

The life story of edvard grieg

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Edvard Grieg (15 June 1843 – 4 September 1907) was a Norwegian composer and pianist. He is best known for his Piano Concerto in A minor, for his incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's play Peer Gynt (which includes Morning Mood and In the Hall of the Mountain King), and for his collection of piano miniatures Lyric Pieces. [1]

Biography

Edvard Hagerup Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway on June 15, 1843. His parents were Hiemlik Grieg (1806–1875), a merchant and the American vice-consul in Bergen, and Gesine Carrie Hagerupel (1814–1875), a music teacher and daughter of Edvard Hagerup.

The family name originally spelled Greig, has Scottish origins. After the Battle of Culloden in 1746, however, Grieg's great-grandfather traveled widely, settling in Norway about 1770, and establishing business interests in Bergen. Edvard Grieg was raised in a musical home. His mother was his first piano teacher and taught him to play at the age of 6. Grieg studied in several schools, including Tank's School,. [2] He often brought in samples of his music to class. In the summer of 1858, Grieg met the eminent Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, who was a family friend; Bull's brother was married to Grieg's aunt.

Bull recognized the 15-year-old boy's talent and persuaded his parents to send him to the Leipzig Conservatory, then directed by Ignaz Moscheles. Grieg enrolled in the conservatory, concentrating on the piano, and enjoyed the many concerts and recitals given in Leipzig. He disliked the discipline of the conservatory course of study, but he achieved very good grades in most

areas. An exception was the organ, which was mandatory for piano students. In the spring of 1860, he survived a life-threatening lung disease. The following year he made his debut as a concert pianist, in Karlshamn, Sweden.

In 1862, he finished his studies in Leipzig and held his first concert in his home town, where his program included Beethoven's Pathetique sonata. (Grieg's own recording of his Piano Sonata, made late in his life, confirms that he was an excellent pianist). In 1863, Grieg went to Copenhagen, Denmark, and stayed there for three years. He met the Danish composers J. P. E. Hartmann and Niels Gade. He also met his fellow Norwegian composer Rikard Nordraak (composer of the Norwegian national anthem), who became a good friend and source of great inspiration. Nordraak died in 1866, and Grieg composed a funeral march in his honor.

On 11 June 1867, Grieg married his first cousin, Nina Hagerup. The next year, their only child, Alexandra, was born. She died in 1869 from meningitis. In the summer of 1868, Grieg wrote his Piano Concerto in A minor while on holiday in Denmark. Edmund Neupert gave the concerto its premiere performance on 3 April 1869 in the Casino Theater in Copenhagen. Grieg himself was unable to be there due to conducting commitments in Christiania (as Oslo was then named). [3] In 1868, Franz Liszt, who had not yet met Grieg, wrote a testimonial for him to the Norwegian Ministry of Education, which led to Grieg obtaining a travel grant.

The two men met in Rome in 1870. On Grieg's first visit, they went over Grieg's Violin Sonata No. 1, which pleased Liszt greatly. On his second visit,

in April, Grieg brought with him the manuscript of his Piano Concerto, which Liszt proceeded to sightread (including the orchestral arrangement). Liszt's rendition greatly impressed his audience, although Grieg gently pointed out to him that he played the first movement too quickly. Liszt also gave Grieg some advice on orchestration, (for example, to give the melody of the second theme in the first movement to a solo trumpet).

In 1874–76, Grieg composed incidental music for the premiere of Henrik Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*, at the request of the author. Many of the pieces from this work became very popular in the orchestral suites or piano and piano-duet arrangements. Grieg had close ties with the (Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra) (Harmonien), and later became Music Director of the orchestra from 1880–1882. In 1888, Grieg met Tchaikovsky in Leipzig. Grieg was struck by the sadness in Tchaikovsky. [4] Tchaikovsky thought very highly of Grieg's music, praising its beauty, originality, and warmth. [5]

Latter Years

Edvard Grieg Museum Troidhaugen Grieg's later life brought him fame. The Norwegian government awarded him a pension. In spring 1903, Grieg made nine 78-rpm gramophone recordings of his piano music in Paris; all of these historic discs have been reissued on both LPs and CDs and, despite limited fidelity, show his artistry as a pianist. Grieg also made live-recording player piano music rolls for the Welte-Mignon reproducing system, all of which survive today and can be heard. In 1906, he met the composer and pianist Percy Grainger in London. Grainger was a great admirer of Grieg's music and a strong empathy was quickly established.

In a 1907 interview, Grieg stated: " I have written Norwegian Peasant Dances that no one in my country can play, and here comes this Australian who plays them as they ought to be played! He is a genius that we Scandinavians cannot do other than love. "[6] Edvard Grieg died in the autumn of 1907, aged 64, after a long period of illness. His final words were " Well if it must be so. " The funeral drew between 30, 000 and 40, 000 people out on the streets of his home town to honor him. Following his wish, his own Funeral March in Memory of Rikard Nordraak was played in an orchestration by his friend Johan Halvorsen, who had married Grieg's niece.

In addition, the Funeral March movement from Chopin's Piano Sonata No. 2 was played. His and his wife's ashes are entombed in a mountain crypt near his house, Troidhaugen.

Music

Grieg is renowned as a nationalist composer, drawing inspiration from Norwegian folk music. Early works include a symphony (which he later suppressed) and a piano sonata. He also wrote three sonatas for violin and piano and a cello sonata. His many short pieces for piano — often based on Norwegian folk tunes and dances — led some to call him the " Chopin of the North". [7] The Piano Concerto is his most popular work. Its champions have included the pianist and composer Percy Grainger, a personal friend of Grieg who played the concerto frequently during his long career. An arrangement of part of the work made an iconic television comedy appearance in the 1971 *Morecambe and Wise Show*, conducted by Andre Previn. Some of the Lyric Pieces (for piano) are also well-known, as is the incidental music to Henrik

Ibsen's play Peer Gynt, a play that Grieg found to be an arduous work to score properly.

In an 1874 letter to his friend Franz Beyer, Grieg expressed his unhappiness with what is now considered one of his most popular compositions from Peer Gynt, In the Hall of the Mountain King: " I have also written something for the scene in the hall of the mountain King - something that I literally can't bear listening to because it absolutely reeks of cow-pies, exaggerated Norwegian nationalism, and trollish self-satisfaction! But I have a hunch that the irony will be discernible. " [8] Grieg's popular Holberg Suite was originally written for the piano, and later arranged by the composer for string orchestra.

Grieg wrote songs, in which he set lyrics by poets Heinrich Heine, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Henrik Ibsen, Hans Christian Andersen, Rudyard Kipling, and others. Russian composer Nikolai Myaskovsky used a theme by Grieg for the variations with which he closed his Third String Quartet.

List of Selected Works

Main article: List of compositions by Edvard Grieg

- Piano Sonata in E minor, Op. 7
- Violin Sonata No. 1 in F major, Op. 8
- Concert Overture In Autumn, Op. 11
- Violin Sonata No. 2 in G major, Op. 13
- Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 6
- Incidental music to Bjornstjerne Bjornson's play Sigurd Jorsalfar, Op. 22
- Incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's play Peer Gynt, Op. 23

- Ballade in the Form of Variations on a Norwegian Folk Song in G minor, Op. 24
- String Quartet in G minor, Op. 27
- Album for Male Chorus, Op. 30
- Two Elegiac Melodies for Strings, Op. 34
- Four Norwegian Dances for piano four hands, Op. 35 (later orchestrated)
- Cello Sonata in A minor, Op. 36
- Holberg Suite for piano, later arr. for string orchestra, Op. 40
- Violin Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45
- Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 6
- Lyric Suite for Orchestra, Op. 54 (orchestration of four Lyric Pieces)
- Peer Gynt Suite No. 2, Op. 55
- Suite from Sigurd Jorsalfar, Op. 56
- Four Symphonic Dances for piano, later arr. for orchestra, Op. 64
- Haugtussa Song Cycle after Arne Garborg, Op. 67
- Slatter (Peasant Dances) for piano, Op. 72
- Sixty-six Lyric Pieces for piano in ten books, Opp. 12, 38, 43, 47, 54, 57, 62, 65, 68 and 71, including: Arietta, To the Spring, Little Bird, Butterfly, Notturmo, Wedding Day at Troldhaugen, At Your Feet, Longing For Home, March of the Dwarfs, Poeme erotique and Gone.