



COMPOSER SPOTLIGHT



SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR

1875-1912

Style: Romantic

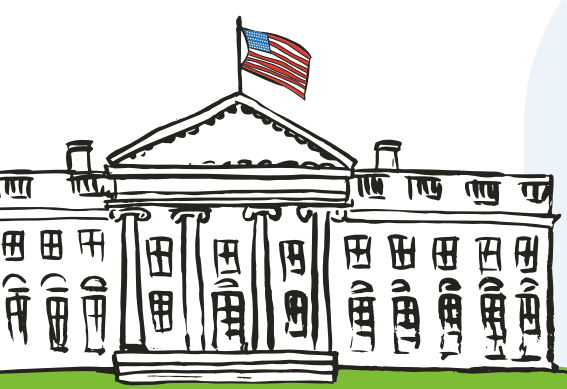


A Man from Two Worlds

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, named after the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was born to a woman from England and a man from Sierra Leone. His father was descended from African-American slaves who were freed by the British and rescued from the colonies during the American War of Independence. However, he never met his father and grew up in London.

Education and Early Career

Young Samuel took his first violin lessons from his maternal grandfather. His ability was quickly noticed, and by the age of 15, he was studying at the Royal College of Music. It was there that he switched from violin to composition. After graduation, he became a professor at the Crystal Palace School of Music and conducted the orchestra at Croydon Conservatoire.



Notoriety

In 1904, he made his first tour to the United States and was invited by President Theodore Roosevelt to the White House. He eventually made three tours of the U.S. and became known as the "African Mahler." He strove to blend elements of African music with the classical tradition.

Performing Rights Society

One of Coleridge-Taylor's best-known works was *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*. Unfortunately, he sold the music rights for about 12 dollars which proved to be a poor financial decision since hundreds of thousands of copies were sold. His particular case helped in the formation of the Performing Rights Society, an initiative to earn revenues for musicians through performance and publication.

Significant Works:

- The Song of Hiawatha, Op. 30
- Violin Concerto
- Symphony in A minor