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Homenetmen Glendale Ararat Chapter
Cultural Division

Get to Know...

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ARAM KHACHATURIAN JUNE 6, 1903 — MAY 1, 1978

Aram Khachaturian was a composer of classical music.

Khachaturian was born in Tblisi, Georgia to a poor Armenian family. In his youth, he was fascinated by the music he heard around him, but at first he did not study music or learn to read it. In 1921, he traveled to Moscow in order to begin his musical studies, having almost no musical education and unable to speak a word of Russian. However, he showed such a great musical talent that he was admitted to the Gnesin Institute where he studied cello and entered a composition class(1925). In 1929, he transferred to the Moscow Conservatory. In 1951, he became professor at the Gnesiny State Musical and Pedgogical Institute and Moscow Conservatory.

His works include concertos for violin, cello and piano (the latter originally including an early part for the flexatone), concerto-rhapsodies for the same instruments, three symphonies the third containing parts for fifteen trumpets and organ, and the ballets Spartak (Spartacus) and Gayane, the latter featuring in its final act what is probably his most famous movement, the "Sabre Dance". He also composed some film music. The cinematic quality of his music for Spartacus was clearly seen when it was used as the theme for a popular BBC drama series, The Onedin Line, during the 1970s. Since then, it has become one of the most popular of all classical pieces for UK audiences.

He died in Moscow, short of his 75th birthday.

