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Hey there, Busy Kids! Welcome to episode 120 of the Busy Kids Love Music podcast, a podcast for music-loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, and before we get started today I just want to give you a quick heads up that spring enrollment for my online piano lesson programs – Busy Kids Do Piano and Busy Moms Do Piano – opens on May 6th. If you're interested in piano lessons for yourself or for a kiddo, you can join the waitlist for either of these programs at [busykidsdopiano.com/waitlist](https://busykidsdopiano.com/waitlist), and then you'll receive an e-mail the day we open for enrollment so you don't miss out. I'll pop the link to join the waitlist in the show notes as well.

Today we're kicking off a special 3-part composer series all about the incredible Sergei Prokofiev. In this episode, we'll learn about his life and musical contributions, and then we'll focus on a deeper exploration of some of his most famous works in the next 2 episodes in the series.

Sergei Prokofiev was a Russian composer, pianist, and conductor who lived from 1891 to 1953. Prokofiev was born in Ukraine and began his musical studies with his mother, an accomplished pianist, when he was 3 years old. He was a musical prodigy, composing his first piece at just five years old and an opera by the age of 9! Recognizing his son's exceptional musical abilities, Prokofiev's father enlisted the help of a renowned pianist and composer who became Prokofiev's mentor. Under this guidance, Prokofiev honed his skills as a pianist and composer, mastering complex compositions and developing a unique musical style that would set him apart as one of the most innovative composers of the 20th century.

In 1904, the 13-year old Prokofiev went to study at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory of music. He was the youngest student to ever be admitted, and younger than most of his classmates at the conservatory. Some students thought he was a bit strange and thought he acted like he knew everything about music. Some even called him eccentric, which means he did things differently than

most people. But you know what? Prokofiev didn't let that bother him. He kept being himself and working hard at his music, and guess what? He ended up becoming one of the most famous composers in the whole world!

Prokofiev didn't like the music of the early Russian composers but wanted to compose newer sounding music. He was always trying to push limits and shock his listeners and critics. When Prokofiev premiered his First Piano Concerto in 1912, audiences were surprised by its bold and daring sound. Some people thought it was too wild and dissonant, while others thought it was brilliant and ahead of its time. But Prokofiev didn't stop there. In 1913, he premiered his Second Piano Concerto – the piece you're listening to now – which was even more daring than the first! With its thundering chords and rapid-fire melodies, it caused quite a stir among listeners. According to reports, the audience left the performance saying things like, “The cats on the roof make better music!” What do you think as you listen to the music? Did it deserve such a scandalous reaction?

Prokofiev's first major success for the orchestra was the Scythian Suite, which we'll listen to now. The piece is quite colorful and intense, don't you think?

Do some of the passages in this piece make you feel a bit funny inside? Well, that's because of something called dissonance! Dissonance in music happens when two notes or chords don't quite fit together perfectly. It can make the music sound a little bit tense or even a little bit spooky! Prokofiev was a composer who loved to use dissonance in his music to create excitement and drama. He would mix together all sorts of different notes and chords that you wouldn't expect to hear together, and it would make his music sound really interesting and unique.

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Prokofiev left Russia and lived in the United States, Germany and Paris. During this time, he married Spanish singer Carolina Codina, and together, they had two sons.

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He was good friends with Stravinsky, another talented Russian composer, and a number of champion chess players, because Prokofiev wasn't just passionate about music – he was also passionate about playing chess! He composed operas, ballets, music for film, concertos, and so many other styles and forms of music. Prokofiev's music is bold, adventurous, and full of surprises, just like the man himself. He wasn't afraid to break the rules and try new things, and that's what makes his music so exciting to listen to.

If you head over to the show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/121](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/121), I've linked my curated playlist of many of Prokofiev's most famous songs for you to listen to. In our next two episodes of Busy Kids Love Music, we'll dive deeper into a few of these songs, so be sure you're subscribed to the podcast on your favorite listening platform so that you don't miss out. I'd also be grateful if you would rate and review the Busy Kids Love Music podcast – it helps more people find out about the podcast and join our musical community.

Until next time, keep listening to and loving music! I look forward to connecting with you again in two weeks when our next episode airs. Bye for now!