

Classics 4 Kids – Halloween

Good morning and welcome to Classics 4 Kids... I'm your host, Kathy Lawton Brown. Today, we have a special Halloween show, which includes extra resources that you can access on our website, **Classic1073.org**. You can visit the site either during the show or afterwards. It's a lot of fun, has some great ideas for Halloween, and I think you might enjoy exploring it. Just look for Classics 4 Kids – Halloween at **Classic1073.org**.

Halloween, as you know, is October 31st. The holiday got its name because it's the day before All Saints' Day...so its original name was "All Hallows' Eve (or evening)" which was later shortened to "Halloween." Halloween has all kinds of traditions that come from all over the world. In the USA, we now know it as Trick or Treat night – that fun time of the year to act spooky or creepy, or pretend we're someone else...or just to dress up and act goofy! (Oh! Candy and goodies are part of it, too!) So today, we're gonna get "warmed up" by spending some time with masquerade costumes, phantoms, wizards and some other ghoulish characters they hang with. Classical composers wrote lots of pieces about these spooky things, too – so let's get our Halloween party started!

We'll start with Masquerade Suite by Aram Khachaturian. Born in Tbilisi, the capital of the country of Georgia, Khachaturian lived in the neighboring country of Armenia, and became one of the most important composers of the Soviet Republic. This suite was taken from music that Khachaturian wrote in 1941 for a play by Mikhail Lermontov. Filled with the flavors of the colorful folk music of that region, the Masquerade Suite's humor and energy have made it one of the most popular pieces in classical music. You may just recognize a movement or two!

Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite – [17:12]

Jon Georgiadis – solo vln

London Symphony Orchestra / Stanley Black

That was *Khachaturian's* music about a masquerade...which is, basically a costume party... but he wasn't the *only* composer to write about them – the Norwegian composer Johan Halvorsen also wrote a Masquerade Suite, based on scenes from Ludvig Holberg's play by the same name. We'll hear four movements from the suite – The Holberg Overture, Gavotte, Molinasque (or Grotesk Dans), and Arietta. As you listen to the music, see where your imagination takes you, and what kind of character you might become in each movement. It's lots of fun pretending to get all dressed up as someone else!

Halvorsen: Masquerade Suite, excpts Mvts 1,5,6,7 – [11:55]

Bergen Philharmonic / Neemi Järvi

As much fun as masquerades are, there are also some “creepier” sides to Halloween. There are witches and ghosts and ghouls and zombies and phantoms, among other things. One piece that plays well into our theme of Halloween is Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1986 musical, *Phantom of the Opera*. Based on a novel by the French author Gaston Leroux, it tells the story of a beautiful soprano, Christine, and a mysterious musical genius who lives in the sewers beneath the Paris Opera House. He wears a partial mask because his face was badly scarred years before. He falls madly – almost uncontrollably – in love with Christine. This is the powerful overture to the musical, played by...

Andrew Lloyd Webber: Phantom – Ov. – [5:14]

Boston Pops/ Keith Lockhart

Our next piece by Camille Saint-Saens is called “Danse Macabre” – or the Dance of Death. The piece essentially paints a picture of Death, who (sooner or later) takes all people with him from this life to the next life. Written in a minor key, it starts with 12 notes (the chiming of midnight), and then we hear death tuning up his fiddle. You’ll hear all sorts of instruments joining in, including the xylophone – which kind of reminds us of bones, as all the dead dance on into the next life. (Yep! Kinda scary!)

Saint-Saens: Danse Macabre – [6:45]

Orch Paris/ Pierre Dervaux

The Dutch composer Johann de Meij always liked the book, *The Lord of the Rings*. In 1987, he wrote his First Symphony which put the story of the Ring to music. The story is all about a magical Ring that determines the safety or destruction of the world. For many years it is possessed by the creature Gollum, but it later falls into the hands of others, threatening everyone’s existence. In this first movement of the five-movement symphony, we meet the wise and noble wizard Gandalf, whom we see as a stately figure. But then he shows us his unpredictable side, taking us for a ride on his beautiful horse, “Shadowfax”.

Johan deMeij: Gandalf the Wizard From Lord of the Rings – [6:01]

USAF Band, DC / LTC Alan Bonner

To wind up our Halloween celebration on Classics 4 Kids today, we go to the Disney movie *Fantasia*, and to a piece that was featured in that timeless classic. The piece is also downright hair-raising, and that’s exactly what its composer, the Russian Modest Mussorgsky, intended! He called it a tone poem, but it was actually written as a series of compositions... to create a musical picture of a witches’ Sabbath occurring on St. John’s Eve on Bald Mountain. Five years after

Mussorgsky died, his friend Nicolai Rimsky Korsakov published an arrangement of the work as a “fantasy” for orchestra, and that’s actually the work we know today ...Night on Bald Mountain, or Bare Mountain. Here the Cincinnati Pops and Erich Kunzel give us a chilling performance...

Mussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain – [8:58]

Cincinnati Pops / Erich Kunzel

Thanks for listening to Classics 4 Kids today, and joining us for some Halloween goosebumps! Don’t forget to go online to check out all the additional resources and ideas for Halloween on our website, **Classic1073.org**. Just look for *Classics 4 Kids – Halloween* – at **Classic1073.org**. Enjoy the holiday – have a blast, but be safe... and have a *spooktacular* Halloween! *Mwwwaaah-ha-ha-ha-ha!*