

## Summary

### Victorian Ballerinas: A Fairy Dancing on *Pointe* and *Salomé* Stepping without Shoes

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*Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* of which Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky contributed a great deal to the success are surely the well-renowned ballet production. These classical ballet works, however, were not performed in the Victorian age when the Romantic ballet vigorously flourished. This paper gives the outline of the Victorian ballet history by observing eminent ballet dancers reported in *The Illustrated London News* and analyzing Victorian poetry covering the music hall ballet. After fathoming the cause of the decline of the Romantic ballet, we are invited into the Opera House in Covent Garden where the Ballets Russes produced by Sergei Diaghilev held the UK premiere in 1911.

Chapter 1 displays the various characteristics of the Romantic ballet like a white tutu, a pair of *pointe* shoes and a hazy gaslight, and describes the love-relationship between a fairy and a young Scottish man in the first Romantic ballet piece, *La Sylphide*. The unknown fact is disclosed in the second chapter that foreign ballerinas mastering a technique of *pointework* enjoyed a monopoly of the principal roles and British dancers resigned themselves to the position of the *corps de ballet*. Chapter 3 features Clara Webster, a rare talented British ballerina, who successfully made a name for herself but met with a tragic death owing to the fire on the stage. Instead of the Romantic ballerinas in the prestigious theatres, exotic dancers in the music hall became increasingly notable at the end of the nineteenth century. The outlandish dancers such as John Davidson's "Selene Eden"

dancing with a mysterious perfume or Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* stepping barefoot are delineated in the fourth chapter. Chapter 5 focuses on the Ballets Russes whose androgynous charm attracted to the members of the Bloomsbury Group. Vaslav Nijinsky, a legendary male dancer and also Diaghilev's lover, revitalized the Romantic ballet by acting the fairy which was the typical role for the Romantic ballerina.

