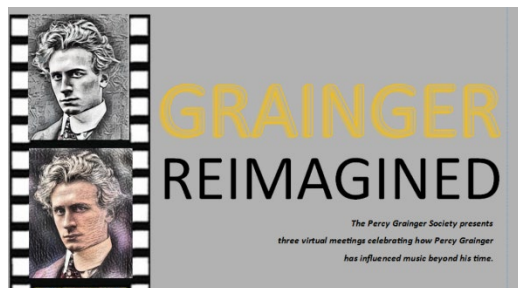


Grainger Reimagined: Arrangement

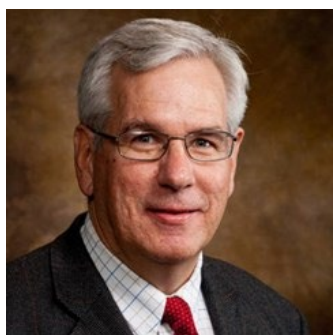
Presented Thursday, October 24, 2023 via Zoom by Prof. Chalon Ragsdale



“Percy Grainger is noted as a remarkable arranger of folk song; Benjamin Britten, the greatest folk song setter of the last half of the 20th century credited him, *In the matter of folk song arranging, Percy Grainger is my master*. But Grainger also brilliantly arranged his own compositions, using innovative instrumental and vocal effects that sound fresh even to today’s ears. He also encouraged and developed techniques of arrangement of music for school and amateur groups to

democratize the making of music for all,” noted **Professor Chalon Ragsdale**, first speaker in the Percy Grainger Society’s series *Grainger Reimagined*.

Prof. Ragsdale’s discussion began the three-part series, ***Grainger Reimagined***, which will be presented throughout 2023-24 year. The series seeks to shed new light on Percy Grainger's artistic genius by examining his arrangements, performances, and compositions. Through a comprehensive exploration of these three facets, the series aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Grainger's contributions to the world of music today. The Society’s board of directors, with the support of the Membership and Programming Committee, believes that exploring these three aspects of Grainger’s career will be a worthwhile examination of Grainger’s effect on music well beyond his lifetime.



Prof. Ragsdale noted that Grainger was a famous pianist and, particularly important for studying his arrangements, a well-known folk song collector. “Grainger’s many, many interests are bound together by Grainger’s desire for freedom, for himself as well as composers and performers” explained Prof. Ragsdale. “He certainly exhibited an eagerness to challenge the status quo in every way possible.” The program began with a discussion of ‘what is arranging’ and ‘what is its importance.’ Prof. Ragsdale stated that while arranging once held a prominent, respected place in music, it has

sometimes been viewed as second class to composing. Prof. Ragsdale noted that this is inaccurate, with arranging the original is still there, waiting to be played. Grainger inform us that good arranging focuses on what he called ‘the manifest nature of music.’ “Preserving the texture of the music was important to Grainger-maybe most important, mused Prof. Ragsdale. The program continued with examples comparing several different selections, which included free music examples and folk song collecting. It concluded with a thirty-minute discussion among attendees.

As always, the presentation and discussion are available in the members’ area of the website at <https://percygrainger.org/Members-Only>.