. His sister wrote that he felt intimidated by the illustrious and aristocratic company. To round out the program, they needed another ballet. Without sufficient time to compose a new work, they decided on a suite of popular dances, to be called *Le Festin*. Anna Pavlova , Karsavina and Nijinsky were chosen as principal dancers. Fokine insisted that Ida Rubenstein would appear as Cleopatra, and Nijinsky insisted that his sister should have a part. Diaghilev departed for Paris in early to make arrangements, which were immediately complicated on the day of his return, 22 February , by the death of Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovitch , who had sponsored an application by Diaghilev for an imperial subsidy of , roubles for the tour. No sooner had rehearsals started that the permission was withdrawn, disappearing as had the imperial subsidy. Diaghilev managed to raise some money in Russia, but he had to rely significantly on Gabriel Astruc , who had been arranging theatres and publicity on behalf of the company in France, to also provide finance. Plans to include Opera had to be dropped because of the lack of finances, and logistical difficulties in obtaining necessary scenery at short notice and for free. Members of the company had noticed Diaghilev keeping a particularly proprietorial eye on Nijinsky during rehearsals in Russia. They took the travel arrangements and accommodation as confirmation of a relationship. The Paris seasons of the Ballets Russes were an artistic and social sensation; setting trends in art, dance, music and fashion for the next decade. His expressive execution of a pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty* Tchaikovsky was a tremendous success. Later seasons[ edit ] Group of supporters and members of the Ballets Russes taken by one of its founders, Nicolas Besobrasov. His portrayal of " Petrushka ," the puppet with a soul, was a remarkable display of his expressive ability to portray characters. His partnership with Tamara Karsavina , also of the Mariinsky Theatre , was legendary, and they have been called the "most exemplary artists of the time". These introduced his audiences to the new direction of modern dance. In *The Rite of Spring* *Le Sacre du Printemps* , with music by Igor Stravinsky , Nijinsky created choreography that exceeded the limits of traditional ballet and propriety. Violence broke out in the audience as *The Rite of Spring* premiered. The theme of the ballet, based on pagan myths, was a young maiden who sacrificed herself by dancing until she died. They were time-consuming to rehearse and badly received by critics. Diaghilev could not face Nijinsky to tell him personally that he would no longer be choreographing the ballet *Joseph*, but instead asked his sister Bronia Nijinska to deliver the bad news. The company was to embark on a tour of South America in August Nijinska, who had always worked closely with her brother and supported him, could not accompany the tour because she had married in July and become pregnant. In October their father had died while on tour with his dance company, causing another stress for the siblings. Diaghilev did not accompany the South American tour, claiming he had been told that he would die on the ocean. Others have suggested the reason had more to do with wanting to spend time away from Nijinsky and enjoy a holiday in Venice, "where perhaps adventures with pretty dark-eyed boys awaited him". In March the recently engaged Romola was taken to see the Ballets Russes in Budapest by her prospective mother-in-law and was greatly impressed. Nijinsky had not been performing, but she returned the following day and saw him: Intoxicated, entranced, gasping for breath, we followed this superhuman being However, Romola befriended Adolf Bolm , who had previously visited her mother, thereby gaining access to the company and backstage. She and Nijinsky shared no common language; she spoke French but he knew only a little, so many of their early conversations involved an interpreter. When first introduced to her, he gained the impression she was a Hungarian prima ballerina and was friendly. Discovering his mistake, he ignored her thereafter. She persuaded Diaghilev that her amorous interests lay with Bolm, that she was rich and interested in supporting ballet. He allowed her to take ballet lessons with Enrico Cecchetti , who

accompanied the troupe coaching the dancers. Nijinsky objected to her taking class with the professionals. Romola took every opportunity to be near Nijinsky, booking train compartments or cabins close to his. She was likely warned that he was homosexual by Marie Rambert , whom Romola befriended and who was also in love with Nijinsky. She befriended his masseur and was rewarded with a rundown on his musculature. Determined to take every opportunity, she succeeded in spending more and more time in his company. The unexpected friendliness was noticed by Baron de Gunsbourg, an investor in the Ballets Russes, who had been tasked with keeping an eye on the company. Romola thought a cruel joke was being played on her, and ran off to her cabin crying.

**Chapter 9 : Vaslav Nijinsky: A Leap Into Madness by Peter Ostwald**

*The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky, unexpurgated edition translated from the Russian by Kyril Fitzlyon, edited by Joan Acocella. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, pages, \$ Psychiatry has been so.*

March 12, Death Date: April 8, Place of Birth: Although his dancing and choreographic career was short, he remains a symbol of human artistic achievement. Vaslav Nijinsky was born in Kiev, Ukraine, on March 12, some sources say, others A brother, Stanislas, two years older than Vaslav, succumbed to mental illness in early adolescence. In her book, *Early Memoirs*, Bronislava describes the young Vaslav as lively, mischievous, and adventurous. He would stand on the knobs of a door and swing side to side with it, and could bounce just as high and forcefully as a rubber ball, and would sneak off to a nearby gypsy camp to enjoy and imitate the action he saw there. Petersburg by his parents. He was auditioned and accepted for both academic and ballet training. He was soon recognized as "remarkable" by his ballet teacher, N. Legat, although he was considered not very bright academically, except in geometry. The response to the company was spectacular, the success of Nijinsky dazzling. Again on leave for a season in , the troupe brought *Scheherazade* and *Carnaval* to Paris. The company with its brilliant music, decor, and dance was wildly acclaimed, and Nijinsky was adored. Petersburg, Nijinsky was dismissed from the Imperial Theatre when he refused to wear trunks over his tights in an appearance with Tamara Karsavina in *Giselle*. Diaghilev then determined to set up a permanent company in the West. From through the Diaghilev Ballets Russes was met with overwhelming enthusiasm throughout Europe. In , still as lead dancer, he also choreographed *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Jeux*, both controversial and breaking the molds of classic ballet. His dancing remained extraordinary. Marie Rambert, who worked with Nijinsky in the Jaques-Dalcroze method, made vital comment about his dancing in *Quicksilver* One is often asked whether his jump was really as high as it is always described. To that I answer: Who would watch the floor when he danced? He transported you at once into higher spheres with the sheer ecstasy of his flight. On the boat trip Nijinsky became interested in a young Hungarian heiress, Romola, who was in the corps de ballet, and when they landed in Buenos Aires they were married. Upon receiving the news of the marriage Diaghilev cabled Vaslav Nijinsky to inform him that he was dismissed from the company. Severed from his personal and professional ties with the ballet, the importance of Nijinsky as dancer and choreographer went into decline. While he was active as a ballet dancer he electrified his audiences with protean performances and a virtuosity that was never exhibitionistic, but always related to the characterizations he forged by the genius of his creative imagination. As choreographer, also briefly, he provided a daring and exotic breakthrough into the 20th century. His dancing was seen by relatively few audiences during the brief nine years of his professional dance activity, and there are no moving pictures of him. But there are photographs, and they are telling. Is it the same dancer who looks so unreal in *The Spectre of the Rose*, that grovels as the straw puppet in *Petrouchka*, that portrays the patrician Albrecht of *Giselle* and the sensuous harem slave of *Scheherazade*, the earthy Greek sculpture-come-to-life in *Afternoon of a Faun*? Each has a different weight, stance, movement, style. Mental Illness Ends Professional Life In the spring of Nijinsky made an unsuccessful attempt to start his own company, and signs of mental illness began to appear. In he rejoined the Diaghilev company and went with it to the United States with only tepid success. He tried another tour soon after with his own company, choreographing and dancing the lead role of *Til Eulgenspiegel*. There was still another brief tour in South America. Then came the end of his professional life. He and Romola went to Switzerland, and for the next decade there was constant shifting from one clinic to another in the hope of finding a cure. Attempts to bring back his memory and interest in ballet were also futile. For the more than half of his life that remained--he died at the age of his mind and body were engulfed by a mental disease identified as schizophrenia. There was not a day of respite. Kirstein, who had never seen Nijinsky dance, was inspired by the photos. There was much scandal and controversy over the homosexual relationship with Diaghilev. Was it a Svengali situation? Was it that the artist needed the support of the sponsor? Would there have been no breakdown had there been no break with Diaghilev? *The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky*, edited by Romola Nijinsky, includes drawings made during the years in mental institutions and has painful-to-read recitations of

what is called "Reflections on Life, Death, and Feelings" in which Vaslav identifies himself with God and calls out for peace and love. Vaslav Nijinsky died in and is buried in Paris. Romola died in Daughter Kyra Nijinsky, born in , painted many dance portraits of Vaslav, although she never saw her father dance. Daughter Tamara, born in , worked with puppets. Further Reading Most of what we know about Nijinsky comes from the vast literature, diverse and often controversial, that perpetuates the legend of his greatness. Some of this was written by those who knew him, much by those who never saw him dance but fell in love with the legend and were inspired to investigate and share their discoveries. Nijinsky by Richard Buckle provides a comprehensive account of casts, dates, descriptions, and details of negotiations based on definitive research and information from those who worked closely with him. The Denby essay is reprinted in the outsize Nijinsky Dancing, a compilation of over photographs with brilliant text and commentary by Lincoln Kirstein Nijinsky, Romola de Pulszky. Simon and Schuster, Equation; New York, N. Distributed by Sterling Pub. Need a custom written paper? Let our professional writers save your time. Need an original paper?