

# 005. Ravel: Bolero

Backgrounds of S. Radic

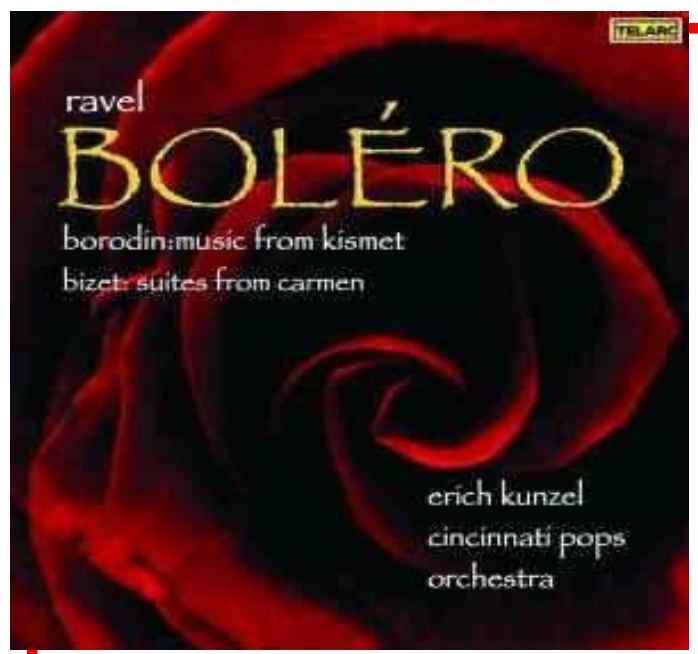
**Maurice Ravel** (1875-1937) was a French composer. He studied music at the Paris Conservatory as a pupil of Gabriel Fauré. He was strongly influenced by French Impressionism, but emerged from this direction and soon came up with his own style, which combines impressionistic timbres with clear lines of form - in the sense of the French baroque masters - and with elements of Basque-Spanish folk and dance music.

The dancer Ida Rubinstein had asked Ravel to create a piece of music for her in the form of a Spanish ballet. The "Boléro" was an instant success. Ravel remained unfamiliar with the popularity of the piece throughout his life, to which he would reply: "It's just a pity that the Boléro contains no music at all". The popular piece consists in its essence of a melody elaborated in several passages but constantly repeating itself, which is accompanied by a uniform rhythm typical of the Spanish bolero. The accompaniment develops towards the end of the piece to an increasing, hammering rhythm, and the melody also develops swelling to maximum volume through the addition of further instruments.

In Germany, the melody became particularly well-known through the campaign broadcast at the end of the 1980s to draw attention to the risks of AIDS. In the musical increase of the Boléro (through the addition of further instruments), more and more people were brought into the picture during the campaign to signal how quickly the virus can spread.



Ravel am  
Klavier  
um 1930



The composition was composed between July and October 1928 and premiered on 22 November 1928 at the Paris Opera under Walther Straram and in the choreography of Bronislava Nijinska with the dancer Ida Rubinstein. Ravel conducted a concert performance on 11 January 1930, but the rapid popularity of his work remained alien to the composer throughout his life.

And yet, the "Bolero" is world-famous, much played and often sold. The basis of the piece is the continuous ostinato rhythm of the bolero, a Spanish dance:



The two melodies A and B change in the order AABBAABB... eight times each time. The tension is created by the instrumentation, i.e. the choice of instruments. More and more instruments are added, the music becomes more intensive and intense!

Ravel describes his work as follows: *"In 1928. . . composed a bolero for orchestra. It is a very moderate, always uniform dance, both in terms of melody, harmony and rhythm. This is constantly beaten through a drum. The only element of variety is the orchestral crescendo."*

Ravel-Bolero, (T=60)

The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. From top to bottom, the staves are: Bells (treble clef, 3/4 time), Piano (bass clef, 3/4 time), Guitar (bass clef, 3/4 time), Bass (bass clef, 3/4 time), and Drums (snare drum, 3/4 time). The score consists of two measures. The Bells part plays a melody of eighth notes. The Piano part features a bass line with triplets of eighth notes. The Guitar part plays a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets of eighth notes. The Bass part plays a simple bass line. The Drums part plays a snare drum pattern with triplets of eighth notes.

Programming instruction

**WERSI-PEGASUS.** The "R-MID" file is the GM version, which sounds good in any GM device (call GM Setup in the peg. before). Transfer process: The file is first loaded into the 16 track sequence. With the GM "R" file, the channels must be changed to the Pegasus style channels: ACC1=1, BASS=2, ACC2=3, ACC3=4, ACC4=5, ACC+=6, DRM+=7 and DRUM=8 Caution, the ascending tracks (1-8) must be kept and all GM Prog. change controls must be deleted. If an ACC channel is missing, it remains empty (can be supplemented by custom programming in the style editor). Then a corresponding main slot with identical clock numbers is initialized in the style editor. Now the complete MID style is buffered in the 16-track sequence via "Copy to buffer" and then automatically transferred to the style editor channels in the style editor via "Ins.All". Now you only have to enter the Pegasus banks with the corresponding instruments according to the list and adjust the volume if necessary (volume recommendation: DRUM/BASS=110, GIT.=60). If you have any problems, try the BRIEFDIALOG in subscription distance learning.