

# Diaghilev: A Life in the Art of Ballet by Sjeng Scheijen



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★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4894 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 569 pages  
Lending : Enabled



Serge Diaghilev, the enigmatic impresario who founded the legendary Ballets Russes, has long captivated the hearts and minds of art enthusiasts. Through his pioneering vision and unwavering dedication, he transformed the world of ballet, leaving an enduring legacy that continues to inspire artists and audiences alike.

In his meticulously researched biography, "Diaghilev: A Life in the Art of Ballet," Sjeng Scheijen provides an intimate and comprehensive portrait of this extraordinary figure. With access to exclusive materials and interviews with Diaghilev's contemporaries, Scheijen delves into the man behind the iconic image, revealing his complexities, his passions, and his profound impact on the cultural landscape.

## **Early Life and Artistic Origins**



Born in 1872 in the Russian town of Perm, Diaghilev's early life was marked by tragedy and loss. His father died when he was just a child, and his mother struggled to raise him and his two sisters alone. Despite these challenges, Diaghilev displayed an early passion for art and pursued his studies at the Imperial School of Law in St. Petersburg.

However, Diaghilev's true calling lay elsewhere. In 1890, he abandoned law and traveled to Paris, the center of the European art world. There, he immersed himself in the bohemian circles of avant-garde artists and writers, forging connections that would shape his future career.

### **Ballets Russes: A Revolutionary Force**



In 1907, Diaghilev launched his groundbreaking Ballets Russes, a touring company that showcased the talents of some of the greatest dancers, composers, and artists of the era. The company's innovative productions, characterized by their vibrant colors, exotic sets, and daring choreography, captivated audiences worldwide.

Scheijen's biography meticulously chronicles the rise and fall of the Ballets Russes, highlighting the key figures involved, the artistic milestones achieved, and the financial challenges faced. Through eyewitness accounts

and exclusive interviews, Scheijen provides a rich and nuanced understanding of this revolutionary force in the world of dance.

### **Diaghilev's Vision and Legacy**



Beyond his role as a producer, Diaghilev was also a visionary curator and mentor, nurturing the talents of some of the most influential artists of the 20th century. He commissioned works from the likes of Picasso, Matisse,

and Stravinsky, and his collaborations with these giants of modern art helped to bridge the gap between ballet and the avant-garde.

Scheijen's biography analyzes Diaghilev's artistic vision and its enduring impact on the world of dance. He explores Diaghilev's belief in the power of collaboration, his ability to spot and develop talent, and his unwavering commitment to pushing artistic boundaries.

## **The Last Chapter**



Tragically, Diaghilev's life was cut short in 1929 when he succumbed to complications from diabetes at the age of 57. His untimely death left a void in the art world, and his legacy has been the subject of countless books, exhibitions, and documentaries.

In the final chapter of his biography, Scheijen examines the circumstances surrounding Diaghilev's death, the aftermath of the Ballets Russes, and the continuing fascination with this enigmatic figure. He also explores the ways in which Diaghilev's revolutionary spirit continues to inspire and influence artists today.

Sjeng Scheijen's "Diaghilev: A Life in the Art of Ballet" is a definitive biography of one of the most influential cultural figures of the 20th century. Through rigorous research, intimate accounts, and a deep understanding of Diaghilev's artistic vision, Scheijen paints a vivid portrait of a complex and brilliant man who left an indelible mark on the world of dance and beyond. This captivating book is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of ballet, the Russian avant-garde, and the enduring legacy of one of the greatest impresarios who ever lived.



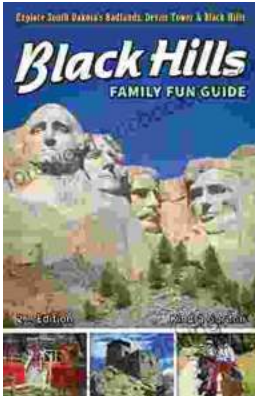
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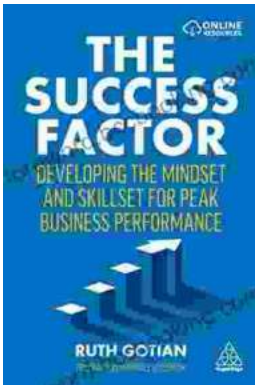
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