

Sergei Prokofiev

“In my view, the composer, just as the poet, the sculptor or the painter, is in duty bound to serve the people. He must beautify human life and defend it.”

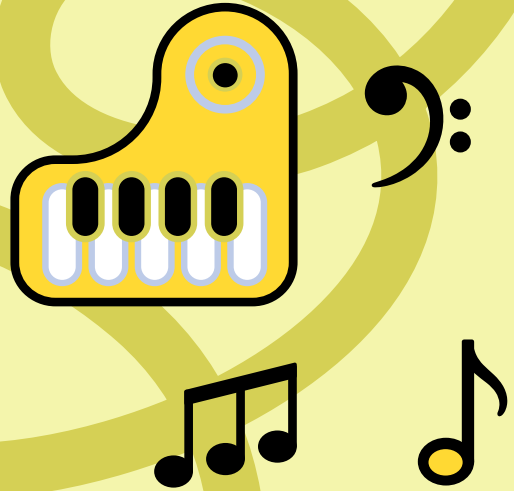
Born in 1891, Sergei Prokofiev was a Russian pianist, conductor and a major composer of the 20th century. Prokofiev's earliest musical inspiration was his mother who was a talented pianist and his first mentor.

In 1904, renowned composer Alexander Glazunov was so impressed by 13 year old Prokofiev's skills that he urged him to pursue his studies at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. Upon graduating, he was awarded the Anton Rubinstein Prize.

During his years as a student, Prokofiev had gained a reputation for being an eccentric and a musical rebel, but was all the while commended for his originality. His early experimentation with dissonant harmonies and unusual rhythm would lay the groundwork for his musical style that he became known for.

Prokofiev was less interested in the classical works of composers like Mozart and more interested in the emerging styles of his time. Prokofiev's approach to his compositions was fresh and innovative which challenged his listeners but nevertheless always left his audiences in wonderment.

Prokofiev's most celebrated works include the ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, and the opera *The Love for Three Oranges*, a fairy-tale play by Carlo Gozzi, about a prince who suffers a witch's curse and must go on an adventure to break the spell.



DID YOU KNOW?

As well as composing music for ballets and operas, Prokofiev also wrote soundtracks for films.

FUN FACT

Prokofiev composed his first piano piece; *Indian Gallop* at just five years old, and his first opera; *The Giant* at age nine.

MUSICAL TERM

Dissonant Harmonies:

Combinations of notes that fit together in a way where our ear hears them as inharmonious; creating tension and unease.

