

Hello, young music enthusiasts, and welcome back to another exciting episode of Busy Kids Love Music. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano and your guide through the wonderful world of classical music. Today marks the grand finale of our three-part series on the influential American composer, Aaron Copland. We've explored his ballets, journeyed through the Wild West, and now, in this episode, we're turning our attention to a piece that's both powerful and patriotic—Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man."

"Fanfare for the Common Man" is a piece that resonates with the spirit of the people. Composed in 1942 during the midst of World War II, Copland intended this fanfare as a musical salute to the ordinary men and women who were contributing to the war effort. It's a celebration of the strength and resilience found in everyday citizens.

The story behind the creation of this piece is quite fascinating. Copland was inspired by a speech delivered by Vice President Henry A. Wallace, where he spoke of the dawning of the "Century of the Common Man." This phrase deeply resonated with Copland, and he set out to create a musical work that would embody the idea of common people coming together for a greater purpose. The ballet is divided into several sections, each depicting a different aspect of Billy's life. From the open prairies to the bustling saloons, Copland's score paints a picture of the American frontier. Listen to this scene of a gun battle. The higher pitched snare drum represents Billy, and the sheriff and his posse are represented by kettle drums.

Let's take a moment to appreciate the opening section of "Fanfare for the Common Man" and its bold, majestic tones.

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One of the remarkable aspects of this piece is Copland's use of brass and percussion instruments. The prominent use of timpani and trumpets creates a sense of grandeur, while the rhythmic intensity gives the fanfare a feeling of strength and unity.

As we delve deeper into the fanfare, it's important to note Copland's deliberate choice of title. By calling it "Fanfare for the Common Man," he emphasizes the idea that heroism and resilience can be found in the everyday person, not just in those with titles or positions of power. The piece is both uplifting and empowering, serving as a musical representation of the common man's ability to rise to extraordinary heights in challenging times.

This masterpiece has enjoyed continued popularity since it was first performed in 1943 by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. In 1994, the Chicago Blackhawks of the National Hockey League used it for part of their pre-game video introduction of the team. Another famous American composer, John Williams, partially based main themes of his score for the 1978 Superman film on Copland's fanfare. Can you hear the similarities in the opening notes of the Superman theme?

Fanfare for the Common Man has been used at many momentous events, including at the 2014 dedication of the 9/11 Museum in lower Manhattan and traditionally, on New Year's Eve when the ball is raised at Times Square.

Now that you're familiar with this famous piece of Copland's, you'll have to pay attention to moments in your own life experiences when you hear and see this work being performed. You might be surprised at how often it pops up!

With that, we conclude our three-part series on the incomparable Aaron Copland. From the Wild West to the stirring patriotism of "Fanfare for the Common Man," we've explored the diverse facets of this iconic composer's work. Thank you for joining me on this musical journey. I look forward to connecting with you again in 2 weeks when

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our next brand new episode of the Busy Kids Love Music podcast airs.
Bye for now!

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