

# EDVARD GRIEG

Born June 15, 1843, Bergen, Norway. Died September 4, 1907, Bergen, Norway.

## *Peer Gynt*

In the Hall of the Mountain King

Edward Grieg (1843-1907) began composing incidental music for Henrik Ibsen's stage play *Peer Gynt* in May 1874 and completed the score in September 1875.

*Peer Gynt* made Grieg famous. When he attended the play, he was applauded again and again throughout the evening for the music he had written for Ibsen's drama. Peer Gynt was a real person who lived around the end of the 1700's or the beginning of the 1800's. Ibsen's play follows him from young manhood to old age as he wanders in search of his innermost self. Grieg composed twenty-six numbers for the 1876 production, later arranging two concert suites of excerpts.

After diverse adventures, Peer finds himself in the Hall of the Mountain King, where the ruler of the trolls seeking vengeance on Peer for mistreating one of their maidens (the chorus cries: Kill him!). He is tortured by gnomes and sprites, who alternate their wild dances with deadly threats. He is rescued at the last moment by the sound of bells in the distance, which make the hall of the goblins collapse.

You will hear the music starting very softly and mysteriously, and then gradually getting louder and faster (*crescendo* and *accelerando*) until its dramatic finish.