

## Pieces to Know (so far)

- Puccini, “Che gelida manina,” *La Bohème*
- Puccini, “Mi chiamano Mimì,” *La Bohème*
- Vivaldi, “Summer” Concerto, mvt. 3
- Tchaikovsky, Piano Concerto in B-flat minor, mvt. 1 introduction



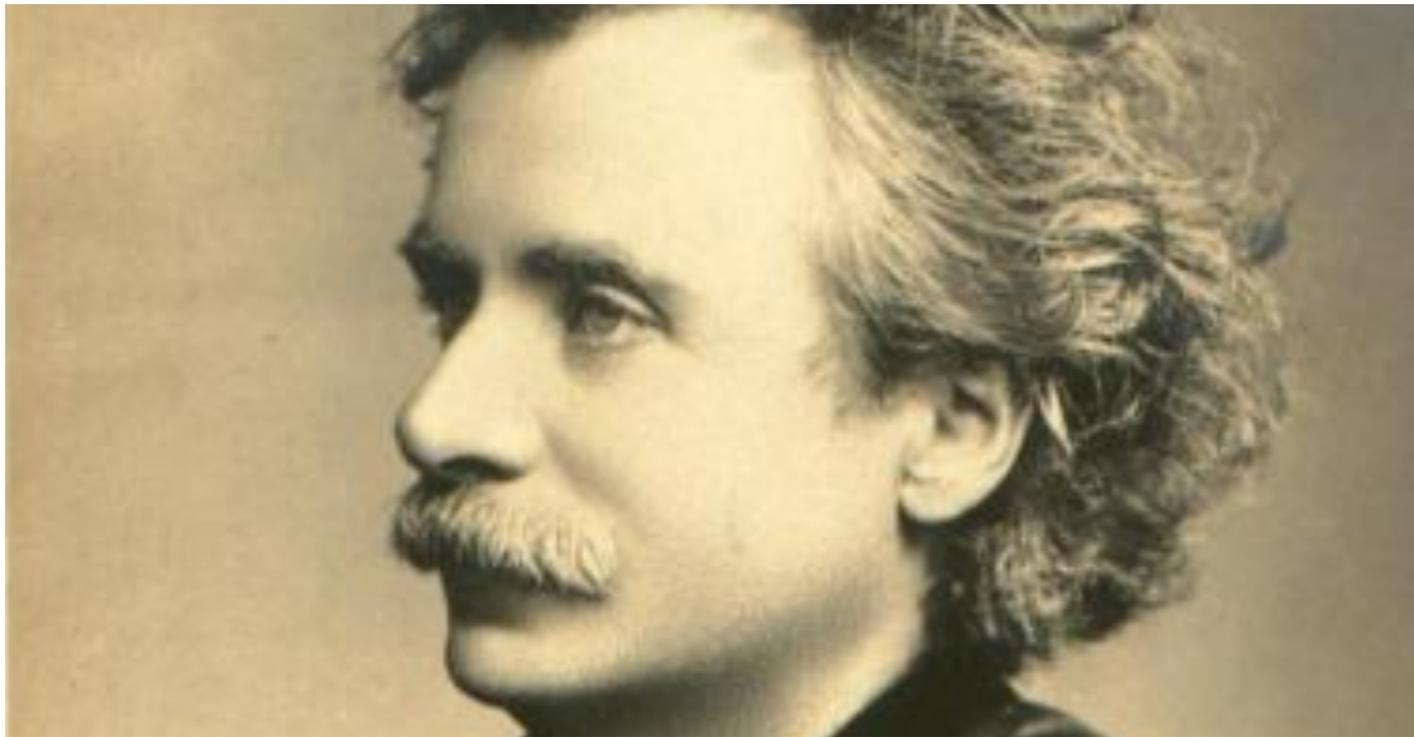
**NATURE**

OUT of DOORS with  
CLASSICAL MUSIC

# Nature in Classical Music

- Landscape, Seascape
- Mountains, Plains
- Gardens

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)  
“Morning Mood”



# Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

## “Morning Mood”

- **Norwegian** composer
- One of the most famous of Romantic-era composers
- Incorporated **Norwegian folk music** into his compositions, many of which are on Norwegian subject matter
- **“Nationalist”** composer

# Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

## “Morning Mood”

- In 1874-76, Grieg writes incidental music for Henrik Ibsen’s play **Peer Gynt** (1867)
- **Peer Gynt** loosely based on Norwegian fairy tale *Per Gynt*, tracing the life of the title character Peer Gynt
- Blends **realistic scenes with fantasy** and the supernatural
- The dramatic action—moving through many places and times—was **unstageable** at the time

# Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

## “Morning Mood”

- “**Morning Mood**” depicts the rising sun in Act IV, scene 4 of the play
- Peer has been abandoned by his companions while he was sleeping.



Norwegian fjord

# Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

## “Morning Mood”

- Peer has been abandoned in the **Moroccan desert** by his companions while he was sleeping.
- Represents, “**A grove of palm and acacia trees at dawn.**”



Moroccan desert



Edvard Grieg, "Morning Mood," *Peer Gynt Suite*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)  
“Clair de Lune” [Moonlight]



# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

- Part of a piano suite, *Suite Bergamasque*
- Begun in 1890, but not finished until 1905

# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

- Debussy often considered an **“impressionist”** composer, similar to the impressionist painters, such as **Monet**

# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

- The “impressionist” painters were so-called after **Claude Monet** (1840-1926) painting *Impression, Sunrise*



Claude Monet, *Impression, Sunrise* (1872)

# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

The Impressionist painters, instead of trying to realistically, attempted to give an **impression** of the subject that they were painting, often with visible brushstrokes

Many listeners felt that Debussy was trying to do the same **with music**

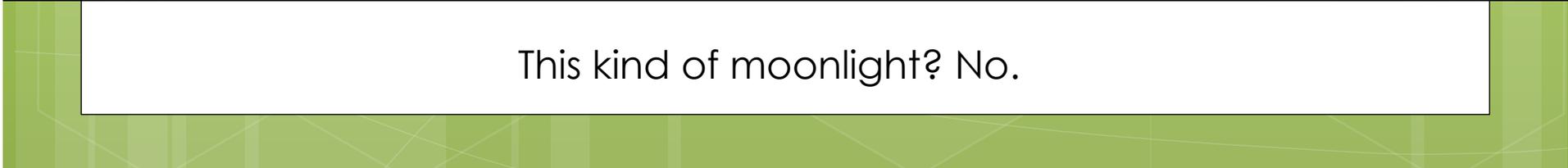
# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

- **Suite Bergamasque** is in four movements:
  - **Prélude** [introductory piece]
  - **Menuet** [Baroque dance]
  - **Clair de lune** [Moonlight]
  - **Passepied** [Baroque dance]



This kind of moonlight? No.



# Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

## “Clair de lune”

- *Suite Bergamasque* is was inspired by the poetry of **Paul Verlaine**
- Debussy inspired by the **symbolist poets** (**not** the impressionist painters)

Paul Verlaine, Clair de lune (1869)

Votre âme est un paysage choisi  
Que vont charmant **masques et bergamasques**  
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi  
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur  
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune  
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur  
Et leur chanson se mêle au **clair de lune**,

Au calme **clair de lune** triste et beau,  
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres  
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,  
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

Your soul is a chosen landscape  
Where charming **masqueraders and bergamaskers** go  
Playing the lute and dancing and almost  
Sad beneath their fanciful disguises.

All sing in a minor key  
Of victorious love and the opportune life,  
They do not seem to believe in their happiness  
And their song mingles with **the moonlight**,

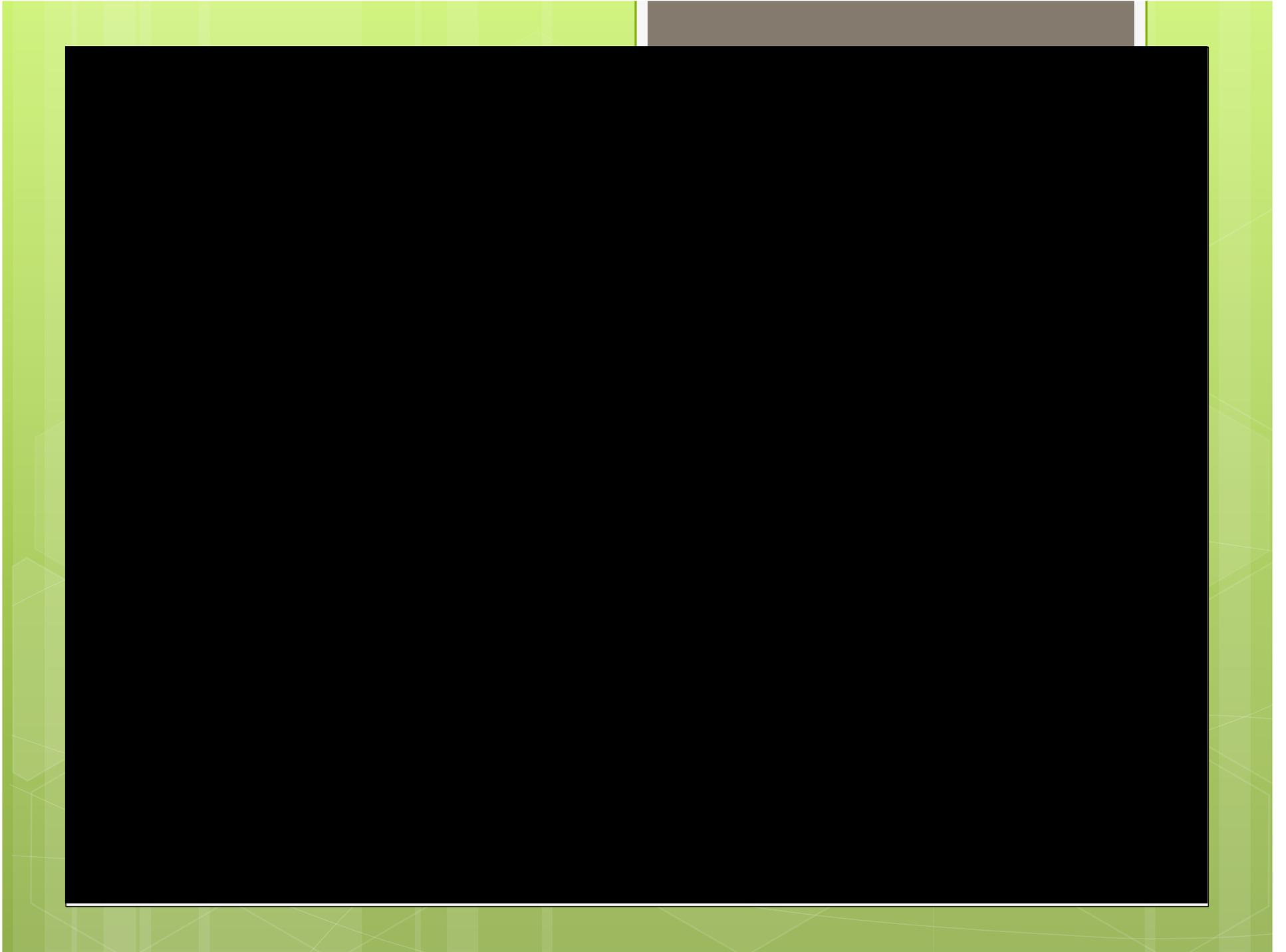
With the still **moonlight**, sad and beautiful,  
That sets the birds dreaming in the trees  
And the fountains sobbing in ecstasy,  
The tall slender fountains among marble statues.

# Claude Debussy

## “Clair de lune”

- Verlaine inspired by the paintings of **Antoine Watteau** (1684-1721)





# JOAQUIN RODRIGO



# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- Twentieth-Century Spanish Composer
- Born in Valencia
- Became blind from diphtheria at 3 years old
- Wrote his compositions in Braille
- Studied at the École Normale de Musique in Paris with Paul Dukas (*The Sorcerer's Apprentice*)
- Becomes best-known for his music for the guitar (though he does not play it very well)

# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- Writes the *Concierto de Aranjuez* in Paris in 1939, during the beginnings of WW II
- Written for guitar and full orchestra, in the conventional 3 movements: Fast, Slow, Fast

# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- Inspired by the gardens of the Palacio Real de Aranjuez, built by Phillip II in the 1500s
- The concerto attempts to transport the listener, both to the gardens and to the past
- Many people have assumed that the piece is an “old” piece, and Rodrigo had many problems with copyright infringement during his lifetime



# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- Concerto was Premiered in Barcelona in November of 1940
- Recorded in 1947 on 78 rpm records
- In 1991 Rodrigo was named Marqués de los Jardines de Aranjuez by King Juan Carlos I of Spain

# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- The slow second movement, is the best-known section
- Based on a melody first played by the English Horn, and taken up by the guitar and the rest of the orchestra

# JOAQUIN RODRIGO

## (1901-1999)

- The slow second movement, is the best-known section
- Based on a melody first played by the English Horn, and taken up by the guitar and the rest of the orchestra
- Rodrigo's wife Victoria wrote that the movement was inspired by their happy honeymoon, and was a response to the miscarriage of her first pregnancy





Bedřich  
Smetana  
“Vlatava”  
[The Moldau]

# Bedřich Smetana

- *The Moldau* depicts water coursing along the river, from its source until it joins another river
- As such, the piece is a kind of “travelogue” that takes the listener through the Czech landscape, from the mountains to the capital, Prague [Praha]

# The Moldau River



# The Moldau River



Prague

# Bedřich Smetana

- Smetana wrote **a short description** of the piece—a **“program”**—to let the listener know what the composer had in mind in writing the piece
- Most **tone poems** are accompanied by such programs.

# The Moldau River

**The composition describes the course of the Moldau:**

**00:00** Starting from **the two small springs**, the cold and warm Moldau, (Woodwinds, pizzicato strings)

**00:56:** To the unification of both streams into a **single current**,

(String scales, Czech melody in violins) First in minor mode **(1:00)** then in the major mode **(1:52)**

**(2:42)** The course of the Moldau **through woods and meadows**,

Fanfares in trumpets and horns

**(3:36)** Through landscapes where a **farmer's wedding** is celebrated, (String orchestra playing a Czech dance, plus woodwinds) Coda with woodwinds (Clarinets)

# The Moldau River

**(5:08)** The **round dance of the mermaids** in the night's moonshine (bassoon transition, woodwind “ripples”, melody in high strings = harp)

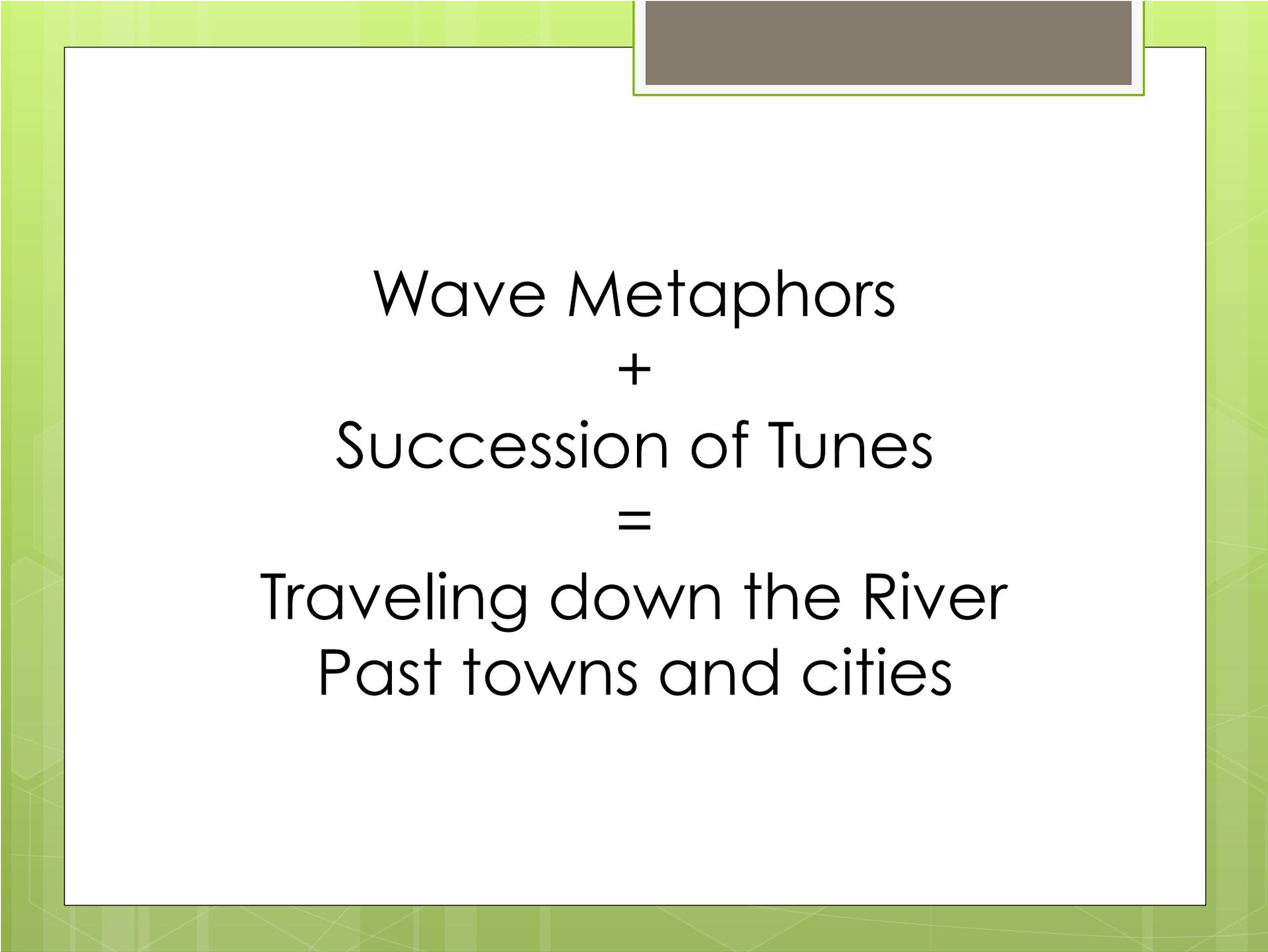
**(7:21)** Transition

**(7:32)** On the nearby rocks loom **proud castles, palaces and ruins** aloft. (Return to “Moldau” melody in violins)

**(8:24)** The Moldau swirls into the **St. John's Rapids** (fanfares in brass section, agitated tremelo strings + piccolo and cymbals)

**(9:35)** Then it widens and flows toward **Prague**, past the Vyšehrad [fort] (Major mode version of “Moldau” melody in strings with entire orchestra)

**(10:54)** And then majestically vanishes into the distance, ending at the **Elbe**.



Wave Metaphors  
+  
Succession of Tunes  
=  
Traveling down the River  
Past towns and cities



2 small springs; a single current; woods and meadows; a farmer's wedding; mermaids; castles and ruins; St. John's rapids; Prague

# Pieces to Know

- Edvard Grieg, “*Morning Mood*,” *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1* (Track, 79, *The 99 Most Essential Pieces of Classical Music*)
- Claude Debussy, “*Claire de lune*,” *Suite Bergamasque* (Track 34, *The 99 Most Essential Pieces of Classical Music*)
- Joaquin Rodrigo, *Concierto de Aranjuez, mvt. 2*, (Track 54, *The 99 Most Essential Pieces of Classical Music*)
- Bedrich Smetana, *The Moldau* [Vlatava], (Track 72, *The 99 Most Essential Pieces of Classical Music*)

# Terms to Know

- Nationalist composer
- Henrik Ibsen, *Peer Gynt*
- Suite Bergamasque
- Impressionism (Claude Monet, painter)
- Symbolism (Paul Verlaine, poet)
- Antoine Watteau (painter)
- Palacio Real de Aranjuez
- Program