

MYSTERY COMPOSER (MC) CLUE

OCTOBER 2023 GROUP

This year's M.C. was not a child prodigy but, since his father was a professional musician, he grew up with music in the house. M.C. began studying piano as a child, later learning trumpet, trombone, and clarinet. He started writing music early, trying to orchestrate his own pieces as a teen. When he was 15, his family moved across country due to this father's career. He continued studying piano thinking he would become a concert pianist and studied composition privately. M.C. went to University briefly but was drafted into the Air Force where he served for 3 years.

After his military service he entered the Juilliard School of Music where he studied with famed teacher Rosina Lhevinne. He later said that at Juilliard he heard "players like John Browning and Van Cliburn around the place, who were also students of Rosina's, and I thought to myself, 'If that's the competition, I think I'd better be a composer!'"

He moved back home, became a studio musician and started composing. Very early on "I developed a habit of writing something every day, good or bad. It feels good to hold a pen or pencil in my hand and dirty up paper."

He is known especially for his lush symphonic style, expertly using the compositional technique of *leitmotif*. One of his leitmotifs has become the second most recognizable theme in Western Music following the opening theme to Beethoven's 5th Symphony.

Leitmotif:

A short, recurring musical phrase associated with a particular person, place, or idea. It can be a short melody, a chord progression or even a simply rhythm. Using a leitmotif can help a composer to relate a story without use of words or to add an extra level to an already present story.

Rules of M.C. Contest:

- All answers must be emailed; I will not respond to texts or phone calls
- **Middle & High School Students must do their own research**
- **Elementary** students may (and will probably need) parental help/guidance
- All answers must include the following:
 - Name, date of birth, date of death of M.C.
 - What part of the clue did you use to guide your research?
 - Resources used to discover identity of M.C. If Google is used, please include the url(s) of articles in your email to me.
 - Include the name of at least 2 compositions by M.C.

Detailed information regarding above rules as well as the August/Sept. clue may be found on the Studio website. Be sure to check out the information regarding periods of music. I strongly urge you to check it out (be sure to scroll through entire page):

<http://www.pullinpiano.com/2021-2022-mystery-composer-contest.html>

Baroque Period:	1600 - 1750
Classical Period:	1740 - 1830
Romantic Period:	1810 - 1910
Russian Keyboard:	1850 - 1975
Impressionist Period:	1880 - 1930
Contemporary Period:	1870 - today

Happy Research!