

Topic Page: [Piston, Walter, 1894-1976](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/piston_walter_hamor_jr_1894_1976)

Summary Article: **Piston, Walter Hamor**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

US composer and teacher. His music follows European neoclassical models, often favouring contrapuntal textures; his works include eight symphonies, a number of concertos, chamber music, the orchestral suite *Three New England Sketches* (1959), and the ballet *The Incredible Flutist* (1938). He wrote a number of textbooks, including *Harmony* in 1941 and *Orchestration* in 1955.

Piston was born in Rockland, Maine. After studying at Harvard University, and in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, he returned to the USA and taught at Harvard 1926–60. He was well regarded as a teacher; his pupils included Leonard Bernstein. Piston's music is clear and finely disciplined, and has some affinities with Stravinsky's neoclassical work.

WorksOrchestral the ballet *The Incredible Flutist* (1938); eight symphonies (1937–65), suite, concerto, Symphonic Piece, Prelude and Fugue for orchestra; concertino for piano and chamber orchestra (1937), clarinet concertino, two violin concertos (1939, 1960).

Chamber five string quartets (1933–62), piano trio, three pieces for flute, clarinet, and bassoon; violin and piano sonata, flute and piano sonata, suite for oboe and piano, partita for violin, viola, and organ.

Choral*Carnival Song* for male chorus and brass instruments.

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Chicago

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Harvard

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