

Caverns and Caves Depicted  
in Music

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September 16, 2016  
Bowling Green, Kentucky



Image: Carlsbad Caverns

## Colorado River rapids



Music, like film, describes landscapes that either no longer exist, or are imagined by the artist. This is the Colorado river as it appeared recently. The Czech composer, Bedrich Smetana, in his symphonic poem *Má vlast* (1874), composed music that depicted a rapids scene like this on the Vltava River. The piece is known by its German title, the *Moldau*.

## Vtalva River today



A portion of “Vltava” reflected St. John’s rapids. The Štěchovice Reservoir, constructed during World War Two, and resulted in a calm and placid waterway. While it may be eons before caverns or arches collapse, the effect is nonetheless there—artists describe what they see at the time.

## Fingal's Cave--Scotland



In 1829, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) traveled to the Scottish island, Staffa, to personally observe Fingal's Cave.

## Felix Mendelssohn. Fingal's Cave (Hebrides)



Composed in 1830, Hebrides (Hebriden) Overture, also known as Fingal's Cave, is an eleven minute concert overture in the German romantic style.

As described by Classicfm, "Fingal's Cave is over sixty metres deep and in stormy tides the cacophonous sounds of the waves inside it rumble out for miles. The intense and rolling melodies within the music perfectly capture this sense of both drama and awe; calmer passages, meanwhile, convey stiller waters and more tranquil surroundings."

Read more at <http://www.classicfm.com/composers/mendelssohn/music/hebrides-overture/#FuyTOFGZgAHRF7EW.99>

## Carlsbad Caverns



Carlsbad Caverns are located in southeastern New Mexico. In October 1923, President Calvin Coolidge created Carlsbad Caverns as a National Monument. Congress passed “An Act to establish the Carlsbad Caverns National Park in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes, approved May 14, 1930 (46 Stat. 279),” which made the monument into a national park in 1930.

Carlsbad Caverns entrance—Peter Jones for the NPS. (left)

Carlsbad Caverns, Eric Gunther, 2003 (right)

Carlsbad Caverns  
music by David Broekman  
electronic effects by Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky



Early in the television age, David Broekman composed music for the series “Wide, wide world.” For one episode, on Carlsbad Caverns (1956), he asked two composers at Columbia University, Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky, to provide electronic sounds. The theme song to the program sounds like standard popular music of the time. The music for the episode about the caverns reflects a more mysterious atmosphere.

Broekman, David, Lois Winter, Raymond Crisara, Julius Schecter, Otto Luening, Vladimir Ussachevsky, Mannie Weinstock, Paul Ricci, Milton Kaye, and John S. Wilson. 1956. *Wide wide world*. Camden, N.J.: RCA Victor.

Otto Luening (far right), Vladimir Ussachevsky (center)

Sound:

Broekman’s Theme music to Wide, wide world.

Broekman’s Carlsbad Caverns.



Mammoth Cave,  
Kentucky



The National Park Service has compiled some of the songs written about Mammoth Cave.

Image: Mammoth Cave, by Joe Shlabotnik

# Come to Mammoth Cave in Old Kentucky

Popular sheet music



Dedicated to The Kentucky Club of Paducah, Ky. 3

## Come To Mammoth Cave In Old Kentucky

Lyric by  
**JETTIE WARDEN ELLIOTT TURNER**

Music by  
**RAY HIBBELER**

**Moderato Expressivo**

*p* Come to Mam-moth cave in old Ken-tuck-y ——— If Ken-tuck-y bred you're more than  
Mon-u-ments to encha-ned-er-ry state ——— You place our stone and are glad to

lucky ——— The eyes of the world are turned up - on you An  
re - late ——— The nat - u - ral bridge, col - lus - i - al dome Makes

thru the cave and on ech-o riv-er tow ——— Climb-ing rocky mountains good  
you proud of your dear old Ken-tucky home ——— Lov-ers leap in a most dan-

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Here is a popular song from the 1920s, Come to Mammoth Cave in Old Kentucky.

Hibbeler, Ray, and Jettie Warden Elliott Turner. 1921. Come to Mammoth Cave in Old Kentucky. Paducah, Ky.: Jettie W.E. Turner.

Sound with this.

Wallenstein, A.  
*Reminiscences of the  
Mammoth Cave :*  
*Schottisch.* Boston:  
Oliver Ditson.



Wallenstein, A. Reminiscences of the Mammoth  
Cave Schottisch. Boston: Oliver Ditson.

Published between 1858 and 1876, when Ditson at  
277 Washington St., Boston.

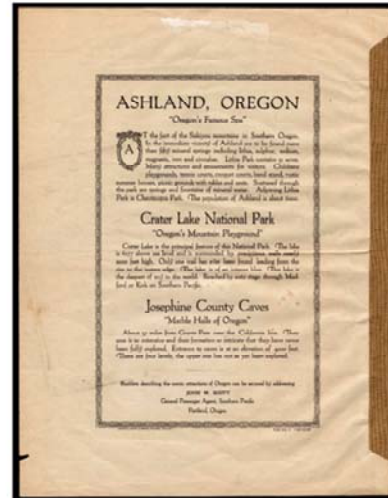
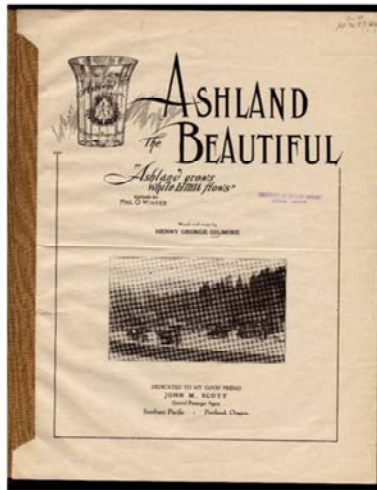
Date of this address for publisher may be found in:  
Dichter, Harry, and Elliott Shapiro. 1977. *Handbook  
of early American sheet music, 1768-1889.* New  
York: Dover Publications.

Wallenstein, A.  
*Reminiscences of the  
Mammoth Cave :*  
*Schottisch.*



This popular song is a Schottisch, a two rhythm round dance, similar to a polka.

## Oregon: Josephine County Caves



Gilmore, Henry George. Ashland, the beautiful.  
Portland, Oregon: Southern Pacific.

Back cover includes descriptions of Ashland,  
Oregon: Oregon's famous spa, Crater Lake National  
Park: Oregon's mountain playground, and  
Josephine County Caves: Marble halls of Oregon.

<http://oregondigital.org/catalog/oregondigital:j6731377h#page/1/mode/1up>

Gilmore, Henry George.  
Ashland, the beautiful.  
Portland, Oregon:  
Southern Pacific.



This piece, in a waltz like rhythm, is joyful, and the pamphlet advertises the caves in Josephine County.

## Other caves featured in Music

Jenolan Caves, New South Wales, Australia

Cresswell, Lyell (Quartet for horn, trombone, tuba, percussion, 1979)

Hinz, Frank. (Song, 1992)

Holland, William (Piece for soprano, bass baritone, piano, choir, orchestra, 2000)

Vick, Robert E. (Jenolan waltz, piano, early 1900s)

Wombeyan Caves (N.S.W.) , Australia

Hiscocks, Wendy (Piano music, 2006)



Newer compositions about caves vary in their medium of performance.

## Other caves featured in Music

Dunhuang Caves (China), also known as  
Caves of the Thousand Buddhas

Luo, Yonghui (2014)

Wu, Weihao (2014)

Zhang, Peishan (2014)

Dordogne (France)

Brandmüller, Theo. (Organ music, 1995)





## Events in Caves

Ardeatine Caves Massacre, Rome, Italy, 1944

Manzino, Giuseppe. (Choir, with ensemble, 2003)

Schuman, William. (Symphony, no. 9, Le fosse Ardeatine, 1971)



A massacre in an Italian cave has inspired at least two composers.



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