

QUAVER REPORT



Great Composers of the Impressionist Period

Claude Debussy



HIS LIFE AND MUSIC

- Born August 22, 1862 in France and died of cancer March 25, 1918 in Paris.
- Two of Debussy's most famous works were *Claire de Lune* and *La Mer*.
- He entered the Paris Conservatory at age 10 where he studied composition and piano.
- Debussy was always using unusual chords that his teachers didn't like. He experimented with sounds and timbres.
- He loved Javanese Gamelan music, which he tried to incorporate into his music.
- Debussy used a special scale called the **whole tone** scale.

FUN FACTS

- He spent two years in Russia teaching the children of Nadia Von Meck.
- During his funeral, the Germans bombed his coffin.
- He was very argumentative.
- He had only one daughter he called Chou Chou. Debussy wrote some music for her called *Children's Corner*, which was played as exercises to strengthen her fingers.

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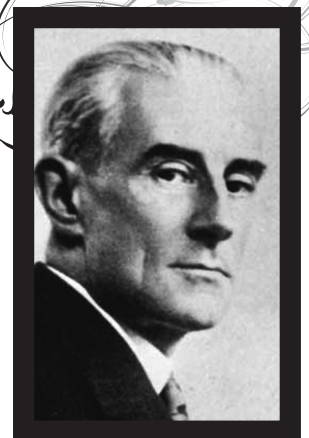
Joseph-Maurice Ravel

HIS LIFE AND MUSIC

- Born March 7, 1875 in an area of France near the border with Spain and died December 28, 1937 in Paris, France after a brain operation.
- Ravel never married. He is quoted as saying, "*The only love affair I have ever had was with music.*"
- Ravel is perhaps known best for his orchestral work *Boléro* (1928) which he considered trivial.
- Ravel's estate earns more royalties than that of any other French musician.

FUN FACTS

- Ravel served as a truck driver during World War I.
- Oxford University in England awarded him an honorary degree of Doctor of Music.



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More about the Impressionist Period...

- This was different from Romantic music in that it tried to create atmospheres and soundscapes or sound worlds.
- It was much more dissonant; some of the notes seemed to clash.
- Impressionist composers used different sounding scales, such as the whole tone scale (it sounds dreamy when played).
- It broke away from forms and tried to paint pictures with music; it ran parallel with Impressionist art.
- Impressionist composers favored short pieces such as the nocturne, arabesque, and prelude.



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