

works, but gave due attention to new ones: Stravinsky was represented, as was the American composer Carl Ruggles. "This program," wrote Fennell, "argues strongly against the old complaint leveled against wind instruments that there is no music written for them which is of sufficient interest to make anyone care to hear it performed." And thus the Eastman Wind Ensemble was born.

The growth of wind ensembles and wind music was also aided by Fennell's and the Eastman Wind Ensemble's impressive output of recordings. Raoul Camus, documenting Fennell's career for the New Grove Dictionary of American Music, observed that "Fennell's pioneering series of 24 recordings for Mercury brought about a reconsideration of the wind medium and established performance and literature models for the more than 20,000 wind ensembles that were subsequently established in American schools."

Fennell's innovations appear in retrospect to be part of a larger effort in the mid-20th century to establish a distinctive American musical sound and identity. It was during Fennell's years at Eastman that his colleague Howard Hanson established an annual symposium to foster new American music for orchestra -- a project that inspired a similar effort on Fennell's part, to elicit works for winds from American composers. Fennell definitely saw his wind ensemble project as a patriotic contribution to Western culture. "Granting the rich inheritance with which the American music heritage began [that is, the inheritance of the European musical tradition], it is not surprising that we finally have emerged as a people worthy of that legacy." In creating an ensemble that could variously serve an educational function, execute original and transcribed works from the Western canon, and foster the creation of new works (and, as evidenced by the widely ranging styles within subsequent wind repertoires, entirely new sonorities), Fennell helped define the character of American music, and the role of music in American society.



# Music of Percy Grainger

Eastman-Rochester Pops  
Frederick Fennell



Percy Grainger was known during his lifetime as a virtuoso pianist and arranger of popular English folk song. His primary contribution to music, however, lies in his prolific output as a composer of expert and highly original works. Grainger's early years were spent in Melbourne where he studied first with his mother, and later with Louis Pabst. From 1895-1899 he attended the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany, and then settled in London in 1901. The next 10 years or so were devoted to a combination of concert touring and folk song collection. Grainger's early reputation was as a brilliant and eccentric pianist, and it was this talent that not only provided his income for the rest of his life, but also brought him into contact with other composers. Grieg and Delius, in particular, had great influence on Grainger's development of a sympathy and sensitivity toward unique national and folk styles. In 1914, Grainger moved to New York, beginning a long career as a composer, arranger, collector of folk music, and educator; he became an American citizen in 1918. In 1925 and 1927 he collected and published over 200 Danish folk songs, and returned to Australia in 1924, 1926, and from 1934-1935 in order to establish a Grainger Museum at the University of Melbourne devoted to ethnomusicological research. His final years were spent completing and arranging his earlier works and trying to develop a workable form of his "free music" using primarily theremins, one of the earliest electronic instruments. The project remained incomplete, and Grainger died embittered and in relative obscurity, known only for a handful of light works that he referred to derogatorily as his "fripperies."

Early in his life, Grainger rejected the central European tradition of Western classical music, seeking instead a "democratic" music that was more closely related to natural sounds, speech, and world music. In his quest to assimilate as much unique musical culture as possible, Grainger became one of the first ethnomusicologists to use the wax cylinder phonograph in the collection and transcription of indigenous music. His arrangements of many of these are

among the best ever done, capturing not only the melodies and harmonies, but also the timbres, inflections, and performance styles of each individual piece. In his own compositions, Grainger experimented with nontraditional rhythms, forms, and instrumental combinations in an attempt to create what he called "free music." He also created a large body of more traditional works and arrangements intended for more popular consumption, motivated, no doubt, by his experience with the Edwardian music hall and later with the U.S. Army Band.

The growing number of serious compositions for wind ensemble, and the large number of institutionalized ensembles to play them, are in large part due to the efforts of Frederick Fennell. Though his career took him to the orchestral podiums of Cleveland, Boston, Miami, and elsewhere, it is his notoriety as a conductor of music for winds, his prolific recorded output, and his role as the founder of the Eastman Wind Ensemble that perhaps most strongly denote his career.

Fennell was born in Cleveland in 1914. After high school, he entered the Eastman School of Music, pursuing a degree in percussion performance from the only institution in the country to offer one at that time. Fennell became a fixture at Eastman, going on to receive a master's degree in 1939, and being hired in that same year to conduct several instrumental ensembles; he remained at Eastman until 1965. During his years there he transformed concert band into a multifaceted musical wind ensemble that could tap into the large body of long overlooked wind and brass concert music, and establishing a unique tradition and sonority for which new works could be created.

His ideas first took shape in 1951, when under his baton a group of woodwind, brass, and percussion players staged a concert featuring several works from composers as wide-ranging as Adrian Willaert, Orlando di Lasso, Giovanni Gabrieli, Mozart, and Beethoven. Fennell not only resurrected "lost"

# Music of Percy Grainger

## Eastman-Rochester Pops - Frederick Fennell

- 1 Country Gardens 2:11
- 2 Shepherd's Hey 2:03
- 3 Colonial Song 6:01
- 4 Children's March 4:10
- 5 Immovable Do 4:25
- 6 Mock Morris 3:35
- 7 Handel In The Strand 4:17
- 8 Irish Tune 3:32
- 9 Spoon River 4:02
- 10 My Robin Is To The Greenwood Gone 4:06
- 11 Molly On The Shore 4:15

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Engineer – C. R. Fine Producer – Wilma Cozart Recording Supervisor – Harold Lawrence

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