

Prokofiev - Symphony No. 7 in C# minor

- Written between 1951 and 1952 this was Prokofiev's final symphony.
- The symphony is cast in the usual four movements and, as a sign of Prokofiev's poverty, was written with an eye to winning the 100,000 ruble Stalin Prize.
- Tranquility and nostalgia-tinted joy permeate this symphony along with hints of his score for the ballet Cinderella some eight years earlier.

Gershwin - *Rhapsody in Blue*

- On February 12th, 1924 a concert entitled "An Experiment in Modern Music" took place at the Aeolian Hall in New York. Emerging from that concert was one of the most iconic fusions of the jazz and classical styles, George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.
- Originally commissioned by Paul Whiteman for his band, the Rhapsody was orchestrated by 'house arranger' Ferde Grofe for a number of configurations. The symphonic version appeared in 1942, five years after Gershwin's death.
- The familiar opening with the clarinet glissando was arrived at by pure chance. Ross Gorman stretched the opening in rehearsal just to tease Gershwin - the composer loved it and asked him to keep it that way.

Gershwin - *An American in Paris*

- "My purpose here is to portray the impressions of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city, listens to the various street noises, and absorbs the French atmosphere."
- Composed in 1928 the music falls, roughly, into five linked sections beginning with two 'walking' themes.