



Ottorino RESPIGHI

Fontana di Roma

Ottorino Respighi (9 July 1879– 18 April 1936) was an Italian violinist, composer and musicologist, best known for his three orchestral tone poems known as his Roman Trilogy: Fountains of Rome, Pines of Rome and Roman Festivals. His musicological interest in 16th, 17th and 18th century music led him to compose works based on the music of these periods. He also wrote several operas, the most famous being *La fiamma*. Born into an encouraging musical family, Respighi's father was his first piano and violin teacher. After finishing a diploma in violin performance in Bologna, in 1900, Respighi accepted the role of principal violist in the orchestra of the Russian Imperial Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia during its season of Italian opera. He found great influence as an operatic composer during this time, and it was there when he met Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, whose orchestrations he greatly admired. Respighi studied orchestration with the composer for five months. Respighi returned to Bologna to continue his studies in composition, which earned him a second diploma. In 1913, Respighi was appointed professor of composition at the Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia in Rome and held the post for the rest of his life.

In 1917, Respighi's international fame rose following multiple performances of the first of his orchestral tone poems, **Fountains of Rome**. The four movements of the work colourfully paint the image of four specific fountains in Rome at four different hours of the day. The Fountain of Valle Giulia at Dawn depicts a pastoral landscape of cattle passing and disappearing in the mists of the Roman countryside. A call from the horns proclaim the second movement, The Triton Fountain in the Morning, where troops of naiads and tritons unite in a frantic dance between the streams of water. The Trevi Fountain at Noon ushers in a triumphant theme presenting Neptune in his chariot drawn by seahorses, followed by a train of sirens, announcing his recent victory. As the sun descends into the horizon, The Villa Medici Fountain at Sunset portrays a peaceful and melancholic atmosphere of tolling bells and chirping birds as the music fades into the silence of the night.