

Maurice Ravel (1875 -1937)

Ravel was born in the Basque region of France and much of his work shows a Spanish influence (this, together with his interest in jazz has produced some exceptional guitar transcriptions). He was a pupil of Faure and at first fell, like many contemporary composers, under Debussy's spell. However, his ascetic and intellectual bent produced from the start a refinement of composition and orchestration, and development of melody, all his own. Later music shows a fondness for the rhythmic features of jazz, and thoughtful incorporation of the innovations of modern music – strong dissonance, atonality etc.

Kaddisch (1914) is one of two pieces based on Hebrew songs that Ravel wrote for solo voice and piano.