



Fairy Tales in Classical Music

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Monday, November 3-24, 2025 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET

Fairytales in Classical Music: Not Just for Halloween!

NOV 17: Faeries, mermaids, trolls, oh my!

The enchanted creatures of myth never cease to fascinate us. Purcell, Mendelssohn, Grieg, Debussy and Sibelius, all wrote many works that draw from mythological roots, frequently via the great literature of Shakespeare, Ibsen and others. Purcell's *The Fairy-Queen*, Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Peer Gynt* by Grieg, and *Pohjola's Daughter* by Sibelius are all magnificent examples of the genre.

Works explored, media used

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21, 1826

- Royal Philharmonic, Jane Glover
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU0d0zuNn7k>

Henry Purcell, 1659-1695

The Fairy-Queen, 'Now the night is chas'd away', 1692

- Glyndebourne Opera House, Sally Dexter
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFwYBt4gsNg&list=RDqFwYBt4gsNg&start_radio=1

Christoph Willibald Gluck, 1714- 1787

Orfeo ed Euridice, Dance of the Blessed Spirits, 1762.

- Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Neville Marriner
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGkOf64pJ5s&list=RDBGkOf64pJ5s&start_radio=1

Hector Berlioz, 1803-1869

Fantaisie sur la Tempête, from Léo, Op. 14, 1831

- Chœur & Orchestre, Sorbonne Université
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcsY2jogmPg&list=RDHcsY2jogmPg&start_radio=1

Jean Sibelius, 1865-1957

Pohjola's Daughter, Op. 49, 1906

- Esa Pekka Salonen, Tonhalle Orchestra
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61r_i-ZiIT4

Arnold Bax, 1883-1953

Tintagel, 1919

- London Philharmonic, Adrian Boult
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbTD_YvfqJI&list=RDLbTD_YvfqJI&start_radio=1

Claude Debussy, 1862 -1918

La Cathédrale Engloutie, from Préludes I, no. 10, 1910

Karol Szymanowski, 1882-1937

Mythes, Op. 30. I. La fontaine d'Arethuse, 1921

- James Ehnes, Andrew Armstrong
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uvre-WnH9jw>

Lowell Liebermann, 1961

Frankenstein, 2016

- Liebermann discussing his ballet for the Royal Ballet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DySbQi4DoM>

Frankenstein excerpts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6alkRa3Yid0>

Edvard Grieg, 1843-1907

Peer Gynt Suite, Op. 23. In the Hall of the Mountain King, 1875

- Ragnhild Hemsing - Hardanger Fiddle, & Trondheim Soloists
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxdhGvFkspA>