

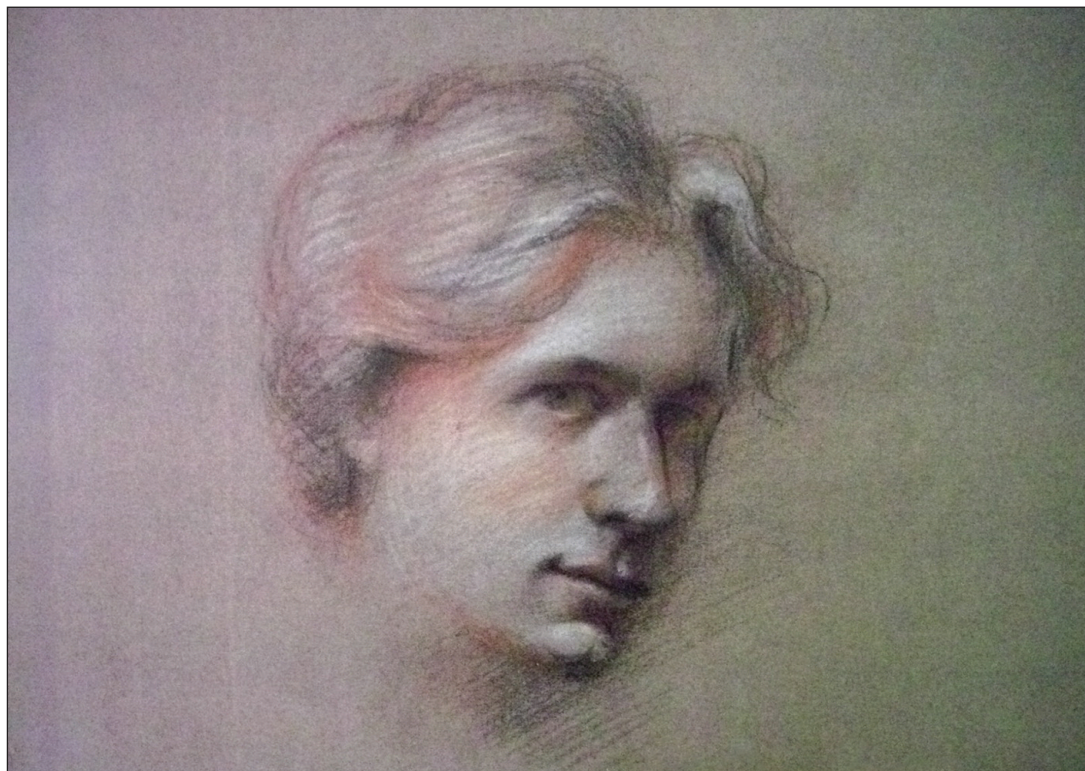
PERCY GRAINGER

Complete Music for Wind Band • 2

Irish Tune from County Derry • The Merry King • Colonial Song

Joachim Carr, Piano • Hans Knut Sveen, Organ

Royal Norwegian Navy Band • Bjarte Engeset



Percy
GRAINGER
(1882–1961)

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Recorded: 17–21 November 2014 2 5 9 10, 20–24 April 2015 1 4 6 8 11, 25–29 January 2016 3 12 13
at Torpedoverkstedet, Karljohansvern Horten, Norway

Producer, mixing and mastering: Lars Nilsson • Engineer: Michael Dahlvid

Editors: Michael Dahlvid and Lars Nilsson • Consultants: Barry Peter Ould and Jerker Johansson

Publishers: Southern Music USA 1 4; Carl Fischer 2 5; Southern Music/Bardic Edition 3; Bardic Edition 6–13

Piano supplied by Steinway Piano Gallery Oslo

Percy Grainger (1882–1961)
Complete Music for Wind Band • 2

Recording the complete music for wind orchestra by composer and pianist Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882–1961) has truly been an inspiring experience for everybody involved, enjoying the diversity and detailed originality inherent in these scores. We have used the instruments Grainger asks for, be it the Hammond organ, tin whistles, Swiss hand bells, bass saxophone or the steel marimbaphone. We have also enjoyed listening to the lively, free and exuberant musical energy, and the unique style of performance he conveyed in his recordings as a pianist.

Grainger's close connection to Edvard Grieg, artistically and personally, dedicating many of his works to Grieg, is of course well documented in Norway. Grainger toned down Grieg's 'Norwegian-ness' and rhetorically asked: 'Is it not more realistic to view Grieg as a strictly cosmopolitan sophistication that entered into and enriched Norwegian music through the agency of one man?' The two met late in Grieg's life, in 1906, while preparing a planned performance of Grieg's *Piano Concerto*. The performance never materialised due to Grieg's death in 1907. Grainger said in a letter that 'of all the composers who have ever existed, Grieg and Bach are the ones I love most'. Also, Grieg formulated his admiration for Grainger in a letter: 'I really care for you! For your refreshing and healthy view of art and for your unspoiled nature, not yet corrupted by "High-life"'. Grainger sometimes mentioned the strong influence Grieg had on his own style. Also interesting, but at the same time potentially embarrassing for us Norwegians, is Grainger's intensive focus on the Nordic, being it Norway or other Nordic countries. This is not so surprising given that his wife Ella Viola Ström was Swedish. But Grainger's 'Nordic-ness' went further: He expressed the hope that America and Australia would be re-Scandinavianising themselves: a return to the 'affirmative life-worship and robust selfhood so characteristic of Scandinavian art'.

Born in Melbourne in 1882, Grainger left Australia for Europe with his mother when he was only 13, at first

studying piano and composition in Frankfurt, but soon touring as a concert pianist. Even though he composed for many instruments and ensemble formations – for example solo piano, choirs and the symphony orchestra – his special love for the wind orchestra was already present in his youth. It is said that during his stay in London in 1901, he went to the Boosey & Hawkes shop regularly, always taking home with him a different wind instrument that he then taught himself to play. From 1914 Grainger served for two years in the American Army as a bandsman, at Fort Hamilton. After settling in White Plains, USA, he composed several works for the American Band Masters Association and for the Goldman Band. He often expressed his dedication to the wind band medium: 'As a vehicle of deeply emotional expression it seems to me unrivalled.' He also considered the wind band to be a much more suitable and well-balanced medium for the transcription of early music than the symphony orchestra. Twenty-three transcriptions for wind orchestra were published as a series entitled *Chosen Gems for Winds*, an idea connected with his teaching at Interlochen Music Camp in Michigan during 1937–44. In the 1930s Grainger met specialists on early music such as Gustave Reese; Arnold Dolmetsch and Dom Anselm Hughes, inspiring many of these settings of music by others, ranging from the Medieval, through to Bach, and on to modern composers such as Fauré and Franck. Many of these arrangements were first performed at the musical summer camps at Interlochen, with Grainger using his idea of 'elastic scoring' which made it possible to perform the music with almost any combination of winds. Typical of his wind band sound is the inclusion of 'tuneful percussion' – he even had some special melodic percussion instruments made in co-operation with the Deagan company.

Grainger was a pioneer in experiments of electronic music. At a late stage in his life he was developing a special, hard to grasp, concept of 'free music', involving 'free music machines'. He became increasingly focused

on freeing music from regular rhythms and pitches. Unconventional as he was, Grainger was looking to the future while at the same time returning to the basic roots of music. Early in his career he became interested in studying and collecting folk music, and could be described as an early Ethnomusicologist. He collected British, American and Danish folk music and a large part of his music for wind orchestra is based on such folk tunes.

Grainger was indeed an innovative composer – for example, his early work *Hill-Song No. 1* from 1902, is full of new scales, changing irregular meters, new concepts of form and free polyphony. He also invented his own English vocabulary for his scores, with terms like 'reedy', 'gracefully', 'angrily', 'feelingly', 'clingingly', 'louden/soften', etc.

His more personal and private eccentricities can be difficult to come to terms with, easily drawing attention away from, and obscuring, his music. Grainger's character could be described as a contradictory mix of universalism with prejudice. He was a strong believer in the supremacy of Nordic races, preferring Nordic and Anglo-Saxon cultures over anything Mediterranean or Teutonic, but at the same time being a supporter of Afro-American rights in the US. He believed in music as a uniting universal language, interested, as he was, in the music of all people and periods. Still, he expressed other prejudiced views which have been documented elsewhere – but the notion that these ideas are expressed through his music is questionable.

Grainger's music is often full of energy and generosity, but also conveys a certain darkness and melancholy, focusing on themes from sombre folk song texts. We have, not least, been fascinated by the works inspired by nature: the world of the hills, the sea and the sands. We have, through this recording project, realised that this eccentric musician offers us an original, remarkable spectrum of musical expression.

1 'In a Nutshell' Suite – The 'Gum-Suckers' March

'Gum-Suckers' is a nickname for Australians from the state of Victoria, sucking refreshing blades from the typical Eucalyptus trees of the region during the warm summers. The pianist and writer Joseph Robert Smith had the following to say about Grainger and such titles: 'The general public is not aware of the sophisticated musicianship of his music, while the celebrated tastemakers are not generally attracted to pieces with such titles as "The Gum-Suckers".' This march is the fourth movement from '*In a Nutshell*' Suite, orchestrated for band in 1942 and dedicated to 'Henry and Abbie Finck, with love'. In our performance, we used the complex and colourful percussion parts from the orchestral version, including, for example, staff bells and some of Grainger's special Deagan instruments like the steel marimbaphone. We even built our own version of the nabimba. Grainger sometimes played the piano part himself with bands in this march. Even though the piano is not really treated as a virtuoso solo instrument here, it still is a somewhat outstanding item in the scoring.

2 Irish Tune from County Derry

This is one of Grainger's most performed pieces, based on what is probably the most famous of all Irish melodies. It was 'Lovingly and reverently dedicated to the memory of Edvard Grieg'. Grainger arranged and scored it for the military band in 1918. Like *Molly on the Shore*, the *Irish Tune from County Derry* was taken from the *Complete Petrie Collection of the Music of Ireland* edited by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. Here the melody has the remark 'Name unknown'. It was collected by Miss Jane Ross, of New Town, Limavady, County Derry, Ireland. *Danny Boy* is just one of many sets of words used with this melody.

3 The Merry King

This English folk song from Sussex was noted down by Grainger himself from the singing of Alfred Hunt (from Kirdford in West Sussex) in 1905. First Grainger sketched it for chorus, and in 1939 he made the version for ten or more winds or strings and piano. Here the piano part is quite soloistic, especially at the end of the arrangement.

The words of the first verse are as follows:

It's a merry king of Old England
That stole my love away;
And it's I in Old England
No longer can't stay.
I'll swim the wide ocean
All on my bare breast
For to find out my true love
Whom I do love best.

Another folk singer, Mr Henry Burstow, of Horsham, Sussex, used to sing a quite amusing variant of the first lines:

The Americans that stole my true-love away,
And I here in England no longer can stay.

4 Children's March (Over the Hills and Far Away)

This march was originally written for piano solo. Grainger orchestrated it for winds while he was a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Artillery Band during the First World War, but it was premiered by the Goldman Band of America, conducted by Grainger. There is no folk-song material here, these are Grainger's own melodic ideas, with a very carefree and optimistic character. The piano part is quite extensive, so Grainger wrote that 'a piano is highly desirable'. At the end, a bass string of the piano is struck twice with a hard marimba mallet. The work was dedicated to 'My playmate beyond the hills'. Some researchers identify this person as the Danish woman, Karen Holten, with whom Grainger had very close relations.

5 Colonial Song

In the score of *Colonial Song* Grainger states that he has expressed his feelings 'aroused by thoughts of the scenery and people of my native land, Australia.' The melodic material is Grainger's, without the use of any folk songs. The work was adapted in many versions, starting with a piano version in 1911 and followed by, for example, a version for two voices (soprano and tenor), harp and full orchestra in 1912. The version for band was a Christmas gift for Grainger's mother in 1918, performed for the first

time on 6 June 1919 by Edwin Franko Goldman and his band. This work was the first of a series that Grainger termed 'Sentimentals' and thought to be the only one under this generic title until recent research has led to the discovery of at least two other works bearing this heading. Today the work is established as a fine addition to the band repertoire, so it is curious to read Sir Thomas Beecham's early opinion: 'My dear Grainger, you have achieved the almost impossible! You have written the worst piece of modern times.'

6 Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788): March, BWV Anh. 122

In a letter, Grainger stated that 'of all the composers who have ever existed, Grieg and Bach are the ones I love most'. In his works for band this love ignited four arrangements of works by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750): The three arrangements recorded here and the setting of *O Mensch Bewein dein' Sunde gross* found on *Volume 1*. The arrangement of the *March* is one of the 23 *Chosen Gems for Winds*. In Grainger's words this is 'one of the fascinating little pieces which Bach wrote for Anna Magdalena, his second wife (in 1725 as part of the *Klavierbüchlein*).' Nowadays, the *March, BWV Anh. 122* is attributed to Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788). Grainger's score was completed at the Alexandria Hotel, Los Angeles, California on 20 July 1946 and is marked 'as interpreted by Arnold Dolmetsch'. In the arrangement, we can thoroughly enjoy the march identifying sounds of snare drum, cymbals and bass drum not usually heard in an 18th-century piece.

7 'Blithe Bells' A Free Ramble (After Bach) (based on Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750): Schafe können sicher weiden, wo ein guter Hirte wacht, from the Cantata, Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd, BWV 208)

This work from 1931 is based on Johan Sebastian Bach's aria *Schafe können sicher weiden, wo ein guter Hirte wacht* from the secular Cantata, *Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd, BWV 208*. Grainger pointed out that the ramble is coloured by the thought that Bach, in writing the

melody that opens and closes the number in thirds, may have aimed at giving a hint of the sound of sheep bells. It is a quite free rendering, not exactly copying the form or content of the aria. It comes across as an impressionistic fantasia focusing on the sonorities of tuned percussion instruments.

8 Johann Sebastian Bach: See what his love can do (Seht, was die Liebe tut, from the Cantata, Ich bin ein guter Hirt, BWV 85)

The arrangement from 1937 of the tenor aria *Seht, was die Liebe tut* from the Cantata, *Ich bin ein guter Hirt*, BWV 85 (1725) is again one of the 23 *Chosen Gems for Winds* Grainger published, and is an example of elastic scoring. The melody stated after the *ritornello* of the introduction is very darkly orchestrated, even with the double bassoon joining the melody.

9 Josquin des Prez (c. 1450/1455–1521): La Bernardina

Grainger's elastic scorings in his *Chosen Gems for Winds* can be looked as quite analogous to organ registration. Each musical voice is assigned a 'tone strand': strand A for the soprano line, strand B for the alto line, etc. Each strand could then be played by a variety of instrumental combinations. *La Bernardina* by Josquin des Prez (c. 1450/1455–1521) is a *Canzone* in three parts, published in Venice 1503. Grainger finished his version on 15 September 1943, in Springfield, Missouri.

10 Alfonso Ferrabosco II (c. 1575–1628): The Four-Note Pavan

From *Chosen Gems for Winds*, Grainger's setting from 1940 of this old pavane has a very poetic tempo indication 'Stately, yet with a grave playfulness, and with the lilt of a slow dance'. The original can be found as *No. 13 in Consort Music to the Viols in 4, 5 and 6 parts* by Alfonso Ferrabosco II (c. 1575–1628). In our time, it is fascinating to see how much Grainger's suggestion of dynamic phrasing and articulation resembles the style of historically informed performance practices.

11 Herman Sandby (1881–1965): Intermezzo

The Danish cellist and composer Herman Sandby (1881–1965) was one of Grainger's fellow students in Frankfurt and became his close friend for life. They performed often as a duo, usually with a repertoire arranged for them by Grainger. They also researched Scandinavian folk music together. In 1906 the two played Grieg's *Cello Sonata* for the composer in London. Afterwards Grieg wrote 'excellent from beginning to end' in his diary. The composition *Youthful Rapture* for cello and piano was made by Grainger for Sandby. Grainger also arranged four pieces by Sandby: *Chant (or The Page's Song)* arranged for room-music in 1925, *Elverhøj* (a song sketch written in 1937), *Love Song* (arranged for strings in 1939) and the *Intermezzo* arranged for wind band. Sandby originally wrote *Intermezzo* for the piano, at Christmas 1931. Our rendering is a world premiere recording.

12 Irish Tune from County Derry (second version)

This setting for pipe organ and band of the famous Irish folk tune is much less known than the scoring for military band from 1918 and much more experimental regarding harmonisation. Similar to the well-known version it has a built-in crescendo from the beginning to the end, but still it almost sounds like a totally different piece.

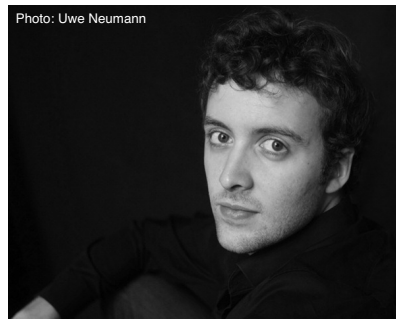
13 Franz Liszt (1811–1886): Hungarian Fantasy

As late as in 1959, at the age of 77, Grainger orchestrated the *Fantasie über ungarische Volksmelodien* by Franz Liszt (1811–1886) for piano solo and wind orchestra. This is a work in which he himself had been the soloist on several occasions, with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in November 1915 and with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in November 1942, for example. There is even an acoustic recording of him playing an abridged version of this work, from 1918. Liszt's music was always an important part of Grainger's repertoire.

Bjarte Engeset

Joachim Carr

Photo: Uwe Neumann



Joachim Carr was born 1988 in Bergen, Norway and studied with the renowned professor Jiri Hlinka at Barratt Dues Institute of Music in Oslo and with Professor Eldar Nebolsin at the Hochschule für Musik 'Hanns Eisler' where he received his master's degree with the highest possible distinction in 2016. In October 2014, he won First Prize, the Audience Award and the Orchestra Prize of the Bergen Philharmonic at the 14th International Edvard Grieg Piano Competition in Norway. He has also won prizes at the 25th Concours Clara Haskil in Vevey, 2013, at the 10th Concours International de Musique de Chambre de Lyon in 2014 and the Boris Pergamenschikow Preis for contemporary chamber music in Berlin. He has also appeared as a soloist with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, the Bergen Philharmonic, the Trondheim Symphony and the Norwegian Radio Symphony, among others, and has performed recitals and chamber music at major festivals and in venues throughout Europe.

Hans Knut Sveen



Hans Knut Sveen is associate professor of harpsichord at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen. Together with Frode Thorsen, he is a founding member and leader of Bergen Barokk, and he participates in most productions of Barokksolistene. In his performances, Hans Knut Sveen is especially dedicated to historical keyboard instruments and their copies. In addition to this, he often experiments with the combination of acoustic, synthetic and sampled sound.

Royal Norwegian Navy Band



The Royal Norwegian Navy Band is one of five professional military bands in Norway. The band was established in 1820 and has been located in Horten, near Oslo, since 1850. It is a unique and popular ensemble and plays concerts both in Norway and abroad with its 29 professional and highly educated musicians. The band gives up to 150 performances each year and has undertaken tours and military assignments to France, Russia, China, Spain, and elsewhere. The band has also visited Afghanistan twice to perform for both Norwegian and foreign troops. The Royal Norwegian Navy Band won a 'Norwegian GRAMMY' (Spellemannprisen) in 2003 and has collaborated with several of Norway's most famous singers and musicians. The band has also collaborated with international soloists such as José Carreras and Melody Gardot. In 2017 the band won the 'Best Large Ensemble' YAMaward for their production of *The Planets*. The Royal Norwegian Navy Band has made its mark performing classical, contemporary, jazz, rock and pop music, in addition to traditional band repertoire.

www.forsvaret.no/en/facts/culture/music

Bjarte Engeset



Conductor Bjarte Engeset gained his diploma at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki in 1989, where he studied with professor Jorma Panula. In 1991 he was chosen as a member of the Tanglewood Music Center conducting seminar where his teachers included Seiji Ozawa, Gustav Meier, Simon Rattle and Marek Janowski, among others. Bjarte Engeset has been music director of the Tromsø Symphony Orchestra and The Norwegian Wind Ensemble, artistic director of Northern Norway's Northern Lights Festival and Opera Nord, as well as permanent guest conductor of the Flemish Radio Orchestra. From 2007 to 2012 he was chief conductor and artistic director of Sweden's Dalasinfoniettan, having contributed to the outstanding high level of the orchestra; he is currently music director of the Royal Norwegian Navy Orchestra. Engeset has performed and toured extensively working with many leading orchestras and artists worldwide. His discography includes more than 30 best-selling recordings, including an eight-disc set of Grieg's complete orchestral works on Naxos (8.508015). His research and editorial work within the Norsk musikkarv ('Norwegian Music Heritage') project, especially on the orchestral music of Grieg, Svendsen, Irgens-Jensen and Tveitt, has been pivotal.

www.proarte.no/eng/engeset.htm

Percy
GRAINGER
(1882–1961)

Complete Music for Wind Band • 2

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|-----------|--|--------------|
| 1 | The ‘Gum-Suckers’ March | 3:37 |
| 2 | Irish Tune from County Derry | 4:12 |
| 3 | The Merry King | 4:00 |
| 4 | Children’s March
(Over the Hills and Far Away) | 6:39 |
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| 6 | C.P.E Bach/Grainger: March | 1:36 |
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| 8 | J.S. Bach/Grainger:
See what his love can do | 3:18 |
| 9 | Josquin des Prez/Grainger: La Bernardina | 1:18 |
| 10 | Alfonso Ferrabosco II/Grainger:
The Four Note Pavan | 3:20 |
| 11 | Herman Sandby/Grainger: Intermezzo* | 4:35 |
| 12 | Irish Tune from County Derry
(second version) | 5:06 |
| 13 | Liszt/Grainger: Hungarian Fantasy | 15:41 |

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Joachim Carr, Piano **3** **13**

Hans Knut Sveen, Organ **12**

Royal Norwegian Navy Band

Bjarte Engeset

A detailed track list, recording information and publisher credits can be found on page 2 of the booklet.

Cover portrait of Grainger (1903) by Ernest Thesiger (1871–1961) (courtesy of the Estate of George Percy Grainger)



Percy Grainger admired the expressive intensity of the wind band and considered it a more suitable medium for the transcription of early music – such as the Bach and Ferrabosco pieces heard here – than the symphony orchestra. In this second volume of his music for wind ensemble (Volume 1 is on 8.573679) there are further examples from the *23 Chosen Gems for Winds*, full of his unique elastic scoring, as well as two versions of the *Irish Tune from County Derry*, one of his most beloved works, and a world premiere recording of Grainger’s arrangement of his friend Herman Sandby’s lovely *Intermezzo*.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
64:38