



BY PAUL  
DUKAS  
1897

# THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE



## THE STORY

An old wizard leaves his apprentice to clean up after a long day. The apprentice is fed up and uses the wizard's hat and spell book to summon a broom to do the cleaning instead. The broom carries and empties many buckets of water while the apprentice has a sit down. When the apprentice tries to stop the broom, he suddenly realises he is unable to. He doesn't know the magic! He panics, takes an axe and cuts the broom in two. The two pieces soon become many pieces and each turn into brooms. Now there are many brooms fetching and emptying water and the room becomes flooded. The apprentice almost drowns! The wizard returns and ends the spell and tells the apprentice off. The wizard finishes by saying 'Only a master should invoke powerful spells.'

Symphonic Poem

A Symphonic Poem is also known as a Tone Poem. It is orchestral music played in one movement that describes a poem, short story or picture using music. It might be playful, serious or humorous

Bassoon

A bass woodwind instrument of the oboe family. It is almost 150cm in length

## THE MUSIC

- The music is a Symphonic Poem based on a poem written 100 years before
- A choreographer, Fokine, who worked with the Ballet Russes staged a ballet performance of The Sorcerer's Apprentice (see Key Composer 6)
- Disney animated the music in the 1940 film Fantasia. Mickey Mouse plays the apprentice. Fantasia is essential watching!
- The bassoon plays a theme that represents the broomstick springing into life. It is low and bouncy—and magical.



## THE COMPOSER

- Dukas was a French composer, teacher and music critic
- Dukas was intensely self-critical and destroyed many of his compositions—just like Beethoven (see key Composer 1)
- Dukas knew and worked with Saint-Saens (see Key Pieces 3)
- He was really good friends with Debussy, another fantastic French composer

