



MY MUSIC – a Music Department podcast

Podcast 4 – Mr Roy Peachey

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1. *La Nativité du Seigneur* (by Olivier Messiaen, 1908-1992)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIhzUZQ-ROE>

Messiaen was organist of Église de la Sainte-Trinité, a Roman Catholic church in Paris, from 1931 until 1992. He was professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire where he taught many distinguished pupils who became important figures in contemporary classical music: Iannis Xenakis, George Benjamin, Alexander Goehr, Pierre Boulez, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. As a prisoner of war, he famously composed *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* ("Quartet for the end of time"). This important and highly influential piece of chamber music is considered a masterpiece of the 20th century and was premiered to an audience of prisoners and prison guards at Stalag VIII-A in 1941. Other essential pieces to listen to include: *L'Ascension*, *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, *Turangalîla-Symphonie*.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Nativité_du_Seigneur

2. *Piano Concerto in G* (by Maurice Ravel, 1875-1937)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ji-a9zE4IE4>

Ravel is often associated with "Impressionism" along with his contemporary Debussy – they both rejected the term. His music borrows elements of modernism, baroque, neo-classicism and jazz, and he had a remarkable ear and gift for orchestral colour. As an orchestrator he famously transcribed Mussorgsky's piano masterpiece *Picture at an Exhibition* for full orchestra. *Bolero* is another example of colourful orchestration. The piece is based on a two-bar rhythmic ostinato for snare drum that repeats 169 times, two main themes that alternate, and remains in the key of C throughout – apart from a brief excursion to E major near the end. His use and control of orchestral colour and layers take the place of traditional musical development. *Bolero* was written for a ballet, as was *Daphnis et Chloé* – something you must listen to!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piano_Concerto_in_G_\(Ravel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piano_Concerto_in_G_(Ravel))

3. *Concerto Grosso No 1 for 2 violins, prepared piano & 21 strings* (by Alfred Schnittke, 1934-1998)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CX2Daceqzvl>

A prepared piano is one that has had its sounds altered by placing bolts, screws, mutes, rubber erases, and other objects on or between the strings. John Cage is usually credited with the invention of this new 'instrument'.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Schnittke