1946

Sleeping beauty overture

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The introduction of the overture is based on material representing the spinning wheel and its sharp pointed spindle. The festivities which open the story (theme one) and the entrance of the vengeful, forgotten fairy (theme two) are followed by a development section which leads back to the motives of the introduction. We then follow the princess as she climbs the stairs of the old tower and discovers an old woman spinning. She takes the spindle which the old woman gives her and hurries back to her room where she awkwardly practices handling it. Suddenly an owl shrieks outside her window. She pricks her finger. The irresistible drowsiness which overcomes her spreads throughout the castle. Soon all have closed their eyes.

An ageless, unfathomable sleep follows, uninterrupted until a young prince enters and blows his hunting horn. He kisses the sleeping beauty whereupon the entire household stirs from its slumbers. The gay festivities are resumed, leading into a jovial ending with its promise of marriage and happiness ever after for the prince and princess.

The term "Overture" has been used because it is the composer's intention to carry forward these musical ideas into a fairy opera at some future date. (The version followed is from the book "Told Again" by Walter de la Mare.)

O.L.B.