The Rite of Spring: The artists who created The Rite of Spring:

NICHOLAS ROERICH
Artist
Ethnographer
Philosopher
Roerich designed the costumes and set designs for The Rite of Spring and was instrumental in developing the premise.

IRGOR STRAVINSKY
Composer
Stravinsky's 3rd score for the Ballets Russes.

NICHOLAS ROERICH
Artist
Ethnographer
Philosopher
Roerich designed the costumes and set designs for The Rite of Spring and was instrumental in developing the premise.

VASILIJ NIJINSKY
Dancer
Choreographer
Nijinsky was the lead male dancer of the Ballets Russes, though he was the choreographer for The Rite of Spring and did not dance in it.

The Rite of Spring was commissioned by:

SERGEI DIAGHILEV
Ballet Impresario

Diaghilev's company the Ballets Russes (The Russian Ballet) was responsible for setting the artistic standard for modern ballet in the 20th century and fostered collaboration between the top artists of the day including:

A Guide to THE RITE OF SPRING
Infographic by Kurt Mortensen, inspired by Nicholas Roerich's costume and set design for the original 1913 production

PART I: Adoration of the Earth

Introduction: Nature is awakening with the arrival of Spring.

The Augurs of Spring—Dances of the Young Girls:
An old crone, who has lived a supernaturally long life and knows the secrets of nature and soothsaying, teaches the young men in the tribe how to jump to warm the earth and interpret the will of their Sun God Yarilo. The young girls dance in celebration of Spring.

Ritual of Abduction:
The young men chase the women as part of a pagan courting ritual.

Spring Rounds: The "Khorovod" is a traditional round dance performed by ancient Slavic people holding hands in a circle, representing the Sun.

Ritual of the Rival Tribes:
Celebrants divide into opposing factions and play competitive games.

Procession of the Sage:
The entrance of the tribe's wisest elder breaks up the series of dances and games.

The Sage:
All celebrants of The Rite of Spring tremble in anticipation of the Sage blessing the earth with a kiss.

Dance of the Earth:
A vernal dance concludes the first part as the people rejoice in celebration.

PART II: The Sacrifice

The Rite of Spring depicts a day and a night in the life of the ancient Slavs in which a pagan ritual sacrifice culminates in a young girl dancing herself to death.

Introduction:
The young women of the tribe gather on a sacred hill.

Mystic Circle of the Young Girls:
Young maidens walk in circular patterns, performing secret rites. One trips and falls. She gets up and continues, but when she falls again, fate has decided: She is the chosen one.

Glorification of the Chosen One:
The maidens encircle the chosen one, paralyzed with fear. They dance around her, paying homage to Yarilo's bride.

Evocation of the Ancestors:
The ancestors are summoned. Their souls are awakened to life as the celebrants honor the deceased.

Ritual Action of the Ancestors:
The men of the tribe enter, dance around the chosen one and perform an inspection ritual.

Sacrificial Dance (The Chosen One):
The Chosen One emerges from her paralysis and performs the sacrificial dance. She dies so her people can continue to prosper. As she collapses, the elders wearing bear skins, catch her fall, lift her up and present her to Yarilo. She and the Sun God are now joined in a mystical union.