

Aaron Copland (November 14, 1900 – December 2, 1990)

Aaron Copland was a renowned American composer, conductor, and teacher, celebrated for his contributions to American classical music. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Copland grew up in a family of Lithuanian Jewish descent and showed an early interest in music.

Copland studied at the Institute of Musical Art (now the Juilliard School) and later with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, which profoundly influenced his compositional style. He is best known for his distinctively American sound, characterized by its use of folk tunes, clear textures, and rhythmic vitality.

Key works by Copland include *Appalachian Spring* (1944), a ballet that incorporates folk melodies and evokes the American frontier spirit; *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), a stirring piece written in response to World War II; and *Rodeo* (1942), another ballet that draws on American Western themes. His music often reflects the ideals and landscapes of America, blending traditional classical forms with modernist techniques.

Copland also had a significant impact as a teacher and advocate for American music, influencing generations of composers and promoting the works of his contemporaries. He received numerous accolades throughout his career, including the Pulitzer Prize and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.