

Airs in Romanian folk style for solo violin

On the back page of the manuscript sketch for these pieces, there is another work dated 1926, therefore we can suppose that the *Airs*, written in the same year as the *Sonata No. 3 op. 25*, are probably a preparatory exercise for this masterpiece. Initially Enescu entitled them *Airs roumains*, but the word *roumain* is crossed out and replaced with *dans le genre roumain* (in Romanian folk style). Hence, we can conclude that Enescu actually *composed* the pieces as opposed to having just reproduced and collected them from folk musicians.

After a careful analysis of the rough sketch where the pieces, although in complex writing, are left unfinished, I determined to divide the Suite into four movements. The first is in a slow rubato style with ornamentations typical of folk fiddling. The second movement is a dance full of humor while the third movement is a sad song (*doina*), sung in a trembling voice. The last movement is a spectacular and challenging folk dance full of virtuoso elements. The Suite is an authentic improvisation in folk style and, together with the *Caprice roumain*, the *Le ménétrier* from the Suite *Impressions d'enfance* or the *Sonata No. 3*, represents a vital link to the lost art of folk fiddling that Enescu knew most intimately, while at the same time mirroring the composer's inner nature.

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