

Ludwig Minkus:
La Bayadère

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La Bayadère
Grand Ballet in Four Acts and Seven Scenes
by
Sergei Khudekov
and Marius Petipa

Piano Score

Edited and Introduced by

Robert Ignatius Letellier

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Ludwig Minkus *La Bayadère*: Grand Ballet in Four Acts and Seven Scenes
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Ludwig Minkus (1875)

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INTRODUCTION

La Bayadère (Russian *Bayaderka*) was first produced at the Maryinsky Theatre, St Petersburg, on 4 February 1877. The scenario was by Sergei Khudekov and Marius Petipa, who also devised the choreography. The music was by Ludwig Minkus, and the décor by K. Ivanov, P. Lambin, P. Allegri and A. Kwapp. The narrative is based on Kalidassa's ancient Indian epics *Sakuntala* and *The Cart of Clay*, and tells the story of the temple dancer, Nikia, who loves the soldier hero Solor, and is loved by him in return. However, Solor is commanded by the Rajah to marry his daughter Gamsatti. At the public celebrations of their betrothal, Gamsatti arranges for Nikia to be presented with a basket of flowers, in which a snake lies hidden. Fatally bitten, Nikia dies. Solor dreams of meeting her again in the Kingdom of the Shades. At the subsequent wedding of Solor and Gamsatti, there is an earthquake and the temple collapses, burying them under the ruins. Nikia and Solor are united in the heavens.

There was a major revival and new production of the work in 1900. However, in later productions during the twentieth century the last act began to be omitted, and it was this reduced three-act version that remained in the repertory of the Kirov Ballet. The ballet was first performed in the West in 1961 as a fragment, consisting solely of the self-contained 'Kingdom of the Shades' sequence of Act 3 Scene 2. This sequence was produced by Rudolf Nureyev for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden on 3 July 1963, and by Natalia Makarova for the American Ballet Theater on 3 July 1974. Her re-creation of the whole three-act version of the work for the same company on 21 May 1980 (with John Lanchbery's arrangement of the music), saw the re-introduction of the whole ballet into Western, and then global, performance; over the last thirty years it has established itself as a repertory work. The most spectacular re-presentation, with a return to Minkus's unadulterated score, formed the final glorious production of Nureyev's directorship of the Paris Opéra Ballet on 8 October 1992. This process of recovery reached a highpoint in July 2002 with Sergei Vikharev's re-creation for the Maryinsky Theatre of the full four-act version of the 1900 production.

The score by Ludwig Minkus, while long scorned and eschewed, never published, and endlessly re-arranged, has slowly emerged as a viable and significant musical achievement in its own right. There is a powerful unity of conception and a sustained mood that establishes its own unique incidental atmosphere. It is written for a large symphony orchestra, and the orchestral colours are carefully planned and thematically pointed. There are extended solos for flute, clarinet, violin and cello, with identifiable motifs providing melodic and thematic integration—for Nikia, Solor, the High Brahmin, and the notion of ideal but doomed love. A purposeful use of tonality underlines the symbolic nature of the action, a pull between B minor and D major, A major and A-flat major, symbolizing the religious function and purity of the bayadères and the notion of love represented by the self-sacrificing Nikia. Opposition is established between B minor (a sense of duty) and G minor (a sense of the earthly) and the tonic majors of both which signify freely given love (D major) and a expectation of the heavenly (G major).

The score realizes both the danced and mimed elements of Romantic ballet perfectly: act 1 scene 1 is mainly dance in free forms with some mime (celebrating pure love); act 1 scene 2 mainly mime with a minimum of set forms (depicting the plot against true love); act 2 is dominated by a dazzling sequence of set celebratory dances, then highly stylized and focussed in the *Grand Pas d'Action* (the exaltation of the false love between Gamsatti and Solor—the equivalent of the Black Swan *Pas de Deux*), while mime is related to the destruction of pure love in Nikia's poisoning. In act 3 (the Kingdom of the Shades) pure dance celebrates the ideal purity of eternal ideals, and in the final act dance, and to a lesser extent mime, are used for the denouement. At all times the composer's care and imagination are manifestly in evidence—in his masterly control of his medium in terms of melody, powerful rhythm, affecting harmony and purposeful tonality, and in the consistent sustaining of mood and attainment of an overriding atmosphere of passionate melancholy and tragic rapture.

The ballet was one of Marius Petipa's greatest triumphs at the Imperial Theatre of St Petersburg. It also brought accolades for the superb dancing of Ekaterina Vazem in the title role. Serge Lifar later wrote: "Petipa knew how to profit from the ideas of Perrot, the dramatist of the dance, and, equally, from those of Saint-Léon, singer of the dancing *aria*, the solo, and after twenty years of collaboration with these two masters, he created the Russian ballet, which at the end of the nineteenth century was to lead the whole world...Petipa trained successive generations of Russian dancers, enriched the art of dancing with new steps and movements, developed and extended academic techniques, introducing

elements of character, but he never opened up new paths. He reigned over a hothouse of art and was mainly the guardian of academic traditions.”

The Kingdom of the Shades is considered one of Petipa’s supreme masterpieces. It consists of an ensemble for the female corps de ballet, a *pas de trois* for three Shades with a solo variation for each of the three ballerinas, a wonderful *pas de deux* for Nikia and Solor united in the world of dreams and ideals, with a variation of vigorous virtuosity for Solor and one of breathtaking lightness for Nikia. The scene captures the essence of Petipa’s style: a slender dramatic thread, little more than a Romantic atmosphere, as the pretext for a crystalline composition of pure movement and dance. The thirty-six Shades enter in identical white tutus, one after the other, each in turn executing an initial *arabesque penchée* in profile, followed by the same series of slow steps, creating an hypnotic impression of endless flow in crescendo, a vector of eternity, until they are all assembled in six lines of six, and all move together, repeating this choreographic counterpoint of enchantment and perfection to a slow waltz. It is one of the greatest and most remarkable of choreographic inventions and it was to exert a powerful influence on the choreography of the succeeding decades, perhaps most obviously on Balanchine’s geometrical abstractions.

The music responds to the exigencies of the scenario to perfection. The whole of Act 3, from its rustling prelude and musical depiction of variants on drugging—the hookah), hypnosis (the snake-charmer) and reverie (sleep and dreams)—provides a nuanced picture that elides through a series of harp arpeggios from specific local colour into the universal unconscious of the supernatural world. Here in the *Grande Scène du Rêve* Minkus achieves a danced tone poem of high Romantic character and musical significance. The famous Entry of the Shades presents a sustained adagio spanning some ten minutes, in which the serene appoggiated melody is extended by variant, sequence, modulation and reprise into a seamless musical reverie that is the perfect medium for the realization of Petipa’s choreographic vision. The other movements sustain the mood of serenity and detachment across the various genres and types of dance that follow, from the dreamy slow waltz for the Shades, through the grand *adage* and *allegretto* of the *pas de deux* with its clear bright solo violin obbligato, to the sumptuous melancholy of the resumed ensemble and the series of variations that instil a cumulative sense of fervour and rapture to the whole scene. The mood is brought to a highpoint in the surging and exultant lyricism of the two codas, and is transferred to the finale of the ballet that sees the ultimate triumph of the pure love between Nikia and Solor and their apotheosis in the empyrean, transcending the vanity of human weakness, imperfection, and tragedy.

It would make better dramatic sense if the scenario of the ballet were divided into a classical 5-act structure since the two scenes of act 1 each carry an innate dramaturgical weight and completeness of action. Each act has its own appropriate designation:

- act 1—The Festival of Fire
- act 2—The Rivals
- act 3—The Betrothal
- act 4—The Kingdom of the Shades
- act 5—The Wrath of the Gods

The libretto of 1900 lists the music as performed in Petipa’s revival. Later interpolations are inserted.

Act 1 Scene 1

- no.1 Ouverture
- no.2 Scène première et entrée de Solor
- no.3 L'entrée du Grand Brahmane, les prêtres, et les fakirs
- no.4 Danse des prêtresses
- no.5 Scène dansée des fakirs
- no.6 Entrée de Nikia
- no.7 Variation de Nikia
- no.8 Scène dramatique du Grand Brahmane et Nikia
- no.9 Scène mimique de Solor et Madhavaya
- no.10 Scène de Nikia et le Veena
- no.11 Pas d'action de Nikia et Solor
- no.12 Scène mimique de Nikia et Solor
- no.13 Scène

Act 1 Scene 2

- no.14 Introduction et scène
- no.15 Danse d'jampe
- no.16 Entrée de Gamzatti
 - supplement - Danse pour Nikia et d'esclave (Konstantin Sergeyev, 1952) (music: Cesare Pugni; *La Esmeralda*; 1844)
- no.17 Scène mimique du Grand Brahmane et le Raja
- no.18 Scène dramatique et final de Nikia et Gamzatti

Act 2

- no.19 Grand cortège
- Grand divertissement -
- no.20 Danse des esclaves
- no.21 Valse éventails
- no.22 Valse des perroquets
- no.23-1 Danse pour quatre bayadères
- no.23-2 Danse pour quatre bayadères
 - supplement - Bozhok or Little God (Nikolai Zubkovsky, 1948) (music: Ludwig Minkus/arr. Pavel Feldt; *Marche persane* from *Le Papillon*, 1874)
- no.24 Danse manu
- no.25 Pas indien
- no.26 Coda générale (in the Chabukiani/Ponomarev
 - production this number is used as a coda for the Grand Pas d'action)
- no.27 Scène dansée de Nikia -
- no.27-1 Danse de Nikia
- no.27-2 Danse parnier
- no.28 Scène et final - La mort de Nikia

Act 3 Scene 1

- no.29 Introduction et scène
- no.30 Danse du charmeur de serpent
- no.31 Scène de Gamzatti et Solor
- no.32 Entrée de Nikia et scène

Act 3 Scene 2

- no.33 Grand pas classique des ombres
 - (The Kingdom of the Shades)
- no.33-1 Entrée des ombres
- no.33-2 Valse
- no.33-3 Entrée de Solor
- no.33-4 Entrée de Nikia
- no.33-5 Grand adage
- no.33-6 Variation 1
- no.33-7 Variation 2
- no.33-8 Variation 3
- no.33-9 Variation de Nikia
- no.33-10 Grand coda

Act 3, Scene 3

- no.34 Scène et final

Act 4

- no.34 Introduction et scène
- no.36 Danse des fleurs de lotus
- no.37 Grand pas d'action
- no.37-1 Entrée
- no.37-2 Grand adage
 - Variation de Solor (Nikolai Legat, 1900) (music: Ludwig Minkus, Variation de Djalma from *Le Papillon*, 1874)
 - Variation de Gamzatti (Olga Preobrajenskaya, 1900) (unknown)

Variation de Gamzatti (Pyotr Gusev, 1947) (music: Cesare Pugni, Variation de Nisia from *Tsar Kandavl*, 1868)

Variation pour Mlle. Mathilde Kschessinskaya (music: Riccardo Drigo, 1900)
(composed for Kschessinskaya's performance)

no.37-3 Grand coda

no.38 La destruction du temple

no.39 Apothéose - la résurrection de Nikia et Solor

The music is reproduced from:

—a répétiteur's piano score from Kiev (1981)

—a copy of the original act 4 held in the library of Covent Garden

—a manuscript copy of the Kingdom of the Shades (c. 1980)

—the Hamburg potpourri of Johann Resch (c. 1880).

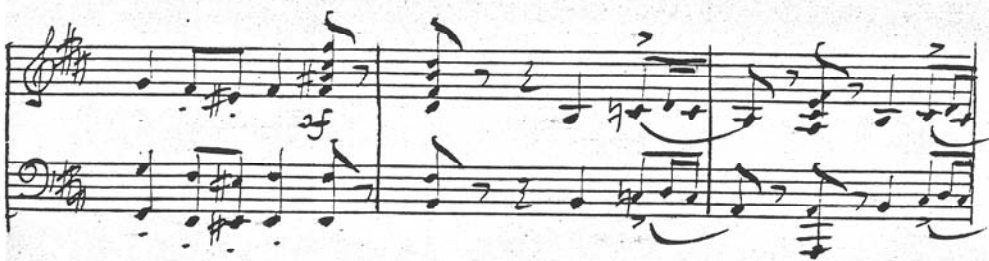
My grateful thanks go to Marina Tcherkasina, Gina Boakes, and the late George Verdak and Dace Dindonis, for sharing their musical treasures.

Robert Ignatius Letellier
Cambridge
30 November 2008.

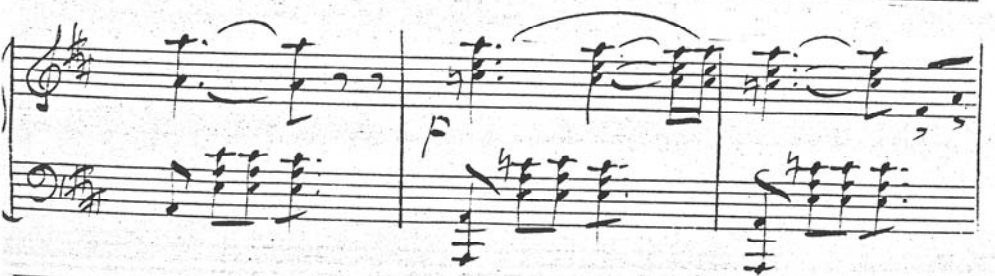
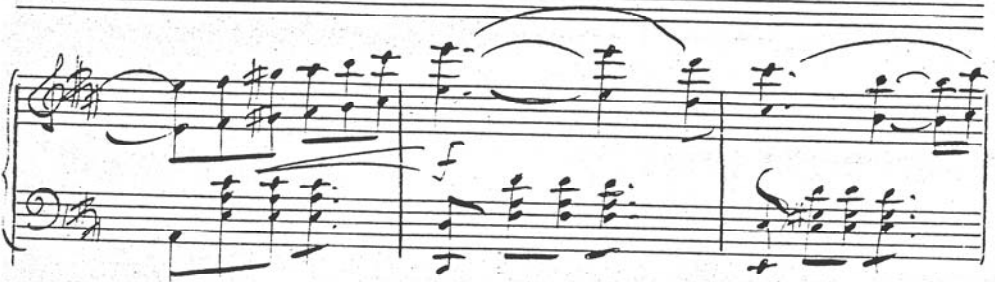
У. Шинкаев
Балет Багдериса

Introduction

Handwritten musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written on two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in 2/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is written on the Treble staff, and the bass line is written on the Bass staff. The score includes a key signature change from one sharp to two sharps (F# and C#) in the second measure of the first staff. The melody is marked with a forte (f) dynamic and a first ending bracket. The bass line is marked with a forte (f) dynamic and a first ending bracket. The score is written in a clear, legible hand.

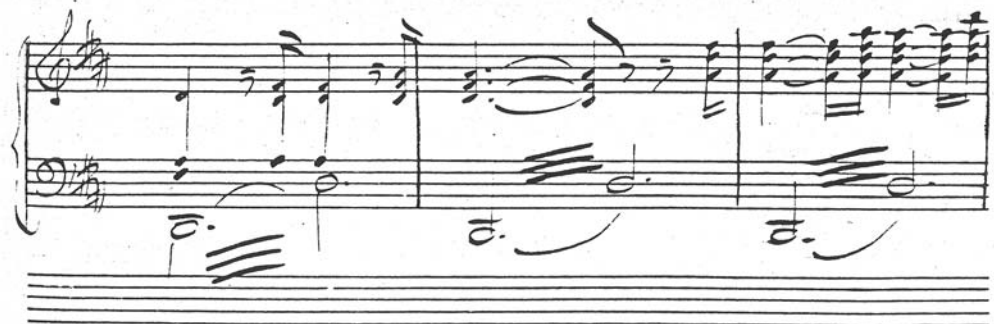
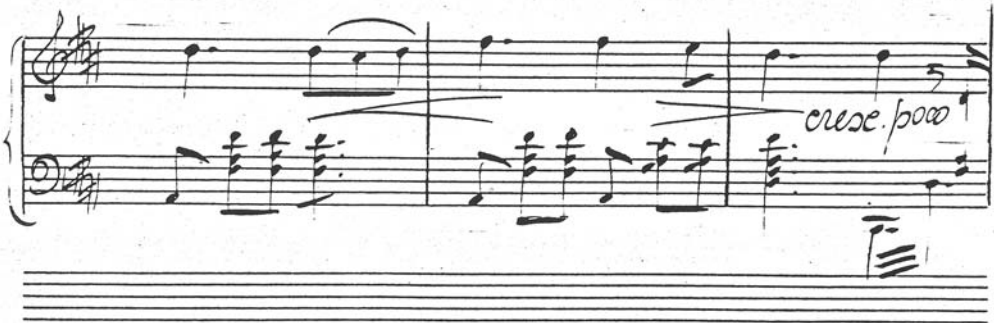
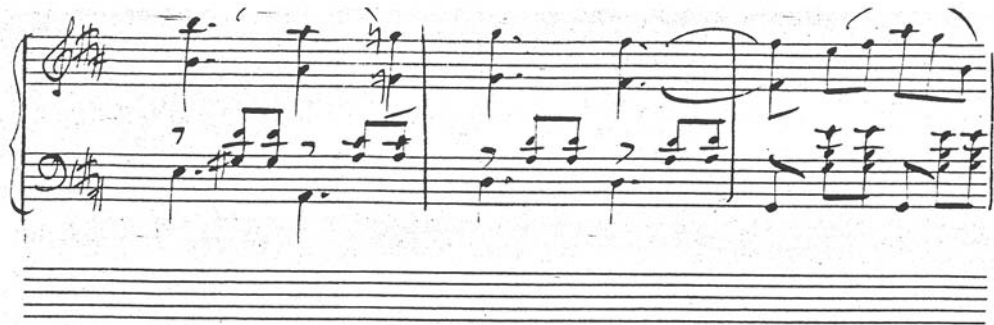


Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring two systems of music. The first system consists of two staves with treble and bass clefs, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The second system is titled "Andante" and also consists of two staves with treble and bass clefs, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.



This image shows a handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. Each system contains a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first system begins with a treble staff containing a series of eighth notes and a bass staff with chords. The second system features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The third system shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The fourth system includes a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The handwriting is clear and legible, with some corrections visible in the first system.

The musical score is written on four systems of staves. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clef) and a single bass staff. The music is in 3/4 time and one sharp (F#) key signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first system begins with a treble staff containing a series of eighth notes and a bass staff with chords. The second system features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The third system shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The fourth system includes a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords. The handwriting is clear and legible, with some corrections visible in the first system.



Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring a waltz in D major, 3/4 time, titled "Allegro (Zasrabee)". The score includes a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), a 2/4 time signature, and a tempo marking of "Allegro". The music is written for piano (p) and includes a "poco crescendo" instruction. The score is divided into three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The first system includes a "2" and "Rarup" marking. The second system includes a "poco crescendo" marking. The third system continues the melodic and harmonic development.

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains several measures of music, including a triplet of eighth notes and a measure with a fermata. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing corresponding bass notes. Above the first measure of the upper staff, there is a handwritten annotation: $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ (moving). Below the first measure of the lower staff, the word "cresc." is written.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music continues from the first system, featuring various note values and rests.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music continues, with the upper staff ending in a measure with a fermata.

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system. It consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music continues, with the upper staff ending in a measure with a fermata. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring Russian lyrics and dynamic markings.

Lyrics:
1. *любовь (глас) / 1. охотники*

Dynamic Markings:
mf (mezzo-forte)

Section Markers:
I II

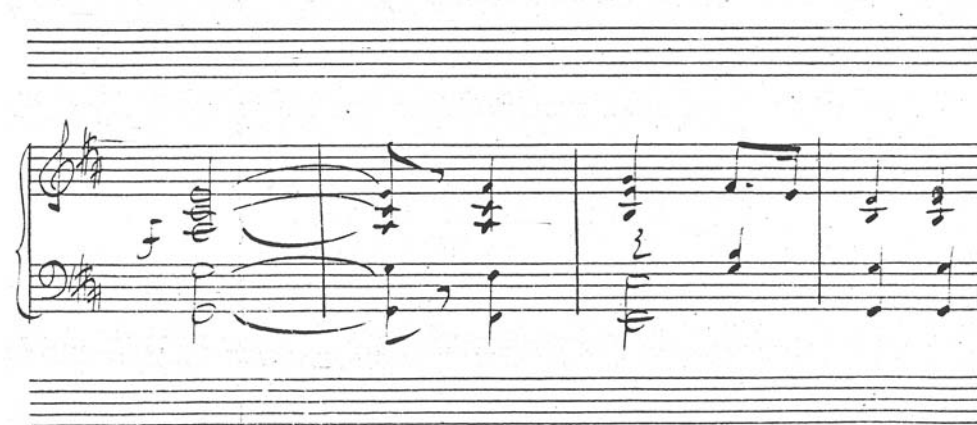
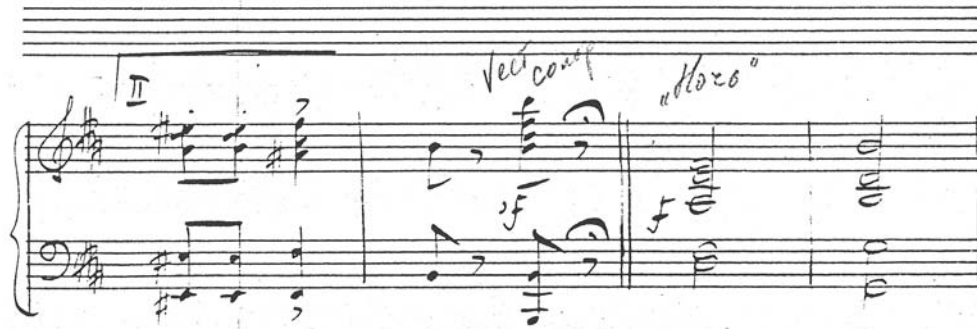
Handwritten Notes:
The score includes various handwritten annotations, including "любовь (глас)" and "охотники" above the staff, and "1." indicating a first ending or section. There are also some illegible handwritten notes in the left margin.

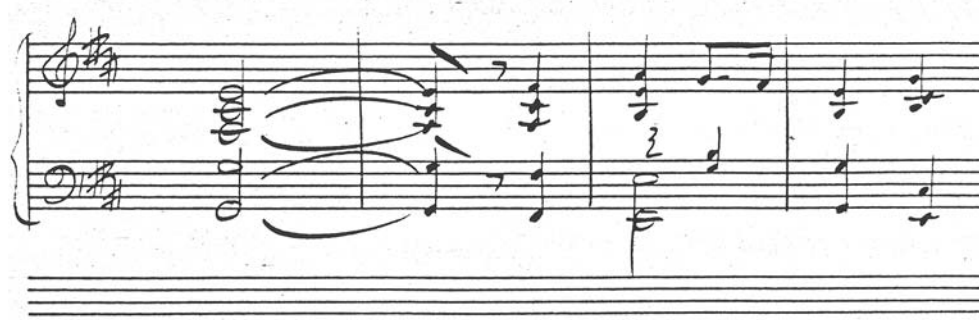
Instrumentation:
The score is written for piano, with staves for the right and left hands.

Handwritten musical score for "La Bayadère", page 9. The score is written on four systems of grand staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo/mood is marked "C. no. 111".

The first system shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a supporting bass line in the bass clef. The second system continues the melody with some trills and grace notes. The third system features a more active melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The fourth system includes a section marked "4" and "k. wai-pi", suggesting a specific dance or musical motif.

Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring four systems of music in G major. The notation includes treble and bass staves with various chords and melodic lines. The first system includes the instruction *poco cresc.* and the fourth system includes *C. Sec* and *cresc.*





Handwritten musical score for La Bayadère, page 13. The score consists of four systems of piano accompaniment, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The first system has a final measure with a fermata. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system is marked "3da et 4da" and features a more active bass line. The fourth system is marked "1a mano" and shows a continuation of the rhythmic pattern in the bass. The handwriting is in ink on aged paper.

Handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. The music is in G major and 3/4 time.

System 1: Marked *2^u* and *poco rit. crescendo*. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

System 2: Marked *3^u*. The right hand continues the melodic development with chords and moving lines, and the left hand maintains the rhythmic accompaniment.

System 3: Marked *p a cap* and *f*. The right hand has a long, sustained chord in the first measure, followed by more active figures. The left hand continues the accompaniment.

System 4: Marked *C. Tunes*, *poco*, and *dimin.*. The right hand features long, sustained chords, and the left hand continues the accompaniment, ending with a final chord.

