



YouTube Channel Classics Explained releases new FREE TO VIEW animation

Episode 24: **Respighi's *The Pines of Rome*** *A musical march through the history of Rome*

Available from Saturday 22 June at 2pm

Press preview: [A musical march through the history of Rome. Episode 24: The Pines of Rome by Respighi](#)
plus additional content available to subscribers on Patreon



Ottorino Respighi: Pines of Rome

Performer: Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner

Label: RCA Year: 2006 (recorded 1960)

Catalogue No. G010000694744F

"The channel is a gem."

Now with 3.8 million views, Classics Explained releases its next eagerly-awaited animation - **Episode 24: *Respighi's The Pines of Rome*** *A musical march through the history of Rome* – following the release of last month's Ravel's *Bolero* "***Classical music meets the machine***".

Set against the cinematic backdrop of the Eternal City, the animation follows Respighi's tone poem through a series of scenes which stretch further and further



back in time: children play-fighting in the Villa Borghese, an ancient chant eerily emanating from a subterranean catacomb from the early Christian period and the march of the Roman legion along the Appian Way in the early dawn which builds up to a raucous stampede. Using a 1960 recording with the Chicago Symphony with the sound of the nightingale ringing out, Rome's iconic umbrella pines provide the backdrop to celebrate Rome's past in all its awe-inspiring grandeur, sun-drenched brilliance and evocative nostalgia. This musical travelogue became the soundtrack to Rome, a calling card for the future Cinecittà in technicolour magnificence.



Founder of Classics Explained, **Ben Levy** explains:

"Most visitors to Rome can't help but be inspired by the city's unique personality and history. Many composers have been inspired by its beauty but none more so than Ottorino Respighi with his Roman Trilogy orchestral tone poems, but that's exactly what Ottorino Respighi did after moving there in 1913. This episode explores the meaning behind the second, and most famous, of these tone poems: Pines of Rome. A series of musical snapshots that take you on a journey through Rome's fascinating history - still the cheapest way of visiting it without buying a plane ticket or time machine."

The 11-minute animation follows Respighi's own programme notes on each movement set in iconic locations across the city – the Villa Borghese, the catacombs of the Campagna, the Janiculum Hill and the Appian Way. With the appearance of birdsong, demonstrating one of the first instances of sampling, Fritz Reiner's legendary recording with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on the RCA label brilliantly captures the magic of the Eternal City.

Following its recent relaunch, the current catalogue has attracted **more than 3.8 million views** to Classics Explained, inspiring a devoted following from over 78,000 subscribers, who eagerly await the next installment. With his trademark irreverence, Levy takes his viewers - mostly **18- to 34-year-old newcomers to classical music** - into the wonders of musicology, free of jargon, tackling timbre with beguiling sophistication.



Started during the pandemic by Ben Levy, **Classics Explained** quickly found a foothold with a surprisingly young audience, many of whom had never previously engaged in classical music. Tailored to viewers' requests, Classics Explained responds to this youthful market, giving them a new entry into classical music and feeding a previously unacknowledged hunger to engage in opera and symphonic repertoire. Levy cites Hollywood's iconic *Fantasia* as inspiration for the channel and many of the musical choices so far.

Classics Explained

Shedding all jargon and pretention often associated with the appreciation of classical music, Classics Explained provides fast-paced video guides for the uninitiated (and also converts) eager to explore the personal and socio-political backstories to great pieces of music, often with a satirical spin. In a category of "edutainment" alongside *Horrible Histories*, these are witty, sophisticated shorts, that demystify the genre with a healthy dose of irreverence.

Launched by Benjamin Levy 3 years ago, the shorts have gradually grown in length from 5 minutes to 20 minutes, with additional separate mini-documentaries of musical analysis from Levy demonstrating on the piano on request from viewers.

As Levy explains,

"We're a YouTube channel that digs into the stories behind the great works of classical music, and explores what inspired the composers to greatness. Whether it's a tumultuous love life, political turmoil or simply a tight deadline, the one thing they all have in common is an all-too-relatable humanity. These stories free this brilliant music from stuffy, unapproachable academic language and puts it back where it is supposed to be: in our life."

So far, the 24 episodes have covered amongst others Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.2, Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals*, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet*, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Mozart's *Magic Flute* and more.

Comments from the viewers include:

"I love you ClassicsExplained! Your content is among my favorite on YouTube! I'd love to see a video on the firebird sometime! please keep up the fantastic work!"

"Please please please NEVER stop making these videos"

"I'm in love with this channel.....You never cease to cheer me up"

"You've treated the genuine sadness of Rachmaninov's story respectfully whilst still incorporating a good level of comedy. This may be my new favourite episode"



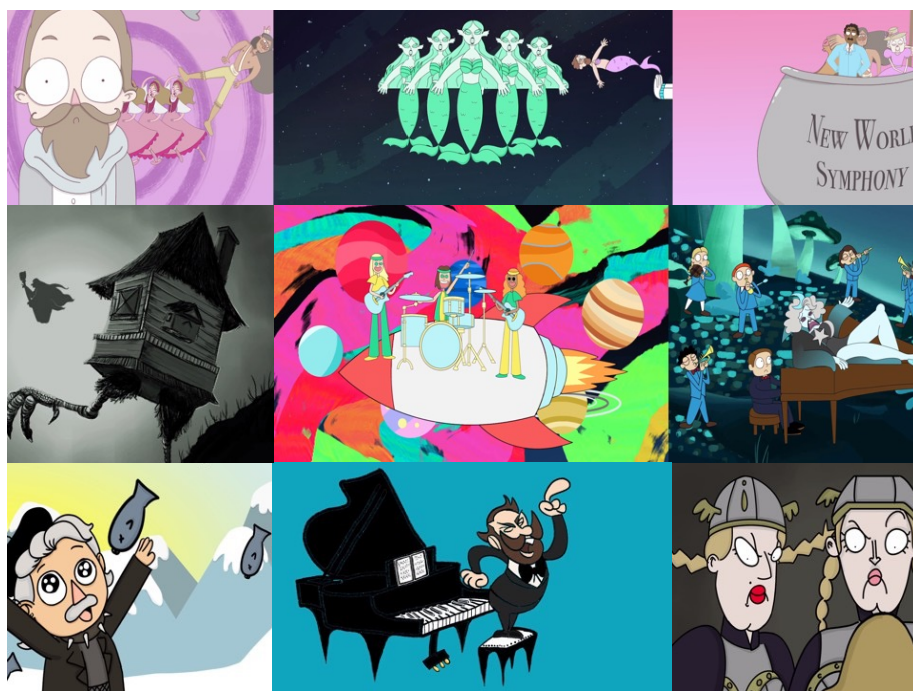
*"Thank you so much! Your channel has opened the doors to classical music for me. Now rarely a day goes by without some classics."
Saint-Saens*

"This was very informative and the HILARIOUS beginning is a bonus! Still chuckling. I'm subscribing."

"I'm stoked. I've been binge watching this series with my 4-year-old daughter."

Benjamin Levy

Based in London, UK, Benjamin Levy's prodigious curiosity for art, music and culture has led him into a number of different projects. He has contributed to widely-published exhibition catalogues for the V&A and other institutions, has written several books, and as a consulting expert, has researched and written on everything from the social history of 20th Century London to Russian stage design for an auction house. He is the creator, researcher, writer, and voice for Classics Explained.



Back Catalogue: unmissable Classics Explained titles

[Sometimes the worst behaviour has the best soundtrack](#)

[1924 the year Jazz crashed Classical Music's Party](#)

[Why would a composer cancel his own music?](#)

[Medieval Wheel of Fortune](#)



[From misery to melody](#)
[Competition solution revealed](#)
[How Vivaldi took the world by storm](#)
[The aria so good we shared it with aliens](#)
[Ted Talks, Thus spoke Zarathustra](#)
[From Russia with Love, via Italy](#)
[The soundtrack to One Thousand and One Nights](#)
[Freaky experiment shocks Paris](#)

For more information on any of the above, please contact

Nicky Thomas Media

Unit 12 The Stableyard, Broomgrove Road, London SW9 9TL

+44 (0)20 3714 7594 | +44 (0)7768 566 530

info@nickythomasmedia.com

www.nickythomasmedia.com