

Pacific Symphony Volunteer Challenge #69 and Happy Halloween!

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Hello, Pacific Symphony Volunteers!

School is in session, summer is a distant memory and Halloween is HERE! Wow, how time flies.....The evenings are now chilly and shadowy, and I have already put another quilt on the bed!

In honor of autumn, Bob Apfelzweig, our favorite Volunteer Challenge contributor, has suggested the following composition, Edvard Grieg's concert overture *In Autumn*, Op. 11.

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) is probably Norway's best-known, and loved, composer. He is famous for his *Piano Concerto in A minor*, the music he composed for Henrik Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*, the *Four Norwegian Dances*, and over a hundred works and collections for solo piano. First and foremost a pianist, Grieg's first orchestral composition, done while still a student at the Leipzig Conservatory between 1863 and 1864, was a *Symphony in C minor*, which he decided was of such poor quality that he forbade any performance even after his death.

His next orchestral composition, written in Italy during the winter of 1865-66, was conceived as an orchestral fantasy and was based on an earlier song entitled *Autumn Storm*. It ended up being called the concert overture *In Autumn*, but it did not receive critical praise and so Grieg rearranged it for piano duet. Later, re-orchestrated it, gave it a title translated into German (*Im Herbst*), and published it as his Op. 11, at which time (1888) it was successfully premiered in England. The music is typical in many ways of the mature Grieg – melodious, alternately dramatic and cheerful, and full of the merriment of the autumn harvest so important to northern European countries.

There are quite a few videos of this lively overture on YouTube, but very few show a symphony orchestra's live performance (and these are apparently amateur or student musicians), such as the Strathmere Festival Orchestra directed by Per Brevig:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVid3hUSHcc>

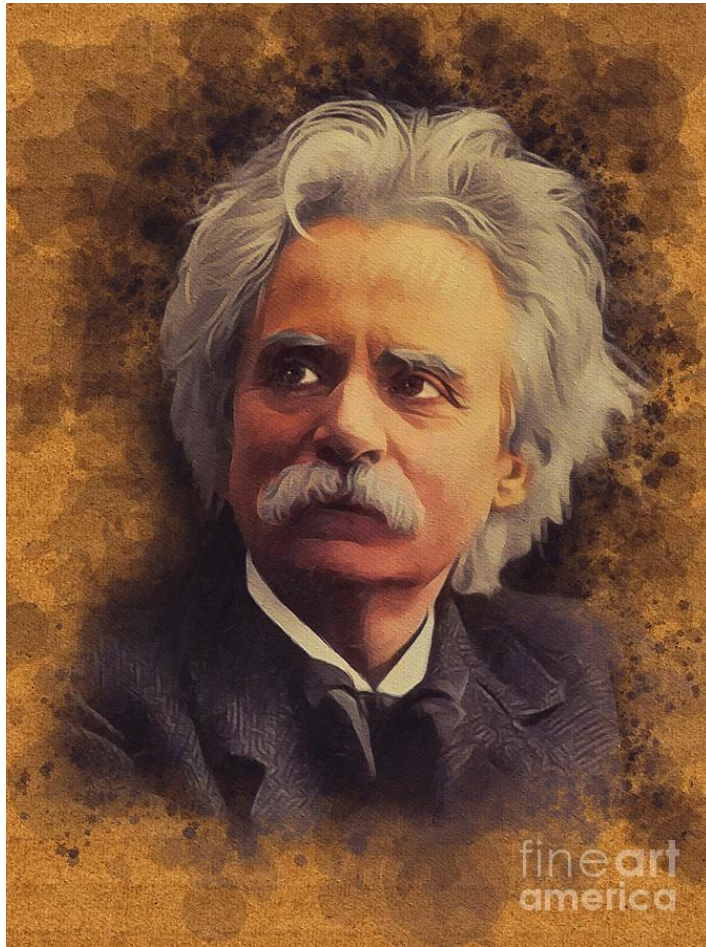
There are various other performances derived from fairly recent digital CD recordings on YouTube, nearly all just showing a photo of the CD label; among the best is that by Neeme Järvi and Sweden's Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWwn98FvnL4>

But to hear this music played for all it's worth, and by a legendary conductor who probably first popularized this music for many listeners, you really need to hear Sir Thomas Beecham conducting The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This performance in stunning, early stereo, was recorded in December 1955!:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mI2XAq3JEiM>

I hope you found these renditions to be as stunningly beautiful as I did!



As most of you know, Pacific Symphony is BACK IN THE CONCERT HALL, and I invite you to sign up for open volunteer roles for upcoming concerts! We love your support and can't wait to see you soon!



You can access Pacific Symphony's Volgistics system to sign up to volunteer for any of our concerts through the end of our musical season, June 30th, 2022! Please feel free to sign up TODAY!

<https://www.volgistics.com/ex2/vicnet.dll?from=261462>

Be sure to email me if you have any problems signing up and I will respond as quickly as possible.

Lastly, it brings me so much happiness to stay connected with you! Until I see you again, please stay well. Stay safe. Know how much we miss you.

Warm regards and Happy Halloween!

Abby

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