

## MUSIC APPRECIATION – TUESDAY 9TH APRIL – SESSION 8

Having really enjoyed last month's Desert Island Discs by David Hooley, we revert to our earlier pattern of choosing a theme, then playing music, much of it chosen by members, but also less well-known pieces where the music whilst memorable, is maybe "off the beaten track". Today we are focusing on compositions where the piece actually has or one can infer a place name in the title.

After our sixth choice of music, John will play a short medley of six probably quite well-known pieces. We will quiz members as to the identity of the composer, the place name and also the "genre" of music played. Feel free to tell us about any memories that may have been stirred.

There is a separate jazz appreciation group but our group is a "broad church" playing many different genres that have helped shape our musical culture.



**JAMAICAN RUMBA** (Arthur Benjamin 1893-1960). Australian composer – non-practicing Jew. Although he wrote serious classical music, including opera he is best known for his film music. The rumbustious piece we are about to hear - is featured in the Hitchcock film "The Man Who Knew Too Much". This was based on the Jamaican piece "Mango Walk". It became very popular when I was a boy and as a thank you for publicising their country, the Jamaican Government gave him a barrel of rum each year for the rest of his life.

2 min 48 sec



**BAILERO** (Joseph Canteloupe 1879–1957). A French composer and musicologist best known for his song cycle "Chants D'Auvergne ". We are to hear "Bailero" one of 30 songs written over thirty years. The Auvergne is an area bang, slap in the middle of France and is known for its mountains and steep volcanoes. Originally a folk song for soprano and orchestra it has lush orchestration and a very pastoral theme. After teasing the shepherd and inviting him to lead his sheep to better pastures, the singer finally says in the local dialect "How will I manage? Over there is the little stream. Call "Bailero ". Wait for me. I am coming."

6 min 39 sec



**IN THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA** (Alexander Borodin 1833-1887). He was better known in Russia as a medical man, professor of chemistry and founder of a school of medicine for women. He allegedly said he only wrote music when he had a cold in his head. Nevertheless, in middle age, he became a member of the Russian musical "5". His output was very small ie only 21 works. We are to hear "In the Steppes of Central Asia". It is a symphonic poem written in 1880 and dedicated to Franz Liszt. The work depicts the interaction between Russians and Asians. A caravan of Asians is crossing the desert protected by Russian troops. Before

we hear the piece I will play the top line of the three separate themes ie “Russian”, “Travelling” depicting plodding horses and camels and “Asian”. In the end, only the Russian theme is heard

7 min 46 sec



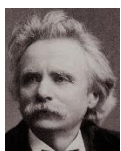
**FINLANDIA** (Jean Sibelius 1865–1957). Very nationalistic Finnish composer. Finlandia was written in 1899. It was one of eight tableaux – the eighth being “Finland Awakes” now known as Finlandia. It owed its existence to the year Russia tried to tighten its grip on Finland. Passive opposition set in when the Finnish people tried to preserve their national identity. It was briefly banned but became popular abroad. It has an anthem-like quality and embodies the Finnish people’s ardent hope for freedom.

9 min 15 sec



**CHORAL DANCE** (Kate Moss 1881-1947) Choral Dance featured in the film “Brassed Off” Kate was a singer, violinist, pianist and composer She wrote the piece whilst visiting Helston in May for their annual floral event where male and female dancers wearing lily of the valley perform the “Furry Dance”. It is perhaps a pseudo folksong.

4 min 11 sec



**WEDDING DAY AT TOLDHAUGEN** (Edward Grieg 1843-1907) Very popular Norwegian composer and concert pianist. One of the leading Romantic era composers. His use of Norwegian folk music in his compositions brought the music of Norway to fame. His music has a highly nationalistic flavour. Trolldhaugen, now a musical museum, was the home of Grieg and his wife in Bergen and this his most famous piece for piano was written to commemorate their silver wedding anniversary in 1896.

5 min 53 sec

### **Short musical quiz**

John will play a medley of six tunes. We want to know the composer, the place name and also the “genre.”

### **Break for those wishing to leave early.**



**ITALIAN** (Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy 1809 -1847). Famous German composer, conductor, pianist and organist. He liked Great Britain and visited frequently – a good friend of Queen Victoria. She chose his wedding march for one of her daughters’ weddings. His sister - Fanny - was also a famous composer. He was one of the first to use a baton when conducting. His Italian 4th Symphony was written in 1833 – the inspiration being his visit to Italy in 1831. He called it “Blue

Sky in A major". He kept revising it and it was not published until 1851 four years after his death. The music is very dramatic based on Neapolitan dances and is a masterpiece of "romantic" music. We could have previously played his third "Scottish" symphony and his "Hebrides Overture" affectionately known as Fingal's Cave. We are to hear the final fourth movement.

5 min 53 sec



SHROPSHIRE LAD (George Butterworth 1885–1916). Little to say about this composer friend of Vaughan Williams whose life was cruelly cut short at the Battle of the Somme. Better known for his Banks of Green Willow but we are to hear "A Shropshire Lad – When I Was One and Twenty" based on poems by A E Housman. His output was small but many pieces that he wrote before the war have been lost.

1 min 20



NEW WORLD (Anton Dvorak 1814-1894). Famous Czech romantic composer following in the footsteps of Smetana often adapting folk songs of his native Moravia and Bohemia. His music is highly nationalistic but falls within the orchestral mainstream. In the late 1890s, he spent four years in New York being paid the princely annual sum of £15,000 per annum. He embraced the American ideal and loved American music. We are to hear the first movement of his best-known work "New World" symphony composed in 1893. In it, you can hear the American spirituals and plantation songs that inspired him - reminiscence perhaps of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot".

10 min 1 sec



APPALACHIAN SPRING (Aaron Copland 1900–1990). Peer amongst American composers. Much of his music is very lyrical evoking the vast American landscape and American pioneer spirit. Main musical influences were Ravel, Satie, Stravinsky, Gershwin and Bernstein also jazz. We are to hear a short excerpt from his ballet suite Appalachian Spring composed in 1944. This is a very short Shaker tune – their religion embraced simplicity and humility – listen out for the words.

3 min 3 sec