



クロード・ドビュッシー 前奏曲集第1巻より第8曲「亜麻色の髪の乙女」

Claude Debussy "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair"

It is said that this was adapted from an unpublished song by Debussy. The song was inspired by the poetry collection "Ancient Poems" by the French poet Legant de Lierlele. The story takes place in the Scottish countryside and tells the story of a man who sees a young girl with flaxen hair and falls in love with her. It is said that Debussy, who had always been in love, composed this piece out of affection for a certain wife.



モーリス・ラヴェル 「亡き王女のためのパヴァーヌ」

Maurice Ravel "Pavane for a Dead Princess"

This is an early work composed by Ravel for Duchesse Edmond de Polignac while he was a student at the Paris Conservatory, and is still one of his best-known works. The title means "Pavane danced by a princess at the court in olden times," and some say that the original title, "Pavane pour une infante défunte," was chosen because it sounded good. The "Pavane" is a court dance popular in the early 16th century, and the 'Princess' is said to have been modeled on the Spanish princess "Margarita" painted by the court painter Velázquez.



アンブロワーズ・トマ オペラ《ミニョン》より「君よ知るや南の国」

Ambroise Thomas Mignon "Knowest Thou the Land"

This work was adapted from the novel "Wilhelm Meister's Trainee Days" by the German poet and novelist Goethe. In the first act, Mignon, a young girl who was separated from her parents and sold to a traveling troupe of entertainers, sings a famous aria about her situation and her longing for her homeland, Italy. He studied at the Paris Conservatory and won the Grand Prix de Rome, demonstrating his talent early on, and "Mignon" became a smash hit with over 1,000 performances, defining his reputation. His music, characterized by concise, beautiful melodies and effective characterizations, was highly acclaimed by his contemporaries, including Berlioz, Gounod, Bizet, and Massenet.



シャルル・グノー オペラ《ファウスト》より「兵士の合唱」

Charles Gounod Faust "Chorus of The Soldiers"

It is characterized by its heroic and rhythmical melody, and the powerful accompaniment of male chorus and orchestra makes it one of the most spectacular and exciting pieces in the entire opera. Gounod was born the second son of a family of artists, his mother a pianist and his father a painter and sculptor, and his musical talent blossomed under his mother's guidance. It is said that he was driven by musical impulses after hearing performances of Rossini's and Mozart's operas and Beethoven's "Symphonies No. 6 and No. 9. The scene at the end of Faust in which Marguerite is taken to heaven, rejecting the salvation of the devil and surrendering herself to heavenly salvation, is a manifestation of Gounod's faith in God.



ジョルジュ・ビゼー オペラ《カルメン》より「ハバネラ」  
アンブローワーズ・トマ オペラ《ミニョン》より「君よ知るや南の国」  
ロベール・プランケット オペラ《マスコット》  
シャルル・ルコック オペラ《アンゴー夫人の娘》

Georges Bizet Carmen “Habanera”  
Ambroise Thomas Mignon “Knowest Thou the Land”  
Edmond Audran “The Mascot”  
Charles Lecocq “Madame Angot's Daughter”



ルイ・ルフェビュール＝ヴェリー 夜想曲 変ニ長調「修道院の鐘」

Louis Lefébure-Wely “Monastery Bells”

Lefebvre-Verry, who had gained fame as both an organist and pianist, produced more than 200 compositions. This piece was the most successful among them.  
The high-pitched melody played in a dotted-point(＊) rhythm evokes the sound of bells. The overall soft and relaxed melody was probably one of the reasons for its popularity.  
He also played Chopin's “Preludes No. 4/No. 6” on the organ at the funeral of Frédéric Chopin held at the Madeleine Abbey, deeply moving those in attendance.

\* Supplementary dots...A dot on the right side of a note, which changes the length of the note.  
Example : ♪.



カミーユ・サン＝サーンス 組曲《動物の謝肉祭》より13番「白鳥」

Camille Saint-Saëns The Carnival of the Animals No.13 “The Swan”

Of the 14 pieces in the suite “Carnival of the Animals,” this is probably the most famous solo cello piece. It was originally a chamber piece composed for a private evening party hosted by a cellist friend.

Carnival is a Christian celebration of meat eating, drinking, and theater before the fasting period of Lent. This work is full of humor, using music to express the movements of animals on this theme. Saint-Saens' playing was so skillful that Franz Liszt praised him as “the best organist in the world,” and along with his performance activities, he contributed to the development of French music and the promotion of young composers to the world.



ジョルジュ・ビゼー オペラ《カルメン》より「闘牛士の歌」

Georges Bizet Carmen “Toreador Song”

This piece is sung by the star matador Escamillo in Act II. The “Toreador Song” is extremely famous for its dignified melody and accessible rhythm. The song depicts the excitement of the bullfight, the enthusiasm of the audience, and the matador's own courage and anticipation of love.  
The original novel uses many intense expressions, but it is said that the Opéra-Comique, which commissioned the opera, asked Bizet to soften the expressions, considering that families would be in the audience.

Although Bizet was not highly regarded during his lifetime, his works were re-evaluated after his death and are now beloved by many people.



ジャコモ・マイヤーベーア オペラ《預言者》より「戴冠式行進曲」

Giacomo Meyerbeer The Prophet “Coronation March”

The opera “The Prophet,” in which the “Coronation March” is performed, was produced during Meyerbeer's heyday. The festive and solemn atmosphere of the coronation is created by the gorgeous tones and sounds of the trumpets and other brass instruments that play during the scene in the play where the new king is enthroned.

Meyerbeer was a figure who established the golden age of grand opera (＊) and was active mainly in France and Italy. He paid close attention to every element of the opera, including script, music, direction, stage, costumes, chorus, and ballet, and pursued the overall artistic integrity of the opera as a whole. He wrote down his honest opinions on other people's works and was a man of sincere character with a deep respect for the arts.

＊ Grand opera

A large-scale operatic style based on myths and legends and accompanied by a large orchestra, ballet, and chorus, often with brass instruments.



ガブリエル・フォーレ 歌曲集《3つのメロディ》より第1曲「夢のあとに」

Gabriel Fauré “After a Dream”

The most famous of Fauré's songs, it is the first of a series of three songs. The original lyrics are an ancient poem from the Tuscan region of Italy. The poet Romain Bucine translated it into French, and the young Fauré was inspired by it.



ロベール・プランケット オペレッタ《コルヌヴィルの鐘》

Robert Planquette “The Belles of Corneville”

The first operetta by Plunkett, who started out as a chanson composer, was commissioned by the director of the Folly Dramatic Theatre in 1876.

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フランスの近代音楽

## About French Modern Music

Modern music" refers to music from about 1890 to 1945 in Western music history.

In chronological order of musical history, it can be roughly divided into Medieval music, Renaissance music, Baroque music, Classical music, Romantic music, and Modern and Contemporary music.

The music of the time was mainly influenced by the culture and trends that emerged in "France," where the school of "Impressionism" was born.

Impressionism was originally a school of French painting in which painters such as Claude Monet attempted to depict light and air. The term was first used at an exhibition in 1874.

The musical world responded to this movement with the birth of impressionist music. It is characterized by its rich colors and emphasis on atmospheric themes such as landscapes and nature. In addition, it was not bound by conventional musical theory, but used free compositional methods and attempted to incorporate the folk music and culture of other countries into its expression. The influence of Japanese taste was particularly strong.

Impressionist music is often compared to the Romantic and Classical music that prevailed prior to this period. Often referred to as the golden age of classical music, it is characterized by passionate, intuitive music that is subjective and emotionally charged.

These schools also coincided with the period in which musicians such as Saint-Saens, Gabriel Fauré, and Erik Satie were active, and some of them had opposing views, such as anti-Romanticism and anti-impressionism. However, despite their different schools of thought, some of these musicians established relationships of master-student and friend.

The modern France in which they lived was a time of violent upheaval, with the Industrial Revolution\*, the development of transportation networks, the practical use of telephones, and other significant improvements in the infrastructure of daily life, as well as major wars. It was during these turbulent times that the music that is still loved today was born.

\*From the late 1700s, mechanical technology improved greatly in England, and innovation and social change took place. The machines and technology were also imported to France, leading to the "Belle Époque," the glamorous era in France.