

All-State: Scandinavian Nationalism and Its Importance to Music

presented by Brad Lambrecht
reported by Kristen Moon and Kathryn Buccola

Brad Lambrecht educated the workshop on the two purposes of Nationalism in Scandinavia in the 19th-20th Centuries and the three main nationalistic composers and why he believes it is important for our Minnesota culture to study and remember Scandinavian roots.

Nationalism in the 19th and 20th Centuries had two purposes. The first was to unite the culture of larger regions. Russia is an example of this. The second is to preserve and promote culture during times of oppression, when a group of people or a country is oppressed by a larger entity. The composers from Scandinavian and Nordic countries expressed Nationalism in their music for this purpose. Composers from these countries were influenced by their culture and political surroundings. Edvard Grieg (Norway; 1843-1907), Jean Sibelius (Finland; 1865-1943), and Carl Nielsen (Denmark; 1865-1931) each expressed love

for their country and nationalism in their music, in different ways and for different reasons.

Grieg drew inspiration for many of his works from Norwegian folk songs, literature, and folk tales. Sibelius sought to influence Finnish identity and give a voice to its people through music. Finland was politically caught between Russia and Sweden for over 200 years, with fighting occurring on Finnish soil. Nielsen, who was never formally trained as a composer, did not obey the conventions of the art. He also served in political offices that influenced his ideas and his Danish music.

Why is this important? The philosophies and influences of the time and culture on the composers above are relevant to today's performer, teacher, and student. This applies to any work, and extends beyond those that are blatantly Nationalist. Dr. Lambrecht argues that teaching Nationalist works is a

way to open up conversations with our students through discussing these pieces and the composers' influences. Dr. Lambrecht poses several questions: What does it mean to have a voice through art? How is culture created through music? What kind of effect will it have on our students if we allow them the opportunity to study the context of the music they are performing and ask these questions of themselves?

Brad Lambrecht is the orchestra director at Alexandria High School and the founder and conductor of the Central Lakes Symphony Orchestra.

Kirsten Moon teaches orchestra at Hastings High School. Kathryn Buccola teaches at Lake Middle School, S. Washington County School District, Woodbury. ‡

Scandinavian Works for School

Advanced Full Orchestra

Grieg – Peer Gynt Suites No. 1 & 2
Grieg – Suite from “Sigurd Jorsalfar”
Grieg – Piano Concerto in A Minor
Sibelius – Finlandia

Advanced String Orchestra

Grieg – Holberg Suite
Grieg – Two Elegiac Pieces for Strings and Piano
Grieg – Aase's Death from “Peer Gynt”
Grieg – Anitra's Dance from “Peer Gynt”
Sibelius – Andante Festivo
Nielsen – Little Suite for Strings

Medium String Orchestra

Grieg/Brook – Three Lyric Pieces
Grieg/McBrien – Prelude from “Holberg Suite”
Grieg/Gruselle – Peer Gynt Suite No. 1
Grieg/Gruselle – Wedding Day at Troldhaugen
Grieg/Ryden – Norwegian Dance No. 2
Sibelius/Moss – Symphony No. 2 Finale

Medium Easy/Easy String Orchestra

Grieg/Bailley – Norwegian Dance No. 2
Grieg/Cacavas – A Grieg Portrait
Grieg/Chin – Two Grieg Lyric Pieces
Grieg/La Plante – A Nordic Lullaby
Grieg/Monday – In the Hall of the Mountain King
Grieg/Monday – Norwegian Dance No. 1
Grieg/Phillippe – Morning
Grieg/Story – March of the Dwarfs
Sibelius/Phillippe - Finlandia