



# COMPOSER SPOTLIGHT



## JACQUES IBERT

1890–1962

Style: Impressionistic/  
Contemporary



### Early Years

Jacques Ibert was born in Paris and began studying music at the age of four. His first teacher was his mother, who taught him violin and piano. His father wanted him to become a businessman, but he instead worked as a private teacher, accompanist, and cinema pianist after leaving school. He later studied at the Paris Conservatoire alongside classmates Arthur Honegger and Darius Milhaud.

### His Music

Ibert won the Prix de Rome on his first try even though his studies had been interrupted by his service in World War I as a naval officer. He wrote seven operas, five ballets, film music, works for solo piano, choral music, and chamber music. In the film score genre, he created the music for Orson Welles' 1948 production of *Macbeth*.



### His Style

His style can be described as eclectic since he did not attach himself to any of the major genres of his time. He claimed that "all systems are valid."

### Administrative Work

Ibert was director of the Académie de France at the Villa Medici in Rome. However, he was thrown out by the pro-Nazi government during World War II and went into exile for a time. His music was even banned in 1940. After the war, he regained his status in French musical life. His final job was managing director of the Paris Opera and the Opéra-Comique. Soon after, he was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

### Significant Works:

- Histoires
- Les Recontres
- Petite suite en 15 images