

Frederick Delius

# Appalachia

A Tone-Poem of Tropical Florida, 1896

Excerpts Transcribed for String Orchestra  
by Marcia Stockton

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## About the Piece

Delius wrote *Appalachia --The American Rhapsody*, a 40-minute tone-poem for full orchestra, chorus and soloists, in 1896 and significantly revised it in 1904. He considered it not only one of his best works, but one in which he had expressed himself most completely. His artistic development, he asserted, was spurred by the plantation songs carried down the river to him at Solano Grove: 'They showed a truly wonderful sense of musicianship and harmonic resource in which they treated a melody, and hearing their singing in such romantic surroundings it was then and there that I first felt the urge to express myself in music.' The singers of whom he spoke were the African Americans who tended crops or loaded cargo onto ships, just one generation removed from the Civil War and emancipation, many with personal memories of the tragedy of slavery. Delius named it *Appalachia* believing that to be the Native American word for the entire North American continent. It conjures images of sultry tropical forests draped with Spanish moss, waterways teeming with exotic flowers, and bird songs -- invoking the contradictory feelings of the songs that inspired it: exhilaration, melancholy, and exuberance, culminating in the triumph of human dignity over suffering. Particularly innovative features include:

- Use of the blues-note characteristic of African-American-derived music, i.e. the lowered third which temporarily transforms the tonic into a minor chord, expressing pathos while introducing harmonic ambiguity and endless possibilities for modulation
- The driving rhythms of work songs.

Wanting to make more of Delius's opus available to today's concert-goers, Marcia Stockton selected excerpts from *Appalachia* and crafted this arrangement for strings in 2014. The arrangement captures the beauty and flavor of Delius's work in a much shorter piece, translating its complex timbres into a string orchestra's varied palette.

## About the Composer

Frederick Delius was born in England in 1862 of a prominent merchant family, and died in 1934. Only a handful of his works are well-known. When his father attempted to recruit him to business by sending the 22-year-old to manage an orange plantation in Florida, instead Frederick spent two years absorbing the exotic tropical atmosphere of the post-Civil-War Deep South. Returning to Europe, he studied music in Germany and made a career as a composer. Music critics described his idiom as extremely individual; in 1929 the London Times wrote that Delius "belongs to no school, follows no tradition and is like no other composer in the form, content or style of his music". His work shares some characteristics with Richard Wagner, Edvard Grieg, and Richard Strauss, post-Romantics whom he admired, such as:

- Exceptionally lush orchestrations featuring a diverse palette of timbres
- Non-traditional structure, made by weaving motifs throughout the work
- Expressive lyrical melodies, set with harmonies based on chromatic passing tones
- Expansion of the orchestra with new instruments: Delius added voices as instruments.

## About the Arranger

Marcia Stockton (ASCAP) has been writing serious music since 1995. In 2013 she started offering her compositions to the public and began composing new works, quickly securing publication contracts and premiere performances. Marcia is one of the professional musicians who volunteers with the Carson Valley Sinfonia, a unique community orchestra in rural Nevada that gives string students the opportunity to gain experience playing in an ensemble. The Sinfonia has premiered many new pieces and ignited many careers in music. Marcia also teaches cello. Marcia majored in music theory at Swarthmore College (1975) and studied with eminent cellists of the Philadelphia Orchestra. For nearly two decades she was a senior technical staff member and Master Inventor at IBM. She and her husband Greg then lived a pioneering life on a backcountry cattle ranch in the southern Sierra Nevada, tending a unique wilderness site. With two cats and two horses, they now live in northern Nevada's Carson Valley. For more information visit her website: Joyful Music Creations, [marciastockton.com](http://marciastockton.com).

Cover: *Fort George Island* by Thomas Moran, 1880

# Appalachia

The American Rhapsody

Duration: 5:30

Frederick Delius (1862-1934)

Excerpts arr. by Marcia Stockton (ASCAP)

Moderato ♩=90

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass, measures 1-8. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is Moderato, marked with a quarter note equal to 90 beats per minute. The Violin I part is mostly rests, with dynamics *pp* and "div. as needed" starting at measure 5. The Violin II part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and has dynamics *pp* and "div. as needed" starting at measure 5. The Viola part has dynamics *mf* and "div. as needed" starting at measure 5. The Violoncello part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and has dynamics *pp* starting at measure 5. The Contrabass part has dynamics *pp* starting at measure 5.

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass, measures 9-12. The score continues in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The Violin I part starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and has dynamics *mp* starting at measure 10. The Violin II part has dynamics *mf* and "div." starting at measure 9, and dynamics *mp* starting at measure 10. The Viola part has dynamics *pp* starting at measure 9, and dynamics *pp* and "unis." starting at measure 10. The Violoncello part has dynamics *pp* starting at measure 9, and dynamics *p* starting at measure 10. The Contrabass part has dynamics *pp* starting at measure 9, and dynamics *p* starting at measure 10.

17 **accel.** **molto rit.**

*mf* *f* *ppp*

**A** Andante ♩=80

*pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*