**Definition:** Grieg, Edvard Hagerup from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Norwegian composer. He used Norwegian folk themes in his compositions, many of which are for piano or voice. Among his best-known works are the song *I Love Thee* (1864), the two *Peer Gynt* suites for orchestra (1876), and the Piano Concerto (1868).

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**Summary Article:** Grieg, Edvard (Hagerup) from *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Norwegian nationalist composer. Much of his music is written on a small scale, particularly his songs, dances, sonatas, and piano works, and strongly identifies with Norwegian folk music. Among his orchestral works are the piano concerto in A minor (1869) and the incidental music for Henrik Ibsen's drama *Peer Gynt* (1876), commissioned by Ibsen and the Norwegian government.

Grieg was born in Bergen, the son of a merchant. He was taught piano by his mother from 1849. In 1858 the Norwegian composer Ole Bull persuaded Grieg's parents to send him to study at Leipzig, Germany, and he entered the conservatory there. In 1863 he went to live in Copenhagen, Denmark, and studied with Niels Gade. In 1864 he met Rikard Nordaak, who fired his enthusiasm for Norwegian national music, and became engaged to his cousin Nina Hagerup, whom he married in 1867, settling as a teacher and conductor in Christiania (Oslo). He was a director of the Christiania Philharmonic Society in 1866 and played a part in the formation of the Norwegian Academy of Music. In 1869, in Copenhagen, he premiered his most lasting work, the piano concerto in A minor. The premiere of Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, in February 1876, secured Grieg's reputation as the leading Scandinavian composer of the day and showed his talent at its best. In 1888–89 he and his wife appeared in London, Paris, and Vienna. He was awarded honorary doctorates by Cambridge University in 1894 and by Oxford University in 1906.

Once dismissed by Claude Debussy as 'a pink bonbon stuffed with snow', Grieg is now returning to critical favour. In his music he rapidly developed a style that included echoes of Norwegian folk song and his own harmonic experiments. This combination produced music of great strength and individuality. He was primarily a lyrical composer.

**Works**

- **Solo voices, chorus, and orchestra** *Land-sighting, Olaf Trygvason; Bergliot (Bjørnson)* for declamation and orchestra.

- **Chamber and solo vocal** string quartet in G minor (1878); three sonatas for violin and piano; sonata for cello and piano; 24 Op. nos. of piano pieces, including ten volumes of *Lyric Pieces*, sonata in E minor, *Slåtter, Norwegian Peasant Dances* (1903); 143 songs, including *Haugtussa* cycle (Garborg, 1895), settings of Ibsen and Bjørnson.

- **Other** incidental music for Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (1876) and Bjørnson's *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (1872); *Holberg Suite* for string orchestra (1884); piano concerto in A minor (1869).

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Grieg, Edvard Anitra's Dance
Grieg, Edvard Peer Gynt, First Movement
Grieg, Edvard Piano Concerto

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