

'Arietta'

from *Lyric Pieces* Book 1

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Op. 12, No. 1

Poco Andante e sostenuto

p

Ped.

5

9

Ped. *

14

19

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pp

Ped. *

About Edvard Grieg...

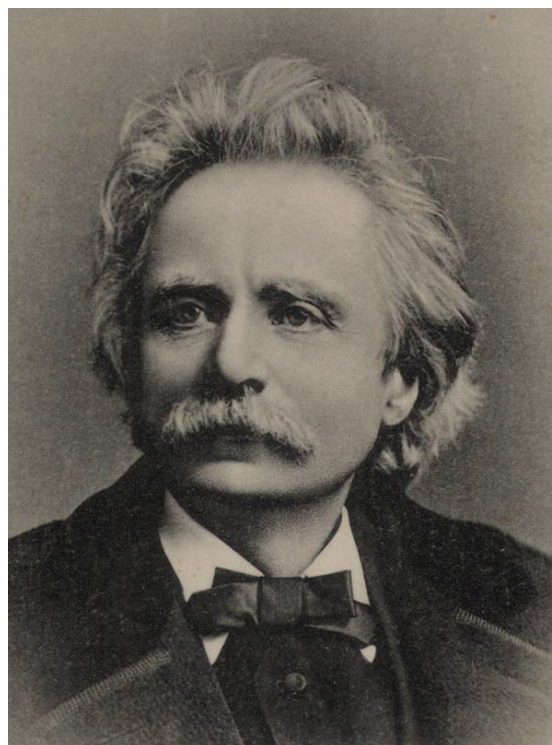
Edvard Grieg was born on 15 June 1843 in Bergen, a city that he stated later was the source from which 'my material has been drawn'.

Grieg's first piano lessons were given by his mother and he studied in Leipzig from 1858. He then moved to Copenhagen, where his nationalistic aspirations began.

On his return to Norway in 1866, he inaugurated a music academy in Christiania (Oslo). He also became acquainted with *Ældre og nyere Fjeldmelodier*, a collection of Norwegian folk music that he frequently returned to for inspiration.

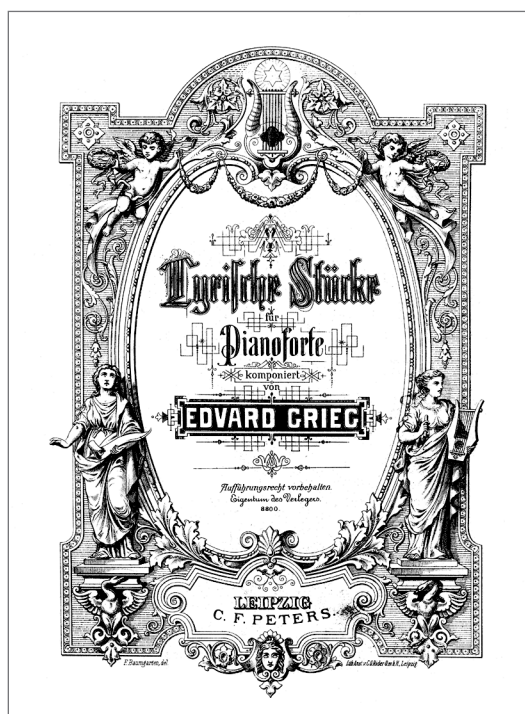
Grieg's reputation was bolstered by the support of Liszt and an exclusive contract with C. F. Peters gave him financial security. His numerous concert tours to Europe in the 1880s, and England in particular, also harboured success for Grieg, as he made devoted supporters of Frederick Delius and Percy Grainger.

By the turn of the century, Grieg's health was beginning to fail and his flow of composition ebbed. He was taken to Bergen hospital, where he died on 4 September 1907.



Edvard Grieg, 1880. Source: Bergen Public Library, Norway

Emily Kilpatrick



Edvard Grieg, *Klavierwerke, Band 1: Lyrische Stücke*, Leipzig: C. F. Peters (1902)

Lyric Pieces Book 1...

In 1867, Edvard Grieg completed what would become the first of ten volumes of *Lyric Pieces* (op. 12). They mark the beginning of the period in which Grieg sought to forge a distinctively Norwegian musical identity in his own music and for the nation as a whole. The suggestion that they were composed for pedagogical purposes, coinciding with Grieg's establishment of the music academy in Christiania, supports this.

The eight pieces which make up op. 12 are the shortest and simplest of all *Lyric Pieces*. The opening 'Arietta' has strong echoes of Schumann: Grieg was profoundly influenced by the older composer's piano writing and harmonic boldness. The mid-texture broken chords and the use of a single brief motif as the basis for the entire 'Arietta' are characteristic of many of Schumann's shorter pieces.

The publication of op. 12 gave the composer his first major commercial success, success that continued with the second volume and which encouraged him to continue the series.

Emily Kilpatrick