Aaron Copland: Fourth in a series about composers of music performed by Leo Kan

[Aaron Copland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Copland) was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1900. His older sister gave him his first piano lessons, and when he was sixteen, he began studying with American composer and pianist Rubin Goldmark. In 1920, he left New York to study classical music in France with the famed pedagogue Nadia Boulanger.

While in France, Copland wrote his “Symphony for Organ and Orchestra”, “Music for the Theater” (a suite for small orchestra), and the jazz-influenced “Piano Concerto”. Later in his career, Copland composed widely for ballet and for the movies, including the movie “Of Mice and Men” in 1939 and choreographer Agnes DeMille’s “Rodeo” in 1942. Copland's "Appalachian Spring", initally conceived as a ballet then re-arranged into an orchestral suite, earned him the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 1945.

From the 1950s through the 1960s, Copland shifted his focus from composing to conducting worldwide. After conducting his last concert in 1983, he turned to teaching, and to writing articles, essays, and books about music.

Copland died in New York in 1990, after becoming one of the twentieth century’s most important musical figures and forging a uniquely American harmonic style.

About the Author:

Leo Kan has a substantial background in music education and classical music, and has performed Copland’s Sonata for Violin and Piano, Three Moods and other pieces.