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Hi there Busy Kids and welcome to Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music-loving families. My name is Carly Seifert, I'm the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and I'm thrilled to have you joining me as we make musical discoveries together.

This episode is brought to you by The Ten News Studio. Want some news you can use? Stop by The Ten News studio and join hosts Ryan Willard and Pamela Kirkland every Wednesday. The Ten News Team covers everything from Ukraine and the Supreme Court to Minecraft and Pokemon, all in a bite-sized podcast for kids and their adults.

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March is Women's History Month, and here on the Busy Kids Love Music podcast, we love to highlight the accomplishments of female composers – who are often under-recognized and under-represented in the world of music. Today we're going to learn about Parisian-born child prodigy and composer Lili Boulanger.

Lili Boulanger was born in Paris, France in 1893, to a musical family and a musical city. Her father was a pianist and teacher at the Paris Conservatory, and her mother, an amateur singer. Her grandfather was a cellist and her grandmother was also a singer.

At the age of 2, a composer friend observed that Lili had perfect pitch, which means that she could name or sing a musical note without being given a reference tone. So what that might look like is, a person with perfect pitch would hear the bell of your bike and be able to tell you that it is a B. Also at the age of 2, Lili would

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contract bronchial pneumonia which would weaken her immune system for the rest of her life.

Lili Boulanger accompanied her ten-year-old sister Nadia to classes at the Paris Conservatory before she had even turned 5. She also attended classes on music theory, studied organ, sang and played violin, cello, piano and harp.

In 1912, Boulanger competed in the Prix de Rome, which was a French scholarship for arts students. Winners of the prestigious award would receive funds that allowed them the ability to stay in Rome for 3-5 years where they could study and be inspired. During her performance, however, she collapsed due to illness. But she didn't let this stop her. She returned in 1913 at the age of 19 and won the composition prize for the cantata that you're listening to now. She was the first woman in history to win the prize, and gained a contract with a music publisher as a result.

Lili completed several works in Italy after winning the Prix de Rome, but her failing health forced her to return home. She and her sister Nadia Boulanger, who would go on to become one of the leading teachers of composition in the 20th century, stayed in Paris for a time together and supported the efforts of French soldiers during World War I. She spent the last years of her life trying to complete an opera, and died at the young age of 24 from intestinal tuberculosis.

Boulanger was influenced by another French composer we have discussed previously on the podcast, Claude Debussy. She grew up during the time of post-Romantic style in music, where Symbolism and Impressionism was being explored by musicians and artists. Composers used uncommon scales such as the whole tone scale. Her music reflects the feelings of loneliness that were caused by her long-term health struggles. Do you hear those feelings as you listen to the music?

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In 1939, Lili's sister Nadia Boulanger created the Lili Boulanger Memorial Fund, with the objectives of helping Lili's music and memory to live on while also supporting talented musicians. I've put together a playlist on YouTube of some of Lili Boulanger's works, and you can find the link to that playlist on this episode's show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/92](https://www.buskidsdopiano.com/podcast/92). I'll also share there links to other podcast episodes about female musicians and composers for you to listen to during Women's History Month – or any other month! Again, you can find all this within the show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/92](https://www.buskidsdopiano.com/podcast/92).

Thanks so much for joining me today to learn about the musical contributions of Nadia Boulanger. I'm excited to connect with you for another brand new episode of Busy Kids Love Music in 2 weeks. Bye for now!