

# **Dance as Music in George Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco***

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This file includes the abstract, and extensive keyword list, bibliography, and related material for the video essay, “Dance as Music in George Balanchine’s *Concerto Barocco*” by Kara Yoo Leaman. This video- essay may be found at: <https://vimeo.com/societymusictheory/smtv072leaman> or <https://smt-v.org>

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**Abstract for**  
**“Dance as Music in George Balanchine’s *Concerto Barocco*”**  
**by Kara Yoo Leaman, *SMT-V 7.2***

George Balanchine was a choreographer and a musician. He studied musical scores from the perspective of a Western-European conservatory-trained musician before setting them to dance. Sometimes, Balanchine designed dance to follow musical patterns closely. Most of the time, however, he designed dance that relates to its music more loosely. In *Concerto Barocco*, a neoclassical ballet choreographed in 1941 to J. S. Bach’s Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins (BWV 1043), there is a memorable passage in which ten dancers hop on pointe while creating surprising visual accents against the music and against each other. The off-beat accents reflect the jazzy character of the ballet. The choreographic accent pattern seems to derive from of a metrically dissonant rhythmic motive in Bach’s score. Using music-analytic terms in the analysis of dance can help viewers appreciate the musical artistry in Balanchine’s choreography.

**Short Keyword List**

J. S. Bach, George Balanchine, dance, ballet, choreomusical, audiovisual

**Extensive Keyword List**

intermedia analysis, cross-domain mapping, metric dissonance, hemiola, Eddie South, Stéphane Grappelli, Django Reinhardt, swinging the classics, anacrusis, neoclassical ballet, choreomusical notation, Johann Sebastian Bach, hops on point, choreographer, choreography, iconic passage, tendu à la seconde, demi-plié, “suck the thumb of delight”

## About the Author

### **Kara Yoo Leaman, author, narrator:**

Kara Yoo Leaman is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Aural Skills at Oberlin College Conservatory and a co-founder of the Dance and Music Interest Group of the Society for Music Theory. She was the 2019–20 Fellow for the Study of Russia and Ballet at The Center for Ballet and the Arts at New York University, a joint fellowship with NYU's Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia.

## Performances/Recordings

“Concerto Barocco (1966) Farrell, Morris, Ludlow.” 2016. YouTube video, 19:39. Posted by John Clifford, September 3. <https://youtu.be/pbNvhuiKo7A>

“Django Reinhardt, Stéphane Grappelli and Eddie South Improvise on Bach (1937).” 2009. YouTube video, 2:31. Posted by HQMatt, February 16. <https://youtu.be/gQZw3nema0Q>

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