

Edition Website: <https://appalachianspring.info>

Published by A-R Editions, Inc.
Middleton, Wisconsin 53562
www.areditions.com

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-1-9872-0458-2 (print)
ISBN 978-1-9872-0459-9 (online)
DOI <https://doi.org/10.31022/A088>
ISSN 0147-0078 (print)
ISSN 2577-4573 (online)

Frontispiece: Martha Graham and Aaron Copland after the premiere performance of their ballet *Appalachian Spring*, 30 October 1944. (Photograph used by permission of The Aaron Copland Fund for Music.)

“Appalachian Spring” by Aaron Copland
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Publication of this edition has been supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Ⓒ The paper in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39-48-1992.

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APPALACHIAN SPRING: THE SCORE FOR GRAHAM'S BALLET

Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett

Aaron Copland, the renowned American composer of concert music, was born in Brooklyn, New York, on 14 November 1900 and studied composition in Europe in the early 1920s with French pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. He returned to New York City and established himself as a freelance, modernist composer, drawing upon networks of patronage and professional organizations including the League of Composers, *Modern Music* magazine, and the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts. As the Great Depression unfolded and the United States entered World War II, Copland composed works intended for a broad public, among them *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), Hollywood film scores, and his three major ballets: *Billy the Kid* (for Lincoln Kirstein, 1937), *Rodeo* (for Agnes de Mille, 1942), and *Appalachian Spring* (for Martha Graham, 1944). He continued to compose both folk-inspired and modernist music into the 1960s, by which time conducting, writing, and speaking had come to dominate his professional life. He withdrew from public activity in the 1970s due to declining health, and he died at his home north of New York City on 2 December 1990.

Appalachian Spring may be Aaron Copland's most popular composition. However, the best-known, most frequently performed versions of *Appalachian Spring* differ in form and musical content from the original chamber ballet that the Martha Graham Dance Company premiered in 1944. The present edition is the first complete, critical edition of the music of the original ballet as it has been heard in performances by the Martha Graham Dance Company since the premiere.

GENESIS OF THE BALLET

The origin of *Appalachian Spring* is well documented: dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (11 May 1894–1 April 1991) inspired the project, pianist and patron of music Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (1864–1953) provided the commission through the Library of Congress, and chief librarian Harold Spivacke (1904–77) saw the project through to completion.¹ The Martha Graham Dance Company premiered it as a

1. The standard sources on the genesis and premiere of *Appalachian Spring* are Wayne Shirley, *Ballet for Martha: The Commissioning of Appalachian Spring / Ballets for Martha: The Creation of Appalachian Spring, Jeux de Printemps, and Herodiade* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1997); Marta E. Robertson, "A Gift to Be Simple: The Collaboration of Aaron Copland and Martha Graham in the Genesis of *Appalachian Spring*" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1992); Marta E. Robertson, "Musical and Choreographic Integration in Copland's and Graham's 'Appalachian Spring,'" *Musical Quarterly* 83,

both conducting and cultural diplomacy.⁹⁹ It is not surprising that Copland was far less attentive to details of nomenclature and consistency than performers, orchestral librarians, and scholars might have hoped fifty years later. Perhaps because the “Ballet for Martha” was a collaborative work from the start, Copland seems to have held only loosely his right—and responsibility—to determine the ultimate shapes that *Appalachian Spring* would take.

Nevertheless, Copland attempted to sort out the versions at least twice: in “Note on Various Versions of *Appalachian Spring*” (undated, see Plate 14) and in “Three Versions Exist” (1972 or later, see Plate 15).¹⁰⁰ Copland himself was inconsistent in the terms used for the version that comprised the suite plus inserts. Although for a time, mostly in the 1950s, he called it “Complete Ballet (orchestra version)” or “Complete Suite for Orchestra,” he ultimately favored the term “extended suite.”¹⁰¹

However, Copland eventually seemed to lose track of or interest in defining the differences among the three versions. He authorized additional new versions of the score without definitively withdrawing or altering the earlier scores; the publisher made pragmatic decisions that Copland allowed to stand; and his own usage of terms evolved as he became persuaded of the artistic and practical merits of new versions. Meanwhile, he neglected to publicly correct misleading statements and imprecise nomenclature by critics, writers of liner notes, and record labels. Because the ballet version was authorized for use only by the Martha Graham Dance Company until Graham’s death in 1991, the ballet had an existence separate from concert performances, and the structural differences mattered little.

Clarification of Versions by The Aaron Copland Fund for Music

By 2010, at least five different scores titled *Appalachian Spring* were circulating,¹⁰² and even more variants existed on recordings. Inconsistent usage of terms and titles over many decades made the different versions hard to distinguish. In 2011, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music—an organization created by Copland before his death and announced to the public in 1992, and to which he bequeathed a large part of his estate for the purpose of encouraging and improving public knowledge and appreciation of contemporary American music—began a thorough review of the *Appalachian Spring* performance materials in circulation, for the purposes of removing handwritten mate-

99. Emily Abrams Ansari, “Musical Americanism, Cold War Consensus Culture, and the U.S.-USSR Composers’ Exchange, 1958–60,” *Musical Quarterly* 97, no. 3 (October 2014): 360–89. On Kraft, see Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 238–45.

100. The first is a typewritten page affixed inside the front cover of an ozalid reproduction of the holograph score **BCh-ac** (see “Sources” in Critical Report). The second Copland wrote directly on his copy of the suite scored for thirteen instruments, published in 1972, **SCp-1972-ac** (see “Sources” in Critical Report).

101. These documents include Copland’s annotation on the bottom margin of his conducting score for the orchestral suite, page 77 (**SOp-1945-ac**; see “Sources” in Critical Report), where he indicates the place where **SOh-i6** should be inserted (see Plate 13), and the two charts described above. Inconsistencies occur in Copland’s list of conducting engagements, where he lists a 1955 London performance with the BBC Symphony as “*Appalachian Spring* (complete)”; box 432, folder 10, Aaron Copland Collection.

102. Five scores titled *Appalachian Spring* were available from the publisher: (1) *Appalachian Spring* (*Ballet for Martha*), Hawkes Pocket Score (HPS 82), Boosey & Hawkes: 1945 (plate no. B. & H. 9054); (2) *Appalachian Spring* (*Ballet for Martha*), suite for thirteen instruments, “First Printing 1945; Second printing with new engraving by Philip Rothman, 2012,” copyright 1945, 1958; (3) *Appalachian Spring* (*Ballet for Martha*): Complete Ballet: Original version for thirteen instruments, “reproduction of the manuscript on deposit at the Library of Congress,” available through Boosey & Hawkes rental department only; (4) *Appalachian Spring* “Complete Concert Suite,” available through rental only, consisting of conducting score and parts for B. & H. 9054 with handwritten inserts restoring some of the cuts; and (5) *Appalachian Spring*, suite for thirteen instruments (HPS 876), Boosey & Hawkes 1972 (plate no. B. & H. 19979).



THEME AND VARIATIONS
59 (♩ = 72)

532

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

Bn.

Pno.

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

Theme * [solo]

p calm and flowing

sul A

59 (♩ = 72)

p

p

The musical score for measures 532-535. It features a woodwind section (Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Bassoon) and a string section (Violins 1 & 2, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass). The woodwinds play a solo theme starting at measure 534, marked 'p' and 'calm and flowing'. The strings provide accompaniment, with the first violin part marked 'sul A' and 'p'. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 72.

* Shaker melody: "The gift to be simple"



539

Fl.

Cl. in Bb

Bn.

Pno.

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

CRITICAL REPORT

Aaron Sherber

Links to sources and related materials, as well as addenda and errata, can be found online at <https://appalachianspring.info>.

SOURCES

In this edition, each source siglum begins with three letters that identify the basic characteristics of the source. The first letter indicates the formal structure of the work contained in the source: **B** for ballet or **S** for suite. The second letter indicates the instrumentation or nature of the source: **C** for chamber orchestra of thirteen instruments, **O** for full orchestra, **P** for piano (or short score), or **S** for script. The third letter indicates the medium in which the source exists: **f** for film, **h** for holograph (in Copland's or Graham's hand), **m** for manuscript (not in Copland's or Graham's hand), **p** for publication, **r** for recording, or **t** for typescript. When necessary to distinguish similar items, further descriptors follow the three initial letters.

LIST OF SOURCES AND SIGLA

Original Source Materials

PREPARATORY MATERIALS

BSt-1 to -5	Typewritten scripts and timings for the ballet with additional holograph and manuscript markings
BPh-sk-1 and -2	Holograph short score sketches of the ballet
BPh	Holograph piano score of the ballet
BPh-ac-1 and -2	Ozolid duplicates of BPh with additional holograph markings
BPh-mg-1 and -2	Ozolid duplicates of BPh with additional manuscript markings from the Martha Graham Dance Company

ORCHESTRATION FOR THIRTEEN INSTRUMENTS

BCh	Holograph score of the ballet for thirteen instruments
BCh-ac	Ozolid duplicate of BCh with additional holograph markings
BCh-mg	Ozolid duplicate of BCh with additional manuscript markings from Martha Graham Dance Company conductors beginning in the 1940s
BCh-copy	Ozolid duplicate of BCh with additional holograph and manuscript markings