

Mr. Schnepel's List of Suggested Tunes to Hear at Least Once in Your Life

The following list is a list of music that everyone should hear at least once in their life. This list is arranged Alphabetically by the Composer/Performers last name.

Barber, Samuel

Adagio for Strings <https://youtu.be/N3MHeNt6Yjs>

-Possibly one of the most beautiful pieces ever written by an American composer. Samuel Barber was known for bringing an incredible amount of emotion and catharsis to his music. The piece reaches its climax when all instruments (violins, violas, cellos, and bass) play high pitches loudly giving the impression of the human voice. This piece was a favorite of John F. Kennedy and was broadcast over radio the Monday after his death. Other notable funerals/announcements of death this music was performed for: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, Princess Diana.

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 <https://youtu.be/OTR3oCCek74>

-Written for a singer and orchestra. The lyrics say it all.

Sonata for Cello and Piano <https://youtu.be/NyVrlin8Mtg>

-An incredible work for a cellist and pianist. A bit more modern in presentation, Barber wrote this when he was young and still focusing his musical style. He dedicated this work to his teacher. *Mr. Schnepel studied and performed this piece during his Masters*

Bach, J.S.

Art of Fugue, Contrapunctus I <https://youtu.be/F39pnJWQ6Hw>

-Bach was known for writing fugues. A fugue is an intellectual exercise where composers would practice finding logical sequences of notes, almost like a musical Sudoku puzzle. Bach's major contribution to music is merging the intellectual exercise with recognizable melody and expression. He wrote a book of fugues called the Art of Fugue as a sort of guide for composers. He did this while blind.

Sheep May Safely Graze <https://youtu.be/B1nyzGR3tUE>

-Sheep May Safely Graze is a soprano aria. An aria is a song for a solo voice. This tune is part of a bigger work, but is often played alone for weddings.

Cello Suite No.3, Prelude <https://youtu.be/m0dWyGsroNI>

-Everyone knows the first Cello Suite. If you were to go to Google and type in the "Cello Song" chances are that it would be the first thing to appear on screen. Bach wrote six suites for cello, each with its own mood and focus. The Third suite is one of Mr. Schnepel's favorites. *Mr. Schnepel also spent a lot of time with this during his Masters work*

Beethoven, Ludwig

Symphony No. 2 https://youtu.be/3c2At_5iwwY

-Beethoven's 2nd Symphony was composed when he first started losing his hearing. Despite the assumption that Beethoven was temperamental and angry, this Symphony is a joyous and energetic experience from beginning to end. As with most symphonies, this symphony has four movements. Imagine the symphony itself being a "CD." A movement would be one "song" on the "CD." I would suggest listening to the 1st movement. The link provided has a quick introduction by a man named Larry Rachleff. Mr. Rachleff is the Orchestra Director at Rice University and is an incredible musician, thinker, and teacher.

Symphony No. 3 "Eroica" https://youtu.be/3c2At_5iwwY

-Beethoven changed the music scene forever with his third symphony titled "Eroica." Originally, Beethoven dedicated the piece to his personal hero, Napoleon. Once Napoleon declared himself emperor Beethoven furiously scratched out the dedication saying, "He is just like the rest." This is one of Beethoven's longest symphonies and changed the role of classical music. Before, most music was played during parties as background music or music for dancing. With his Third Symphony Beethoven really pushed the orchestra into the concert hall. The first movement was considered incredibly long at the time, it is about 20 minutes long. The last movement is quite long as well but can be considered the first diss track ever written. A composer named Daniel Steibelt went to Vienna to "challenge" Beethoven. Beethoven at the time was top dog and Steibelt was rumored to be the next big composer. At a party Steibelt sat at the piano and played some of Beethoven's music and created his own version, basically saying "I can do your music better." Beethoven stormed out of the room. At the next party Beethoven listened to a performance of Steibelts music again, but this time as soon as the music was over Beethoven grabbed some of the music, went to the piano, turned the music upside down, rudely banged out some notes on the piano, and spent an hour composing new music on the spot based off of Steibelt's upside down music. Steibelt, incredibly embarrassed left Vienna never to return. To further his point Beethoven took the main melody that he used to insult Steibelt and based the fourth movement of his Third Symphony off of the musical insult. By the way, all 50 or so minutes of the symphony were written when Beethoven was completely deaf. His imagination allowed him to continue pursuing his craft. The fourth movement starts at 38:26 in the link provided.

Symphony No. 5 <https://youtu.be/RKcAAA1O2sc>

-There is a stigma with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. It is supposed to be one of the greatest pieces of music written. A prime example of Beethoven using one small idea to create a symphony. There are claims that the motif is fate knocking on the door, it is a sound of victory, the entire symphony is symbolic of human triumph etc. The metaphors go on and on. To understand the importance of the symphony it is important to understand that Beethoven is one of the first composers to use music to express his own emotions. Instead of writing music for entertainments sake he begins writing music that is meant to be interpreted as art. With the Fifth Symphony, it is important to understand that the loss of his hearing had profound effects on Beethoven. He was depressed, he was hopeless, he tried different methods to fix or heal his ears. He talks about this in his Heiligenstadt Testament. The Heiligenstadt Testament is an unsent letter to his brothers chronicling his coming to terms with his loss of hearing. It was never meant

to be read during his life and was found after his death in a desk drawer. Beethoven makes the third movement and fourth movement flow directly into each other in a way that embodies a transformation from darkness to light. The first movement is fire and brimstone, definitely give that a listen. Listen to the third and fourth together in one sitting to experience possibly the greatest transformational moment in all of music.

Symphony No. 6 “Pastoral” https://youtu.be/23VcuR55_j4

-This is Mr. Schnepel’s favorite Beethoven symphony. Written at the same time as the Fifth Symphony and premiered on the same concert this symphony is a complete change from the drama of the Fifth. This symphony, nicknamed “Pastoral” was written to invoke images, scenes, and ideas from nature. Beethoven loved the outdoors and walked through the country side every day of his life. This symphony’s movements have titles: 1. Happy feelings upon coming into the countryside 2. Scene at the Brook 3. Merry Gathering of Country Folk 4. Storm 5. Happy Feelings After the Storm, Shepards Song

Symphony No. 7 <https://youtu.be/DNYk0jI1cio>

-A symphony written for a concert celebrating one of Napoleon’s defeats. This symphony is one of Beethoven’s larger works. The most famous movement is the second movement, often used as part of the soundtrack in Netflix documentaries. The fourth movement is a wild whirlwind from beginning to end. One of Beethoven’s friends said that it was impossible to have a lot of fast notes create a “melody.” Beethoven responded it was possible and wrote the fourth movement to prove it. The link provided is a recording of a concert of the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Carlos Kleiber. Carlos Kleiber is often considered one of the best conductors to ever live. He was eccentric and reclusive, once making an orchestra rehearse the same four notes for three hours and once receiving payment for a concert in the form of a brand new Audi.

Berlioz, Hector

Symphonie Fantastique <https://youtu.be/yK6iAxe0oEc>

-Berlioz was one of the first composers to tackle the symphonic form after Beethoven. Born in a small French country village, he spent most of his life in Paris. He initially went to Paris to become a doctor. In his Memoirs Hector mentions fainting at the sight of cadavers and spending a lot of time going to concerts. He eventually starts sneaking into the local music school’s library at night and he starts teaching himself compositional techniques. He is eventually caught and chased around the library by the head of the music school who yells at him that no one will ever know the name Hector Berlioz. Eventually, Berlioz enrolls in the music school and lives to become more famous than the head of the school. Berlioz’s life is filled with incredibly odd stories such as almost attempted murder, living in Rome, kind of participating in a revolution, and falling in love with a Shakespearian actress. His Symphonie Fantastique is a sort of love letter to the actress. The symphony follows the story of an artist who falls in love with a woman, falls asleep under a tree, has a nightmare that he kills her, dreams that he is beheaded, and has a final nightmare of watching a Witches Sabbath. He wrote the story down and distributed it at the premiere. The actress, Harriet Smithson, was impressed and they get married. Listen to the fourth and fifth movement. Their titles are 4. March to the Scaffold and 5. Witches Sabbath

Brahms, Johannes

Serenade No. 1 <https://youtu.be/cP8orFQLO4c>

-Johannes Brahms never really had a “job”, his longest post lasted for only three years and even then, he only worked during the summer. During this time he wrote his first serenade. He wrote this for a nonet, a chamber group of only nine musicians. It was incredibly well received.

Brahms, who was incredibly self-critical, thought it was an absolute disaster. His friend encouraged him to rewrite it for an orchestra and in the span of only a month Brahms rewrote the serenade for an orchestra. You may be wondering, “Mr. Schnepel, which do you like more, the nonet version or the orchestral version?” Well, I’ve never heard the nonet version. Brahms, like with most of his early compositions, destroyed it because he thought it was terrible. Many people, perhaps with too much time on their hands, have recreated the work for nonet based on how they think Brahms would have written.

Symphony No. 1

-20 years after the Serenade was written Brahms finally finished his first symphony. Brahms, self-critical as always, spent 20 years writing, rewriting, and revising his first symphony. When asked by a friend about the long gestation period Brahms replied, “Do you know how hard it is to write a symphony with that giant stamping about behind you?” The giant he was referring to was, of course, Beethoven. Brahms felt tremendous pressure to a man who died six years before he was even born. The symphony is often referred to Beethoven’s 10th Symphony. The premiere was well received, but critics still noted the nods and similar style to Beethoven. *Mr. Schnepel’s fair warning: this can be a hard piece to listen to, there are a lot of things going on. It often sounds like a bunch of nothing before finally culminating in a melody for a only a brief moment.*

Symphony No. 2 https://youtu.be/XHmk17GM_es

-Brahms wrote the entire symphony during a summer visit to the Austrian province of Carinthia. The first took 21 years to write, the second took only a few months. Brahms wrote to his publisher about the melancholy nature of the piece and how it was incredibly sad. Brahms the perfectionist also enjoyed a witty, tongue-in-cheek sense of humor. The symphony is a joyous ride of happiness from beginning to end. Some of you may know Brahms’ Lullaby, the melody for that comes from the first movement of this symphony. *This is Mr. Schnepel’s favorite Brahms Symphony*

Hungarian Dance No. 1 https://youtu.be/GEK_QSjWpcs

Hungarian Dance No. 5 <https://youtu.be/HCDygl0pttM>

-The musical world in Brahms’ time was pushing towards nationalism. Nationalism in music is when a composer takes folk melodies or ideas and puts them into music. Imagine if you were to listen to a symphony written by an American composer and all of a sudden you hear the melody to a song like “Old McDonald had a Farm” or “She’ll Be Coming Around the Mountain.” That is nationalism in music. Brahms wrote many dances using Hungarian melodies and ideas. These are the two most famous ones. There are versions for both piano and orchestra.

Copland, Aaron

Appalachian Spring (Ballet for Martha)

Recorded ballet part 1 <https://youtu.be/XmgaKGSxQVw>

Recorded ballet part 2 <https://youtu.be/PTdyDOWtE2Q>

Recorded ballet part 3 <https://youtu.be/91y-NEdTj-g>

Recorded ballet part 4 <https://youtu.be/6KIn6xHbSZg>

-Aaron Copland took nationalism in music a little bit further during the 20th century. He is what we would call a populist composer, meaning he wrote music that he thought would be well received by the American people. Possibly the most famous American Composer, Appalachian Spring is possibly his most famous work. Martha Graham, a famous ballet dancer at the time, contacted Copland and asked him to write music that she would turn into a ballet. Copland wrote the music and unsure of what the ballet was to be about, he titled it simply “Ballet for Martha.” On the night of the premiere Copland learned the title had been changed to Appalachian Spring and the story was that of two newly wed pioneers as they faced the uncertainty of the life ahead. Notice this marks a change, before most stories were focused on good vs. evil or good guy vs. bad guy. During the mid 1900’s stories become more focused on the average person and the questions of life. There are versions for both orchestra and a smaller ensemble of 13 musicians.

Variations on a Shaker Hymn <https://youtu.be/-SOeNgQBNFA>

-The most famous moment from the ballet Appalachian Spring Suite. Copland found this tune in a hymnal he had and wrote it into the ballet.

Hoe Down from “Rodeo” <https://youtu.be/dYdDYSTEuWo>

Most known for its use in a beef commercial in the 90’s. Copland creates the image of a country dance during a rodeo. Short, fun and to the point. This recording is of the National Youth Orchestra. All the musicians in the video are high school students.

Quiet City for Trumpet and English Horn <https://youtu.be/FBAB8jHAhdw>

-Copland lived in New York and surprisingly hated the country side. He often thought it boring and uneventful. In Quiet City Copland tries to catch the mood and feelings of a night in the city.

Debussy, Claude

Clair de Lune <https://youtu.be/WNcsUNKlAKw>

-Debussy is considered an impressionist. He himself despised that term, but he wrote music with the intent to give an impression of a scene. Clair de Lune is one of his most famous pieces and is supposed to give the image of moonlight.

La fille aux cheveux de lin

-Or “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair”. Much of Debussy’s music has the title of the image that he is trying to portray. Debussy was interested with the music and instruments of Asia. During his time as a student he was praised and recognized for writing music very much in the style of what had come before. Once he discovered music from Asia he started incorporating their music system. The result is a pseudo-jazz that highlights ambiguity of emotions.

Dvorak, Antonin

Symphony No. 7 <https://youtu.be/ZEIhKLBBXKI>

-Dvorak was a solely nationalistic composer. He used the music of Bohemia (Czechia) in many of his symphonies. His seventh symphony is not often played, but it is an incredible piece of music. Dvorak was “discovered” by Johannes Brahms and much in the way Brahms felt indebted to Beethoven, Dvorak felt indebted to Brahms. This symphony is a prime example of Dvorak trying to sound like Brahms. *Mr Schnepel recommends listening to the 2nd movement which Dvorak himself titled “From the Sad Years” referring to the death of his son.*

Symphony No. 8 <https://youtu.be/wIBtWyKj-vA>

-The symphony begins with one of the most Eastern European sounding melodies in all of classical music. The symphony is joyous and happy from beginning to end. With his symphonies Dvorak created a national style of music. Germans had Mozart and Beethoven and Bach, so they used those models and influences. Bohemia at the time did not have any musical role models, although Mozart was invited to Prague many times during his life and was greatly supported there.

Symphony No. 9 “From the New World” <https://youtu.be/g9qf5Trjtvw>

Dvorak eventually caught the eye of a wealthy American woman who created the now defunct National Conservatory of Music of America. Dvorak was hired to be the director and spent a few years living in New York. During this time, he championed music of Native Americans and African Americans. For the United States to have a musical future he urged composers and musicians to embrace African American spirituals and Native American rhythms and ritual music. He put his money where his mouth is by incorporating all of these thoughts and ideas into his last symphony. The first movement has three main melodies (themes): a horn melody, a fiddle tune, and an almost direct quotation of the African American spiritual “Swing Low Sweet Chariot.” The second movement was inspired by the epic poem The Song of Hiawatha. The second movement is possibly the most famous movement and the famous melody was later turned into the song “Going Home.” The Third movement is a wild cacophony of sound and rhythm reminiscent of a Native American drum circle. The fourth movement begins with notes reminiscent of the Jaws theme (Film Composer John Williams would eventually use this movement to inspire his soundtrack for Jaws). In a smorgasbord of themes and melodies the fourth movement recaps much of the symphony before ending with a shimmering chord in the woodwinds.

Slavonic Dance No. 1 <https://youtu.be/Hyb8oieGdcM>

-This is the piece that put Dvorak on the map. When the music for the piano version of this went on sale it sold out in a day. No one is really sure why, it is probably the only time a composer’s music sold out. This piece is also the reason Brahms was strongly encouraged by his publisher to write his Hungarian Dances.

String Serenade <https://youtu.be/CRcbDMg56yg>

-Written for string orchestra, this is one of Dvorak’s most beloved pieces. This piece is a perfect example of Dvorak’s ability to write melodies.

Cavatina <https://youtu.be/PagfpnTlfMY>

-Another great example of Dvorak's ability to create melodies. I think what brings people to Dvorak over and over again is that his melodies always have a tinge of sadness. With Dvorak, it is always about nostalgia.

Grieg, Edvard

Holberg Suite <https://youtu.be/j1wQ8ZMZq60>

-This suite was written to commemorate the 200th birthday of Norwegian Playwright Ludvig Holberg. The music written in 1884 is meant to sound like music Holberg would have heard when he was alive.

-Norwegian Dance No. 1 <https://youtu.be/i14q8gh6TKg>

Grieg, like Dvorak, was a nationalistic composer. His own set of dances based off of his Norwegian heritage are wonderfully somewhat evil sounding.

String Quartet <https://youtu.be/rxIP764lgOk>

-Powerful. The first movement is fairly long, but filled with energy from beginning to end. *This is one of Mr. Schnepel's favorite string quartets ever written by any composer*

Peer Gynt Suite <https://youtu.be/dyM2AnA96yE>

-Grieg's most famous piece, originally written as incidental music to a play. Everyone knows "In the Hall of the Mountain King" and "Morning Mood", but the other movements are worth a listen as well.

Haydn, Joseph

Symphony No. 104 "London" <https://youtu.be/OitPLlowJ70>

-Haydn taught both Mozart and Beethoven. The three composers make up the First Viennese School. Much of their styles and methods were adopted by composers all over Europe. Haydn is considered the father of two different musical forms: the symphony and the string quartet. His last 12 symphonies are all considered the "London" symphonies as they were written in honor of his two tours of London. No. 104, however, is the only one with the nickname "London." Other nicknames of his symphonies include: The Drumroll, The Surprise, The Miracle, and the "Farewell"

Sunrise Quartet https://youtu.be/vcrKzQ1_2R4

-A great example of music writing that would influence music for generations. The opening of the quartet is reminiscent of the Sun rising over the country side, hence the nickname.

Holst, Gustav

The Planets <https://youtu.be/Isic2Z2e2xs>

-This suite has seven movements all based off of the Roman gods: 1. Mars, the Bringer of War 2. Venus, the Bringer of Peace 3. Mercury, the Winged Messenger 4. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity 5. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age 6. Uranus, the Magician and 7. Neptune, the Mystic. Most famous and worth a listen are Mars and Jupiter. Mars was used as inspiration by John Williams for the Imperial March from Star Wars and the story goes that when the orchestra was first rehearsing Jupiter the cleaning staff for the concert hall felt compelled to dance.

Janacek, Leos

Idyll Suite for Strings https://youtu.be/jQLD_rPWXsE

-Another Czech nationalist composer. Janacek lived and composed both in the Romantic and Modern era. This creates a sound that is heavily rooted in folk melodies, but uses chords and structure more common in modern composers.

Mahler, Gustav

Mahler is an incredibly huge, imposing, and thought-provoking figure. His music is often considered to be the culmination of all music that existed (at the time) and philosophy. Much of his music was created around a story which Mahler would later abandon. The story material Mahler would base his music on often centers around Nature, Death, and his unending fascination with the afterlife. Listening to Mahler is in some ways a philosophic endeavor and an incredibly emotional undertaking. He grew up in a city where there was a large military presence, a large Jewish community, and a classical music tradition. All of these styles and influences are present in his music.

Symphony No. 1 "Titan" <https://youtu.be/JXMFbGRyII>

-Mahler was one of the top conductors in Europe during his life. His day to day life was filled with administrative tasks for his Opera Company, rehearsing, and giving concerts. During the summers, he would head to the country side and spend his days in a cabin composing. His first symphony has the nickname Titan. In the first movement you can almost imagine a hero walking into the woods and hearing the sounds of nature. Mahler writes bird calls and an ominous "hum" to symbolize nature's omnipresence. Mahler, who thought all music has value, writes in Alp Horn calls. Mahler passes his melodies around the orchestra. Another big characteristic of Mahler's music is the rapid changes of mood. The first movement begins ominously before entering into a relaxed, playful section. The joyous section ends in excitement before returning to the "hum" of nature and a repetition of the ominous material from the beginning. A triumphant horn call signals a new section and a new mood. The cheerful music quickly turns tumultuous. The strings alternate between two long notes and the trumpets sound a militaristic call that only agitates the music. This sectional culminates into a Brass fanfare with the trumpets and horns with cymbal crashes. The first movement ends in triumphant fashion.

The second movement is based off of a German Landler, a traditional dance almost like a waltz. In regard to our story so far, the hero has made it through the woods and stops at a tavern and witness the festivities of the local village people. The excitement culminates and the next section begins with quieter, more delicate music than before. This music is in the style of street performers and tavern musicians. This is a perfect example of Mahler using popular music of the time in the symphonic art form. Just like the first movement this movement ends in triumphant, brilliant joy.

The third movement was inspired by a woodcut piece of art titled The Hunter's Funeral. This movement is a funeral march of a hunter set to a variation of the tune Frere Jacques. The melody gets passed around the orchestra in a round reminiscent of children's nursery rhymes and tunes. Mahler, himself Jewish, uses traditional Klezmer music in the next section. Klezmer music, originating in the Ashkenazi tradition, is used in celebration and festivals. In Mahler's music, all music has a place. The section is symbolizing the animals of the forest celebrating the death of the hunter. The procession returns to its solemn march before changing mood to a peaceful, heavenly section. Now the melody is one of love and beauty. The solemn procession continues, the Klezmer music returns wilder than before, and the procession gets quieter as it moves into the distance.

The fourth movement begins rudely, opening the gates of Hell. That's all there is to say, its intense. Almost as abruptly as it started, it changes mood. The next section loses all energy and consists of an incredibly romantic melody played by the strings. Material from the first movement returns and the music builds ominously. The thunderous beginning is repeated before a quiet triumphal march begins. The march is quickly interrupted as the music descends into chaos. A brass fanfare signals triumph and the march returns in triumph. In true Mahler fashion the triumph disappears and the ominous nature sounds return. The flute imitates bird calls and the strings resume their romantic melody. Musical material from the first movement is heard again and everything almost starts again. Once more we hear the intense, energetic music then a brass fanfare. The signals the triumphal march to the end. Finally, Mahler allows us to be overcome with joy and happiness.

Symphony No. 2 "Auferstehung" <https://youtu.be/sHsFIv8VA7w>

-The Resurrection Symphony marks Mahler's obsession with the afterlife. Mahler, a prominent composer and conductor, was offered a position at the top Opera House in Vienna. The only consolation was that he had to convert to Christianity. There are differing accounts of how much this affected Mahler, but this symphony comes from that time in his life. The 4th movement is the most beautiful piece of vocal music any one will ever hear.

This video gives a great synopsis of the Symphony: <https://youtu.be/E0SKvJjuoTA>

Symphony No. 3 <https://youtu.be/Xplx64LVENg>

-Mahler's third symphony is the record holder for being voted the greatest symphony ever written and being the longest symphony ever written. The entire symphony tries to take the ideas from his first two symphonies further. In this symphony he tries to symbolize the evolution and progression of life from its beginnings to plants in a valley, animals in the forest, humanity, angels, and love. This symphony is separated into two parts. The first part is the first movement,

which itself is 30 minutes long, and the second part is comprised of the other five movements. This series of videos is a great synopsis of the entire symphony. If you are going to listen to the symphony in its entirety I would suggest watching these videos first.

Mahler 3 videos:

<https://youtu.be/bArhdP88dGE>

https://youtu.be/O9prTL_5pBU

<https://youtu.be/fcZh6Iu2NZ4>

<https://youtu.be/31JYDyP4I9s>

Mendelssohn, Felix

Violin Concerto <https://youtu.be/WPi7LrQ1rNg>

-Possibly one of the most famous violin concertos. Mendelssohn was often considered the Mozart of his time, he was a child prodigy who was a prolific composer, and he died around the same age as Mozart. He was able to become a prolific composer, superstar violinist, and respected conductor all before his death at the young age of 38.

Hebrides Overture (Fingal's Cave) <https://youtu.be/MdQyN7MYSN8>

-An overture is a piece of music that usually happens before an opera or musical. This is a concert overture which means it is simply a piece of music that can stand alone on itself. Mendelssohn wrote this piece after visiting the British Isles. Mendelssohn himself wrote his sister saying that the melody instantly appeared in his head upon seeing Fingal's Cave for the first time. Mendelssohn, also an artist sketched what he saw in the same letter. *This is one of Mr. Schnepel's favorite pieces of music*

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus

Symphony No. 29

-This is the perfect entry point for any person into understand the symphonic form. The first movement is a perfect example of Sonata form. There are two main melodies followed by a development of those ideas, a recap of the melodic ideas, and a short coda or end paragraph. The second movement is a prime example of a melodic, slow, and expressive movement. The third movement is a simple dance movement as was tradition. The fourth movement again in sonata form is a fun ending to the work of young Mozart.

Rondo Alla Turca <https://youtu.be/aeEmGvm7kDk>

-A rondo is a song form where certain sections repeat themselves. Almost like a poem the most common structure is something like: A B A C A B A. This famous piano piece is a great example of that form and structure.

Piano Sonata No. 16 <https://youtu.be/qjk-YRuQZDE>

-This piece can be heard the world over in all sorts of places. What is truly great is that even though it is fairly simple, it sticks truly to the structure of Exposition, Development, Recapitulation. We are introduced to two melodies, they are developed, and they are repeated before ending.

Symphony No. 40 https://youtu.be/p8bZ7vm4_6M

Symphony No. 41 <https://youtu.be/C6EOb86YdIs>

-Nicknamed Jupiter. The fourth movement is famous for being a massive fugue, meaning a lot of instruments or “voices” enter at different times. The first four notes of the fugue are C, D, F, and E. A certain curmudgeonly composer later uses these notes to determine the keys of his four symphonies.

The Magic Flute

-A singspiel, which is a fancy German word meaning sing talk. Essentially a musical, this fairy tale is famous for conspiracy theories and hidden Freemason symbols. This singspiel follows the prince Temino as he tries to save princess Temina with the help of bird person Papageno. Another reason this opera is famous: the highest notes ever written for a singer. The Queen of the Night has a famous aria for notes that are on the threshold of human ability.

Respighi, Ottorino

Pines of Rome <https://youtu.be/zBFSI-x2ETY>

-Respighi is somewhat of an outlier, he composed in a fairly romantic style during a time of increasing expirimentation. Considered a neo-classicist, he used modern techniques and technology in music that sounds like it could have been composed by Tchaikovsky. This piece creates different scenes from the city of Rome. The first movement, Pines of the Villa Borghese, captures the scene of children chasing each other, dancing, and playing soldiers. The second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb, is a dirge that takes us through one of the many catacombs that run under Rome. Respighi masterfully uses an organ playing the lowest notes possible to create a low hum, suggesting the subterranean feel. Offstage trumpets play hymn tunes creating a sense that somewhere in the vast underground maze is human activity. The Pines of Janiculum captures nighttime in Rome. Respighi writes that a specific recording of a nightingale must be played at the end of the movement. The Pines of the Appian Way captures the might of the Roman army as the music starts softly and grows continuously until the army “arrives” at Capitoline Hill.

Schumann, Robert

Symphony No. 4 https://youtu.be/i5A_FFahysY

-Schumann was mostly known as a pianist and music critic. He famously built a device to strengthen his hand, which ultimately hurt his hand so badly he was never able to play piano again. Known for his piano pieces, his symphonic works are worthy of a listen as well.

Shostakovich, Dimitri

Symphony No. 5 <https://youtu.be/3urU3pSsky0>

-Shostakovich was a Russian composer who lived during the time of Joseph Stalin. Much of Shostakovich’s life was spent being denounced and praised only to be denounced again. At least once Stalin publically threatened Shostakovich because he thought Shostakovich wasn’t creating

music for the people. This symphony, though well received by Stalin, is Shostakovich's musical criticism of the communist government. In the music we hear anger, frustration, and despair.

Symphony No. 9 https://youtu.be/AfakIg9E_a0

-At the end of WWII Stalin went to Shostakovich and demanded he write a symphony to commemorate the end of the war and the Soviet victory over Germany. Stalin knew Shostakovich was about to write his 9th symphony and knew the symbolic musical expectations. A composer's 9th symphony was supposed to be huge, just look at Beethoven's 9th and Mahler's 9th was even titled 'Songs of the Earth.' Shostakovich had the opportunity to glorify Soviet superiority and a victory for mankind. Shostakovich wrote the shortest, happiest, and most ironic symphony he would ever write. Instead of some philosophical venture through sound, he wrote melodies that seemed nonsensical, he wrote the music in a way that made some instruments too loud, and he writes a lot of fake sounding marches. This was his way of thumbing his nose at Stalin and saying, "Victory? For who?"

Symphony No. 10 <https://youtu.be/6UePidMXQEE>

-This is Shostakovich's final statement on Stalin. When Stalin died in 1953 Shostakovich immediately wrote this symphony. The second movement is one of the most violent in all of classical music. Fast notes and loud chords symbolize Stalin and his terror. The last movement is littered with the musical representation of Shostakovich's initials. In the German Language the note E flat is "Es" and the note B is "H" so "D Es C H" or D E flat C B is played over and over again symbolizing Shostakovich outliving and "beating" Stalin.

Waltz from the Jazz Suite <https://youtu.be/7UIHl0oJEpg>

-Shostakovich, living in the Soviet Union, was not allowed to hear Jazz. So, he wrote what he thought was Jazz. This is not Jazz, but a nice tune otherwise.

Polka from the Golden Age <https://youtu.be/BLHBK0X8uWk>

-Shostakovich wrote a lot of music for Soviet films. Here is an example of some of his film music. In this Polka, it is easy to see how Shostakovich wrote "wrong" notes to make something fun and light-hearted sound... off.

Stravinsky, Igor

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT STRAVINSKY LEFT RUSSIA BEFORE WWI AND THE RISE OF STALIN

Firebird Suite <https://youtu.be/RZkIAVGlfWk>

-Stravinsky is best known for his Ballets. His first three are monumental in launching music into the 20th century. Stravinsky took inspiration from French impressionists to write his first ballet: The Firebird. The music follows Prince Ivan who stumbles upon the castle of Koschei, an immortal wizard. While nearing the castle Prince Ivan catches the magical Firebird and is about to kill her before she begs for her life. Once Prince Ivan agrees to spare her life she offers him one of her feathers that he can use to summon her if he finds the need. Prince Ivan then finds 13

princesses who are under the spell of Koschei and Ivan confronts the magician. Koschei sends his monsters after Ivan, the prince summons the firebird, and the bird makes the monsters and Koschei dance until they fall into a deep slumber. While they sleep Ivan finds an egg that contains Koschei's powers and breaks it, freeing the princesses. The ending music for the ballet is beautifully triumphant without sounding like a fanfare.

Petrushka <https://youtu.be/XvXlFKvpoOg>

-A ballet based on the puppet character Petrushka. For this ballet Stravinsky starts writing music that is influenced by the art movement of cubism and Pablo Picasso. This ballet also blurs the lines between reality and mysticism. The ballet opens with a Shrovetide Fair, a traditional fair taking place in St. Petersburg. At this festival the townspeople gather before a magician arrives. The magician brings three puppets: a Moor, a ballerina, and a traditional character named Petrushka. The magician brings them to life with a magic flute and makes them dance and interact. From this first showing it is obvious that Petrushka loves the ballerina, but the ballerina loves the Moor. The magician puts the puppets away and the first act ends. The second act begins with Petrushka in his room. He cries and sobs about how much he loves the ballerina. Meanwhile, the moor in his room tries to open a coconut and is visited by the ballerina. Petrushka bursts into the room and he and the moor begin to fight. Begin the third act. The festivities at the Shrovetide Fair are in full swing. Some maids dance, then some coachmen, then a peasant walks in with a bear, some actors in demon costumes dance about. Eventually the crowd hears a ruckus and out jumps Petrushka being chased by the Moor. Someone goes to find the magician because his puppets are going crazy. The Moor strikes Petrushka and kills him. The magician comes and picks up the puppets assuring the crowd that they are just puppets. Every one leaves and the ghost of Petrushka gives one final cry and yells at the magician.

Weird, right?

The Rite of Spring <https://youtu.be/YOZmlYgYzG4>

-This ballet caused a riot in Paris. Seriously. This ballet follows an ancient tribe as they greet the season of spring and prepare to sacrifice a young woman. That is the story. The dancing is very different from traditional ballet. The audience did not receive it well. There was booing and hissing and arguing so loud that the dancers could not hear the musicians. The dance master had to stand on a chair backstage and yell directions at the dancers. The video in the link has an intro that is about 4 minutes long.

Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich

Symphony No. 2 "The Little Russian" <https://youtu.be/CRGK4cv0k9c>

-Tchaikovsky was a Russian composer known for both his Ballets and his symphonies. His 2nd symphony was written after he visited Prussia. This symphony is full of little nods to Prussian and Russian folk music. *This is Mr. Schnepel's favorite Tchaikovsky Symphony*

Symphony No. 4 https://youtu.be/cnXd4ZqN_c8

-This symphony was written during a tumultuous time in Tchaikovsky's life. He had just left a disastrous marriage and was approached by a rich countess who wished to support him financially but refused to meet him in person. In his personal letters, we read that this symphony

is about happiness, but not your own happiness. Tchaikovsky writes that he has never been happy since the death of his mother (she died when he was only 8) and that he thinks he is incapable of being happy. Instead, he sees others being happy and finds happiness in their happiness. The entire symphony, however, ends triumphantly and has been a favorite of audiences since its premiere.

Symphony No. 6 “Pathetique” <https://youtu.be/zIJiPlbJjs8>

-Pathetique is a word that means full of emotion. This symphony has three wonderful movements. The third is the most glorious, energetic triumphal march in all of music. The fourth movement is the saddest symphonic movement ever written. The ending doesn't even end. It slowly fizzles out and there is only a quiet heart beat played by the basses that slowly dies. Tchaikovsky dies a few days after the premiere.

Serenade for Strings <https://youtu.be/DHtojYUEVz8>

-Written for string orchestra. Incredibly difficult for the musicians. The waltz movement and the Elegy movement are audience favorites.