



TCHAIKOVSKY arr. SPANSWICK

Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy

BEGINNER/
INTERMEDIATE

In its original, dazzlingly inventive orchestration, the sound of the sugar plum fairy is defined by the celesta, which was a much-coveted, little-heard new instrument at the time of the ballet's premiere in December 1892 – the composer's last Christmas – in St Petersburg. Indeed the story goes that the celesta was smuggled in and out of the Mariinsky Theatre under wraps during rehearsals, so that this moment would retain its magic for the audience. 'Everything in [Tchaikovsky's] work trues to his genius aspires to the condition of ballet,' wrote the composer Robin Holloway. 'It involves clarity of aim, a distinction and focus so physical that one can almost see them.'

Note from the arranger. Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy is a perennial favourite, conjuring the image of the prima ballerina pirouetting around the stage. I danced to it as a young girl, and I've always enjoyed performing the duet version as arranged by Eduard Langer. My arrangement offers a chance to perfect your staccato technique. It also calls for a tenuto touch (leaning in to the note) and clear articulation (especially the semiquaver passages in the left hand!). Feel free to add your own dynamics and colour, and above all enjoy bringing out the delightful melody.

Read Melanie Spanswick's step-by-step lesson on page 20.

Andante non troppo ♩ = 96

17

mf

Ped. _____