

Hey Kids, Meet Antonin Dvorak

Czech Romantic Era Composer (1841-1904)

Antonin Dvorak was born on September 8, 1841 in a small village in Bohemia, which is now part of the Czech Republic. He was one of seven children. Antonin's parents recognized his musical talent, and at the age of six he began his musical training. He studied music in Prague and graduated as an accomplished violin and viola player before he was 20 years old.

As a young adult Antonin played viola in the Bohemian Provisional Theater Orchestra. When it became necessary to supplement his income with a teaching job, he left the orchestra to allow himself time to compose. While teaching, he fell in love with one of his students. In an attempt to win her heart, he wrote a song cycle called, *Cypress Trees*.



In 1875 Dvorak composed his second string quintet. A performance of this work attracted the attention of German composer Johannes Brahms. Brahms contacted a music publisher in Vienna who commissioned Dvorak to write his first set of *Slavonic Dances*. This work was published in 1878 and became an immediate success.

In 1892 Dvorak moved to America to accept a position as head of the National Conservatory of Music. While in America he wrote his *Symphony No. 9 "New World Symphony"*. The New York Philharmonic's premiere performance created a sensation at Carnegie Hall in 1893.

Antonin Dvorak died in Prague, Czechoslovakia on May 1, 1904. His most successful works include *Carnival Overture*, *Humoresque in Eb Minor*, *Slavonic Dance in E Minor*, and his *Symphony No. 9 "New World Symphony"*.

