



Smithsonian Associates

Northern Masters: Evocative Concert Music of Europe's Northern Countries

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET

Geography, geology, wind and weather, legend and language: all play a role in shaping the artistic vocabulary of national identity, and none more so than the countries situated around the wild oceans of the Baltic, North and Norwegian Seas.

The best-known composers from this region have long held a cherished place in our concert halls. Figures such as Edvard Grieg, Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen and Arvo Pärt have shaped our understanding of their varied cultures, exploring mysterious folklore, vast land, ice and seascapes, spiritual belief and turbulent history through their music.

In this 4-session course, popular speaker and concert pianist Rachel Franklin uses her unique live piano demonstrations and fascinating film clips to explore both well and lesser-known masterpieces from the ancient nations of the North.

British-born Franklin has been a featured speaker for organizations including the Library of Congress and NPR, exploring intersections among classical and jazz music, film scores, and the fine arts.

WK 1. SYLLABUS & WORKS

FEB 14: Composers of Norway

Edvard Grieg is beloved for his stirring piano concerto and “Peer Gynt” suites. But what about his “Holberg Suite”, solo piano miniatures, violin sonatas – all imbued with unique national character. Meanwhile there is wonderful Norwegian music to be explored by Christian Sinding, Johan Svendsen, Johan Halvorsen and Ole Olsen. However, it’s impossible to connect fully with Norwegian concert music without being familiar with the beautiful, haunting sound of the traditional Hardanger fiddle. We start with an introduction to this magical instrument.

Works explored; media used:

Haakon Solaas plays Fanitullen on the Hardanger fiddle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Di1F8GUvEtg>

Rachel Nesvig: basic differences between a Hardanger fiddle and a violin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64IKomW2ncw>

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907): Peer Gynt Suite, Op. 23. Morning Mood

- Ragnhild Hemsing - Hardanger Fiddle, & Trondheim Soloists

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_st6_6Xvhk

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite, Op. 23. In the Hall of the Mountain King

- Ragnhild Hemsing - Hardanger Fiddle, & Trondheim Soloists

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxdhGvFkspA>

Grieg: From Holberg's Time, Op. 40 (Holberg Suite)

- Academy of St. Martin in the Fields & Sir Neville Marriner

Grieg: Violin Sonata No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 45

- Sergiu Schwartz, Rachel Franklin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sukw4CYKj5w>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCETc3YyJQ4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGfVaoCMyso>

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907): Slåtter, Op. 72

- Einar Steen-Nøkleberg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCEJ1JNAOGg>

Grieg: Piano concerto in A minor, Op. 16

- Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra, Håvard Gimse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-NPZ7w80GA>

Johan Svendsen (1840-1911): Romance in G Major, Op. 26

- Johan Svendsen Romance, Pekka Kuusisto, Norwegian Chamber Orchestra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3rCYTy193o>

Christian Sinding (1856-1941) Frühlingsrauschen (Rustle of Spring)

- John Ogden

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IlnUDeRdu7o>

Johan Halvorsen (1864-1935) Entry March of the Boyars

- Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0RSTzPJ_Bo

Ole Olsen (1850-1927): Åsgårdsreien (the Ride of Asgard)

- Arctic Philharmonic, Christian Lindberg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWBuxcKLzyE>

Arne Nordheim (1931-2010): The Tempest Calm Sea, Storm And Awakening

- Süddeutsche Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester & Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=varDSFbNWaM>