

# Diaghilev's Legacy: The Life and Influence of Serge Diaghilev

Serge Diaghilev was a Russian impresario and art critic who founded the Ballets Russes, one of the most influential ballet companies of all time. His innovative approach to ballet and his patronage of some of the greatest artists of the early 20th century had a profound impact on the development of modern art and culture.



## Diaghilev: A Life by Sjeng Scheijen

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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## Early Life and Career

Serge Diaghilev was born in 1872 in Selishchi, Russia. He studied law at the University of St. Petersburg, but soon became more interested in art and music. In 1899, he co-founded the magazine *Mir Iskusstva* (*World of Art*), which became a leading voice for the avant-garde art movement in Russia.

In 1906, Diaghilev organized an exhibition of Russian art in Paris, which was a huge success. The exhibition introduced Western audiences to some of the most innovative and exciting artists of the time, including Wassily Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich, and Natalia Goncharova.

## **The Ballets Russes**

In 1909, Diaghilev founded the Ballets Russes, a ballet company that would revolutionize the art form. The company's dancers were renowned for their technical brilliance and their expressive interpretations of innovative choreography. The company's repertoire included works by some of the greatest composers and choreographers of the time, including Igor Stravinsky, Michel Fokine, and Vaslav Nijinsky.

The Ballets Russes toured extensively throughout Europe and the United States, and its performances were always met with critical acclaim. The company's influence on the development of modern ballet cannot be overstated. It helped to establish ballet as a serious art form, and it paved the way for the emergence of some of the greatest dancers and choreographers of the 20th century.

## **Diaghilev's Patronage of the Arts**

In addition to his work with the Ballets Russes, Diaghilev was also a patron of other artists, including painters, musicians, and writers. He commissioned works from some of the greatest artists of the early 20th century, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and Jean Cocteau.

Diaghilev's patronage of the arts had a profound impact on the development of modern art and culture. He helped to create a new

environment in which artists could experiment and innovate. He also played a key role in bringing Russian art to the attention of Western audiences.

## Legacy

Serge Diaghilev died in 1929 at the age of 57. He left behind a legacy that continues to inspire artists and audiences around the world. His innovative approach to ballet and his patronage of some of the greatest artists of the early 20th century had a profound impact on the development of modern art and culture.

The Ballets Russes disbanded after Diaghilev's death, but its influence continues to be felt in the world of ballet today. Many of the company's dancers and choreographers went on to found their own companies, and the company's repertoire is still performed by ballet companies around the world.

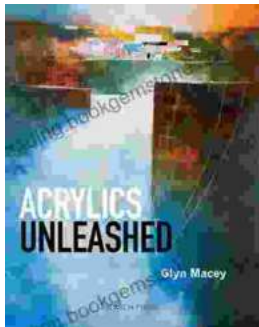
Serge Diaghilev was a visionary impresario who changed the course of modern art and culture. His legacy continues to inspire artists and audiences around the world.



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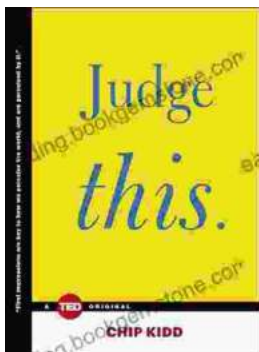
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