

These five dances are taken from Grieg's *Slåtter* (Norwegian peasant or folk dances): numbers 4, 14, 8, 6, and 5, respectively. The source for the music is Hardanger fiddle music. Typically this music uses two-bar motifs in organizing the musical structure. In this tradition, wedding music is quite common, and frequently used dance types are the *Springdans* (jumping dance), *Gangar* (walking dance) and *Halling* (men's dance). Grieg included comments with the score of his piano versions of the *Slåtter*:

"These Norwegian *Slåtter* ('*Slat'* is the usual Norwegian name for the peasant's dance), now for the first time brought before the public in their original form for the violin (or for the so-called Hardangerfiddle) and re-arranged for the piano, were written after an old gleeman in Telemarken. Those who can appreciate such music will be delighted at the originality, the blending of fine, soft gracefulness with sturdy almost uncouth power and untamed wildness as regards melody and particularly rhythm, contained in them. This music—which is handed down to us from an age when the culture of the Norwegian peasant was isolated in its solitary mountain valleys from the outer world, to which fact it owes its whole originality—bears the stamp of an imagination as daring in its flight as it is peculiar.

My object in arranging the music for the piano was to raise these works of the people to an artistic level, by giving them what I might call a style of musical concord, or bringing them under a system of harmony. Naturally, many of the little embellishments, characteristics of the peasant's fiddle and of their peculiar manner of bowing, cannot be reproduced on the piano, and had accordingly to be left out. On the other hand, by virtue of its manifold dynamic and rhythmic qualities, the piano affords the great advantage of enabling the harmony of repeated passages or parts. I have endeavored to make myself clear in the lines set forth, in fact to obtain a definite form.

The few passages in which I considered myself authorized as an artist, to add to, or work out the given motives, will easily be found, on comparing my arrangement with the original, written down by Johan Halvorsen, in a manner reliable even for research-work, and published by the same form.

The *Slåtter* sound a minor third higher when played on the peasant's fiddle; nevertheless, I have retained the key in which the original is written down, in order to obtain a fuller effect on the piano."

Other comments found in the collected works of Grieg give some information on these individual dances:

*"Halling from the Hill:* This 'Halling' is connected with the following legend: A man, by the name of Brynjulv Olson, had lost a bull. After searching for the animal in the mountains for several days, he became exhausted and fell asleep. He dreamed that he heard a wondrous strange song. Behind a hill he saw a beautiful maiden; she called to him and said, 'Yea! So shalt thou play on the fiddle, Brynjulv Olson, when thou returnest home to wife and child, and yonder, where the mountain disappear, wilt thou find the bull.' The Halling dances were acrobatic dances for men. Brynjulv Olson was the great-grandfather of Knut J. Dahle and one of the earliest Norwegian fiddlers to be known by name.

*Bridal Procession of the Goblins:* This piece, a figure dance subtitled *Gangar*, was handed down by Ola Mosafinn. According to the legend associated with it, a wedding procession of gnomes took place in Vossevangen, led by a tiny fiddler with a red cap who played this tune.

*Bridal March* (after 'The Miller'): 'The Miller' or 'The Miller's Lad' was the nickname given to Torgeir Augundson (1799 or 1801–1872), a renowned Hardanger fiddler. He is said to have played this march while hidden behind a boulder as the wedding procession of his beloved Kari passed

by.

*Walking Dance* (after 'The Miller'): Here is another piece, in this case a Gangar, ascribed to the fiddler Torgeir Augundson.

*Jumping Dance* (Prillar from the Parish of Os): This piece, a *Springdans*, was handed down by Knut Lurås (1782–1843), a virtuoso fiddler and 'rose painter' from Tinn in Telemark. He is said to have obtained the tune from the fiddler Jörn Hilme of Valdres or from other fiddlers of this region."

—Edvard Grieg

Armand Russell (born 1932, Seattle, Washington) completed the Bachelor of Arts and the Master of Arts degrees in music composition at the University of Washington where he studied with John Verrall and George McKay. He earned the doctorate in composition at the Eastman School of Music, studying with Bernard Rogers and Howard Hanson. As a virtuoso bass player, he played double bass in the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic and Civic Orchestras, the Boston Pops Tour Orchestra, and the Honolulu Symphony. During the summers, he was a Visiting Professor at the Eastman School of Music.

Russell joined the University of Hawaii music faculty in 1961 as Professor of Music Theory and Composition, and he later served as Chairman of the Music Department for seven years. Under his leadership, the department earned national accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music and the graduate program was expanded. He retired in 1994 as Professor Emeritus. He now lives in Santa Rosa, California.

Russell was a prolific composer whose output included many works for double bass and percussion in solo, chamber, and concerto formats. Some of his frequently performed published works include the *Pas de deux* for clarinet and percussion, *Sonata for Percussion and Piano*, *Suite Concertante* for tuba and woodwind quintet, *Theme and Fantasia* for band, *Chaconne* for double bass and piano, *Buffo Set* for double bass and piano, *Harlequin Concerto* for double bass and orchestra (or piano), and several works for chorus. Russell also co-authored with Allen Trubitt, a series of theory textbooks, *The Shaping of Musical Elements*, published by Macmillan.