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The legacy left by Percy Grainger is that not only of his innovative compositional styles, but also that of his role as a "music-activator in a changing world."[1] By diligently seeking out, listening to, and recording the songs of often forgotten folksingers, Grainger gave a voice to those who society failed to acknowledge. Through the examination of one of his most well-known works, *Lincolnshire Posy,* it will be shown that the encouragement of musical development in students of all ages can be beneficial to their understanding of the world around them while equipping them to then impart their knowledge to others.

Grainger's interest and talent in music was nurtured by his mother from a young age. After his début as a pianist in Melbourne, Australia at the age 12, Grainger spent six years studying at the Hock Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany. His professors, a small group of fellow composition and theory students, known as the Frankfurt Group, and the writings of poets like Kipling and Whitman influenced the development of his compositional style. Soon after, Grainger moved to London where he made a career for himself as a concert pianist and private teacher from 1901 to 1914.[2] It was during these years that he would come to appreciate the art of folk singing and develop his love of ethnomusicology.

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1. Wilfrid Mellers, *Percy Grainger* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1992.), 121.

2. Malcolm Gillies and David Pear, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* second edition, ed. by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001), 269.

After attending a lecture by Lucy Broadwood, the secretary of the English Folk-Song Society, in March of 1905, Grainger became enamored with this dying art form.[3] Beginning that same year and continuing through the next, Grainger and Broadwood set out to collect folk songs on their tour of the northern English countryside. Grainger believed that folk music found its way into the hearts of the general public, who he considered "less erudite musicians," only after it had been "'simplified' (generally in the process of notation by well-meaning collectors ignorant of those more ornate subtleties of our notation alone fitted for the task) out of all resemblance to its original self."[4] In efforts to prevent this occurrence from happening in his own work, Grainger recorded the tunes he collected with the use of the most modern technology available, a wax cylinder phonograph.[5] This method allowed Grainger to listen to the tunes repeatedly after the initial performance, preserving the "habits, dialect pronunciations, and personal idiosyncrasies" of the individual singers in his own notations.[6] Although Grainger made many sketches and arrangements of these tunes in the years that followed, his true skill as a composer would not be widely realized until some thirty years later when he set six of these folks songs for wind band in his composition of *Lincolnshire Posy.*

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3. Stephen Lloyd, "Grainger 'In a Nutshell'," in *The Percy Grainger Companion,* ed. Lewis Foreman (London: Thames Publishing, 1981), 18-19.

4. Graham Freeman, "'That Chief Undercurrent of My Mind': Percy Grainger and the Aesthetics of English Folk Song," in *Folk Music Journal* 9, no. 4 (2009): 591.

5. Thomas C. Slattery, *Percy Grainger: the Inveterate Innovator* (Evanston: The Instrumentalist Co., 1974), 156.

6. Richard Franko Goldman, *The Band's Music* (New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1938), 208-9.

At the onset of World War I, Grainger moved to the United States where he became a bandsman in the US Army. Having made a name for himself during this time with his composition of *Children's March: Over the Hills and Far Away,* and because of relationships made with many of the bandmasters and officers, Grainger was invited by the American Bandmasters Association to compose a new, original work for a "Monster Concert" on March 7, 1937 during their eighth annual convention in Milwaukee.[7] This "Monster concert," lasting almost two and a half hours, was performed for over 7,000 people and contained seventeen works. Eight of these works were being performed for the first time, two of which were by Grainger.[8] Reviews of this first performance of *Lincolnshire Posy* were quite harsh. One reason as to why this could have been is that Grainger was only allowed a mere 84 minutes to rehearse this piece with the Milwaukee Symphonic Band. The first performance resulted in being that of only three movements. The fourth movement had yet to be composed, and the remaining two movements proved too difficult for the ensemble with their limited rehearsal time. The world premiere of *Lincolnshire Posy* in its entirety came on May 29 of the same year by the Band of the Ernest Williams Schools of Music.[9] The public did not consider these first performances a "success" not due to their lack of musical appreciation, but because there is so much depth to this work that understanding it after simply one hearing is quite a feat.

Although this suite contains a plethora of intricate musical innovations, the way in which Grainger was able to preserve the folk song at the heart of each movement is what makes

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7. Robert J. Garofalo, *Folk Songs and Dances In* Lincolnshire Posy *by Percy Grainger* (Silver Springs: Whirlwind Music Publications, 2008), 2.

8. Ibid., 14.

9. Ibid., 14-16.

Lincolnshire Posy more than just a challenging staple of band literature. H.G. Wells wrote in a letter to Grainger, “You are trying to do a more difficult thing than record folksongs, you are trying to record life.”[10] This is because Grainger believed that “the folk were artists and the entirety of their lives was their art-work.”[11] Each movement was created to be a “musical portrait of the singer who sang the underlying melody.”[12] Irregular rhythms, tempo fluctuations, and slight variations in style and articulations between verses were all intentionally maintained in Grainger’s settings of these six folk songs in order to focus the listener and performer’s attention on the uniqueness of the story told by the original recorded performances three decades earlier. Grainger treated these folk songs as “expressions of the art in the lives of those who sang them.”[13]

In the program notes of this piece, Grainger includes the history of each tune with a brief biography of each singer and the circumstances of the collection and recording of each tune.[14] The correlation between each artist and the folk song that they sang for Grainger is intriguing. The first movement, “Lisbon,” is a sailor’s song that was sung for Grainger by Mr. Deane of Hibbaldstowe. During the first recording of the tune, Mr. Deane began to cry, as the singing of it

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10. Nicole J. Barber, in *A Source Guide to the Music of Percy Grainger,* ed. Thomas P. Lewis (White Plains: Pro/Am Music Resources, Inc., 1991), 46.

11. Graham Freeman, “‘That Chief Undercurrent of My Mind’: Percy Grainger and the Aesthetics of English Folk Song,” in *Folk Music Journal* 9, no. 4 (2009): 591.

12. Thomas C. Slattery, “Music for Wind Instruments,” in *The Percy Grainger Companion,* ed. Lewis Foreman (London: Thames Publishing, 1981), 108.

13. Bob Thompson, in *A Source Guide to the Music of Percy Grainger,* ed. Thomas P. Lewis (White Plains: Pro/Am Music Resources, Inc., 1991), 46.

14. Thomas C. Slattery, *Percy Grainger: the Inveterate Innovator* (Evanston: The Instrumentalist Co., 1974), 157.

brought back too many memories. Grainger returned a year later and played recordings of other folk songs he had collected in hopes of convincing Mr. Deane to sing for him. Sure enough, Mr. Deane, on his hospital bed, agreed to sing the tune for Grainger, as the hearing of others had touched his soul. Grainger wrote that the singing of this song brought comfort to Mr. Deane.[15] When Grainger set this tune for band, he provided variations around the tune, in accompanying voices and countermelody, rather than varying the tune itself.[16] This may have been Grainger's way of signifying that the tune sung by Mr. Deane was a work of art that required no alterations. Grainger kept the tune true to itself as Mr. Deane had remained true to himself.

Mr. George Goulderthorpe, the singer of "Horkstow Grange," was an older gentleman whose manners made up for his less than tidy appearance. Though he was poor and had seen tragedy in his day, Mr. Goulderthorpe exemplified a gentle heart. The song he sang was of "The Miser and his Man—a local Tragedy," that told the story of a poor worker who had a falling out with his employer.[17] Mr. Goulderthorpe probably learned this ballad during his days working in the rural countryside of Lincolnshire.

Grainger considered Mr. Joseph Taylor, the singer of the third movement, "Rufford Park Poachers," as one of the most talented folk singers he had ever met. Mr. Taylor differed from most folk singers as he was not illiterate or socially backward. He was a retired woodman and carpenter who was proud to be known for his folksinging tradition by many in his family and

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15. Robert J. Garofalo, *Folk Songs and Dances In* Lincolnshire Posy *by Percy Grainger* (Silver Springs: Whirlwind Music Publications, 2008), 42.

16. Frederick Fennell, "Basic Band Repertory: Lincolnshire Posy Part I (movements 1 and 2 of 6)." *The Instrumentalist* 34, no. 10 (1980): 44.

17. Robert J. Garofalo, *Folk Songs and Dances In* Lincolnshire Posy *by Percy Grainger* (Silver Springs: Whirlwind Music Publications, 2008), 44.

village.[18] Although the true story told in “Rufford Park Poachers” is of the killing of the keeper of the estate, it is also a story of common men, poachers, making a stand for themselves in a society barred by social classes. The poachers and Mr. Taylor both exhibited pride in their lines of work and were not ashamed of it.

Little is known about Mrs. Thompson, the singer of “The Brisk Young Sailor (who returned to wed his True Love),” but Grainger did make note that she and her husband had moved to the region from Liverpool, which is a large port town.[19] It is then fitting that Mrs. Thompson would sing a love song about a sailor. As in the first movement of the suite, Grainger relied on “variations around the tune, rather than on it.”[20]

“Lord Melbourne” is a “genuine war song” about General John Churchill during the War of Spanish Succession. Mr. George Wray, who sang this song to Grainger in 1906, was eighty years old at the time. Despite his sharp memory and love of dancing, there was no sense of strict rhythm in his three recordings of the tune for Grainger. Mr. Wray believed that singing in church had destroyed folksinging. He sang with a freeness and joy that came through in each performance with his added “nonsense syllables” and “queer hollow vowel-sounds.”[21] Grainger believed that creating a “so called ‘normal’ version of the tune” would have been “so poverty-

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18. Ibid., 45.

19. Ibid., 46.

20. Frederick Fennell, “Basic Band Repertory: Lincolnshire Posy Part I (movements 1 and 2 of 6).” *The Instrumentalist* 34, no. 10 (1980): 44.

21. Robert J. Garofalo, *Folk Songs and Dances In* Lincolnshire Posy *by Percy Grainger* (Silver Springs: Whirlwind Music Publications, 2008), 46-7.

stricken."[22] As a result of Grainger wanting to maintain the elements that brought such richness to the tune, he used irregular time signatures and passages in free time in his setting to portray the originality of Mr. Wray's performance.

The sixth and final movement of this suite for band is "The Lost Lady Found," a real dance-song "from the days when voices, rather than instruments, held the village dancers together." Miss Broadwood recorded Mrs. Hill, an old family nurse, singing this song that she had learned as a child from her old cook.[23] The intended aural tradition of folksinging can be seen here as this tune maintained its strong dance meter of 3/4 as it was passed down by at least three generations. The lyrics of this tune tell of a young maid who is kidnapped by three gypsies, how her uncle is wrongfully convicted of murdering her, and of her rescue by a young squire who brings her back to England just in time to free her uncle from being hanged.[24]

The variety of not only the lyrics and historical context behind each folk song, but also that of the artists of whom Grainger and Broadwood collected these folk songs is what makes *Lincolnshire Posy* so unique. Grainger took on an enormous and somewhat risky task when he chose to compose a piece that would showcase these "Kings and Queens of Song."[25] Free of the "shackles sometimes forged in conservatories and opera houses," these artists, combined with Grainger's ability of inserting their "individuality" and "unfettered flights of creative fancy" into

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22. Peter Pears, in *A Source Guide to the Music of Percy Grainger,* ed. Thomas P. Lewis (White Plains: Pro/Am Music Resources, Inc., 1991), 48.

23. Robert J. Garofalo, *Folk Songs and Dances In* Lincolnshire Posy *by Percy Grainger* (Silver Springs: Whirlwind Music Publications, 2008), 48.

24. Ibid., 48.

25. Frederick Fennell, "Basic Band Repertory: Lincolnshire Posy Part I (movements 1 and 2 of 6)." *The Instrumentalist* 34, no. 10 (1980): 42.

each movement, proved to audiences that the wind band had depth and potential of conveying life through purely instrumental music.[26]

When pondering the need of appreciation for folk songs, consider the words of Steve Reich, a prominent twentieth-century composer who described the "victorious on-march of our ruthless Western civilization" during it's "destructively intolerant" colonial phase as a "distressing spectacle of the gentle but complex native arts wilting before its irresistible simplicity."[27] By giving aesthetic value to these tunes that did not conform to the Western art tradition, Grainger sought out to challenge the definition of "popular" music.[28] Everyone has a different perception of "popular" music based on their social class and their experience of this music, whether they be the composer, performer, or listener.[29] Since emotions "often dictate what we value," the way a piece of music makes you feel holds great power in determining your appreciation for that music.[30] Grainger believed that the fusion of musical styles of the past with those of the present could only be accomplished by "lifting the veil of ignorance" between older and newer "masterworks of tone."[31]

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26. Ibid., 42.

27. Wilfrid Mellers, *Percy Grainger* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1992.), 144.

28. Graham Freeman, "'That Chief Undercurrent of My Mind': Percy Grainger and the Aesthetics of English Folk Song," in *Folk Music Journal* 9, no. 4 (2009): 582.

29. Wilfrid Mellers, *Percy Grainger* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1992.), 21-22.

30. Kenneth H. Phillips, "Preserving Music Education in the 21st Century," in *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, no. 185 (2010): 89.

31. Percy Grainger, introduction to *The Band's Music*, (New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1938), xi.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the division of social classes stirred a desire within many youth to make something of themselves. Due to their efforts, many "younger kin of old folksingers" grew to despise their heritage of folksinging, as it revealed "social backwardness and illiteracy in their families."[32] These youth did not recognize that "the practitioners of art music were intelligent and often brilliant creative artists who made individual artistic choices about the music they performed."[33] Over a century later, society is still dealing with many of the same issues that dictate the value that is placed on people of different backgrounds. Religious beliefs, cultural preferences, race, and socioeconomic status are just a few barriers that must be broken down in order to view people from different walks of life as equals. Music educators can begin to break down these barriers and bridge this gap by "engaging students in a variety of music that taps into our common humanity" and by celebrating the development of musical knowledge in each student.[34]

Without exposing students to music that "stretches their imagination" and providing them with the knowledge necessary to understand a variety of music, how can they be expected to recognize the relevance of music in their lives?[35] Grainger wanted everyone to participate in ensemble music whether it be by playing the music or by developing a "genuine appreciation"

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32. Percy Grainger, in *A Source Guide to the Music of Percy Grainger,* ed. Thomas P. Lewis (White Plains: Pro/Am Music Resources, Inc., 1991), 197.

33. Graham Freeman, "'That Chief Undercurrent of My Mind': Percy Grainger and the Aesthetics of English Folk Song," in *Folk Music Journal* 9, no. 4 (2009): 590.

34. Peter Miksa, "The Future of Music Education: Continuing the Dialogue about Curricular Reform," in *Music Educators Journal* 99, no. 4 (2013): 49.

35. Ibid., 46.

for the talent involved.[36] Music educators "are responsible for helping to shape music culture as much as reflect it, and the repertoire we choose must be suited to both goals."[37] Incorporating the use of folk songs into curriculum at all levels of music education can be beneficial. If students are exposed to a variety of music during their elementary years, and are taught to acknowledge the value behind the music, then they will be better equipped "to lead meaningful musical lives."[38] If directors of students involved in musical ensembles at the secondary level take the time and encourage their students to understand the historical context and background of the composer and piece they are performing, the students will be able to bring more depth to the music through their individual performances and interpretations of the piece.

Grainger was a firm believer that music would someday become a "universal language" if society broadened their musical vision to more that just "the output of 4 European countries between 1700 and 1900." He thought that "the first step in the right direction" was "to view the music of all peoples and periods without prejudice of any kind, and to strive to put the world's known and available best music into circulation."[39] By doing so, Grainger hoped that people's new found awareness of the music of the world would help give rise to human understanding.[40] He compared life to the themes of Bach's polyphonic music. Each theme being different from the

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36. Brian Fairfax, in *The Percy Grainger Companion*, ed. Lewis Foreman, (London: Thames Publishing, 198), 78.

37. Peter Miksa, "The Future of Music Education: Continuing the Dialogue about Curricular Reform," in *Music Educators Journal* 99, no. 4 (2013): 48.

38. Ibid., 47.

39. Wilfrid Mellers, *Percy Grainger* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1992.), 2.

40. Teresa Balough, in *'A Commonsense View of All Music': Reflections on Percy Grainger's contribution to ethnomusicology and music education,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 6.

rest and taking on a role in the composition, resulting in a "rich masterpiece—difficult of performance and execution, but unequaled in perfection of plan and soul-satisfying in concept."[41] In a music classroom, each student serves a role similar to that of one of these themes. They each have distinctive qualities that influence how they choose to perceive and create music.

Grainger described *Lincolnshire Posy* as his "bunch of musical wildflowers."[42] For him, these wildflowers were the musical portraits painted in each movement. By preserving the style that the folksingers used in telling the stories of these folk songs, Grainger was able to incorporate aspects of the folksingers' lives in his presentation of this suite. Viewing each student in a music classroom as a wildflower with their own story to tell, music educators can cultivate students through the teaching of appreciation, importance, and promotion of the arts in all aspects of life.

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41. Percy Grainger, in *A Source Guide to the Music of Percy Grainger,* ed. Thomas P. Lewis (White Plains: Pro/Am Music Resources, Inc., 1991), 12.

42. Malcolm Gillies and David Pear, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* second edition, ed. by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001), 270.