

Ballet: Jewels

Choreography: George Balanchine

Composer: Gabriel Fauré (Emeralds), Igor Stravinsky (Rubies), Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Diamonds)

The Story

"Jewels" is a ballet that doesn't follow a traditional narrative pattern but instead is a tribute to different styles of dance. Created by George Balanchine of the New York City Ballet, the ballet consists of three distinct acts: 'Emeralds', 'Rubies', and 'Diamonds'.

"Emeralds" is the opening act, inspired by the French Romantic style of ballet. It is characterized by its fluid and elegant movements, evoking an atmosphere of dreamlike tranquility. The choreography is graceful and delicate, reflecting the nuances of Gabriel Fauré's music.

"Rubies" is a sharp contrast, reflecting the dynamism and energy of American dance. The choreography is sprightly and energetic, with bold, athletic movements encapsulating the vibrant vivacity of Igor Stravinsky's score. This act is a celebration of modernity, mirroring the rapid pace and lively spirit of New York City.

The final act, "Diamonds", pays homage to the grandeur of Russian ballet. It incorporates elements of classic Petipa choreography, set to the majestic compositions of Tchaikovsky. The dancers move with regal elegance, embodying the opulence and grandiosity of the Imperial Russian style. Collectively, "Jewels" is a ballet that transcends storytelling, celebrating the diversity and beauty of dance itself.

The History

"Jewels" was conceived and choreographed by George Balanchine, the co-founder of New York City Ballet, and it first premiered on April 13, 1967, at the New York State Theater. Balanchine was inspired by the artistry of jewelry designer Claude Arpels, and he used the concept of precious gems to embody the essence of three different ballet styles that he admired. The ballet was the first full-length abstract work and has been celebrated ever since for its innovation and artistic brilliance.

Each act of "Jewels" represents a different era and style in ballet, showcasing the diversity and evolution of the art form. "Emeralds" captures the romantic elegance of French ballet, "Rubies" represents the exuberance of American contemporary dance, and "Diamonds" celebrates the grandeur of Russian classical ballet. Over the years, "Jewels" has been performed by numerous ballet companies around the world and continues to be a testament to Balanchine's creative genius and his extraordinary contribution to the world of dance.