

# LIVES OF CLASSICAL COMPOSERS

John Scales Avery

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# INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

## Human history as cultural history

We need to reform our teaching of history so that the emphasis will be placed on the gradual growth of human culture and knowledge, a growth to which all nations and ethnic groups have contributed. In fact, the millennia-long accumulation of knowledge and culture is a much more important part of human history than the wars and power struggles of rulers and national governments.

## Against nationalism

Today, in an era of all-destroying nuclear weapons, instantaneous global communication and worldwide economic interdependence, nationalism has become a dangerous anachronism. History, as it is taught today, is centered on the country where it is being taught. Our own country is the most important. Our own country is always in the right, according to nationalist historians. Patriotic soldiers and generals are exalted. It is sweet and noble to die for one's country. But today, war has become prohibitively dangerous. Unless we rid the world of nuclear weapons, the end of human civilization and much of the biosphere is just around the corner.

Cultural history can be seen as an antidote for nationalism. It allows us to take a wider view of the world, where cooperation is more important than conflict, and where the contributions of all nations, cultures and ethnic groups are recognized.

## Other books on cultural history

This book is part of a series on cultural history. Here is a list of the other books in the series that have, until now, been completed:

- Lives of Some Great Film Directors
- Lives of Some Great Dramatists
- Lives in the Ancient World
- Lives in the Middle Ages

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<sup>1</sup>This book makes use of my previously published book chapters, but a considerable amount of new material has been added.

- Lives in the Renaissance
- Lives in the 17th Century
- Lives in the 18th Century
- Lives in the 19th Century
- Lives in the 20th century
- Lives in Biology
- Lives of Some Great Novelists
- Lives in Mathematics
- Lives in Exploration
- Lives in Education
- Lives in Poetry
- Lives in Painting
- Lives in Engineering
- Lives in Astronomy
- Lives in Chemistry
- Lives in Medicine
- Lives in Ecology
- Lives in Physics
- Lives in Economics
- Lives in the Peace Movement

The pdf files of these books may be downloaded and circulated, free of charge, from the following web addresses:

<https://www.johnavery.info/>

<http://eacpe.org/about-john-scales-avery/>



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# Chapter 1

## THREE MEDIEVAL COMPOSERS

### 1.1 William IX, Duke of Aquitaine (1086-1127)

William IX, Duke of Aquitaine, was the ruler of a province of France. He was also a troubadour, that is to say a composer of poems and songs dealing with courtly love. He is one of the first troubadours whose musical and poetic works have survived. (Eleven of his songs have survived.)

William IX was a notorious womanizer, and he seemed to enjoy shocking his contemporaries with these exploits.

Interestingly, William's granddaughter, Eleanor of Aquitaine, was one of the most wealthy and influential European women of her time. She became Queen of France and later, Queen of England.

### 1.2 Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) was a German scientist, philosopher, theologian, and composer. Her works include three large volumes of visionary theology, over 70 chants and hymns that continue to be performed today, 400 letters to popes, emperors, abbots and abbesses throughout Europe, two volumes devoted to medicine and cures, the first known invented language, and pioneering works on natural history. One of her musical compositions, *Ordo Virtutum*, is a liturgical drama believed to be the oldest example of a morality play. She has for centuries been recognized as a saint by branches of the Roman Catholic Church, and in 2012, Pope Benedict XVI named her a Doctor of the Church. She is also known as Saint Hildegard and Sibyl of the Rhine.



Figure 1.1: Hildegard von Bingen and her nuns.



## 1.3 Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300-1377)

### Composer and poet

Guillaume de Machaut is regarded as the most important French composer and poet of the late Middle Ages, and many musicologists regard him as the greatest European composer of the 14th century.

He was born in about 1300 in the Ardennes region of France, near to Reims and to the town of Machault, from which his name undoubtedly derives.

### Secretary to King John I of Bohemia

Between 1323 and 1346, Guillaume de Machaut was employed as the secretary of John I, king of Bohemia. Machaut often accompanied King John on his trips around Europe, many of them military. In 1330, Machaut was named Canon of Verdun.

In 1346, King John I was killed in the Battle of Créchy, but by that time Machaut was famous as a composer, and he readily found employment in the service of other noble and royal patrons.

### Machaut's surviving musical compositions

These include

- 42 Ballades
- 1 Complainte, *Tels rit au main* from *Le Remède de Fortune*
- 1 Chanson royale, *Joie, plaisence* from *Le Remède de Fortune*
- 19 Lais
- 1 Mass
- 24 Motets
- 22 Rondeaux
- 33 Virelais

Many modern recordings of these works are available.

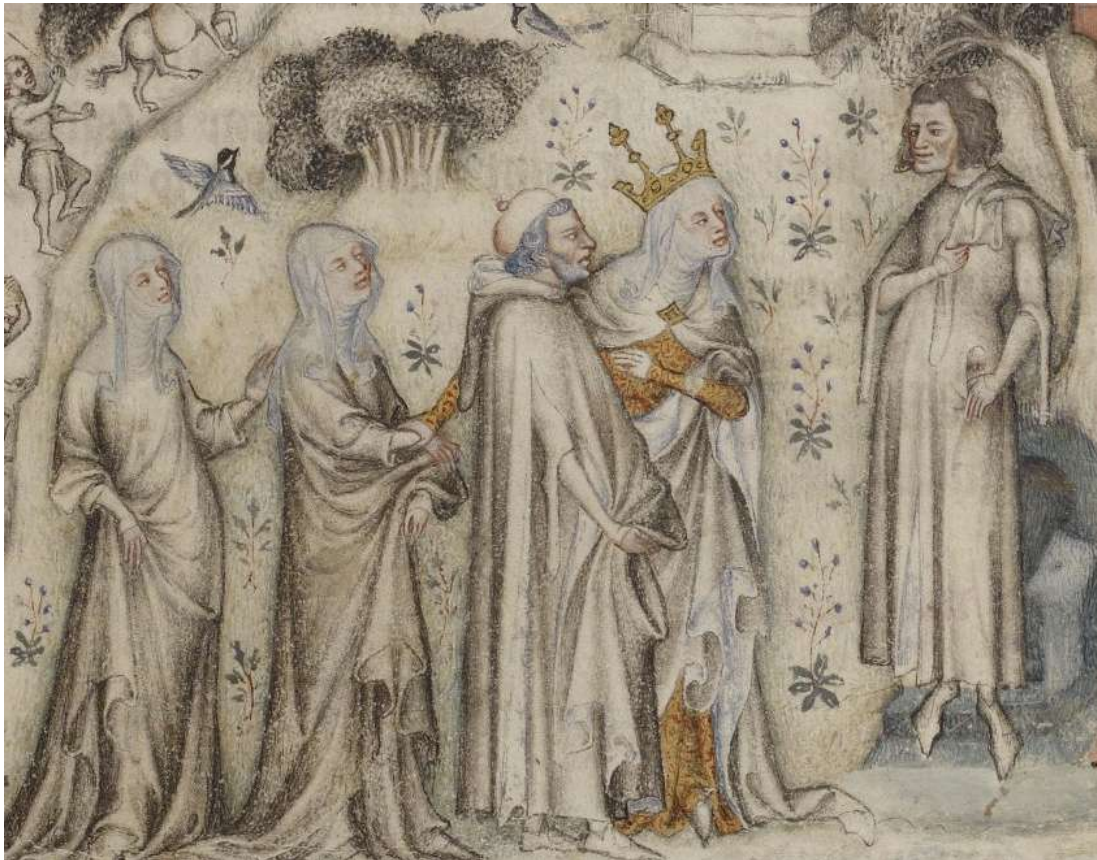


Figure 1.2: Machaut (right) receiving Nature and three of her children. From an illuminated Parisian manuscript of the 1350s.

### Suggestions for further reading

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## Chapter 2

# RENAISSANCE COMPOSERS

### 2.1 John Dunstable (1390-1453)

John Dunstable (often spelled Dunstaple) was probably born in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, England. He was undoubtedly a highly educated man, and an author of astronomical and astrological and mathematical texts, although there is no record of him at either Oxford or Cambridge. As a musical composer, his fame was very widespread, and although manuscripts of his music were lost because of the dissolution of the monasteries, his music has been reconstructed from manuscripts in Germany and Italy, where his influence was also felt. He introduced a polyphonic style of composition, with rich harmonies based of thirds and sixths, This came to be called the *contenance angloise* style, and it was continued by other composers. Of Dunstable's musical compositions that have survived, most are religious. He is also thought to have composed many secular works, but none can be attributed to him with certainty.

### 2.2 Josquin des Pres (1450-1521)

Josquin des Pres was born in France, but he spent much of his life in Italy, in Milan, in the service of the Sforza family and in Rome as a singer in the choir of Pope Innocent VII and later the choir of the Borgia Pope Alexander VI. He composed 18 masses, 62 motets, 3 motets.chansons, and 63 chansons.

Wikipedia states that **“Josquin lived during a transitional stage in music history. Musical styles were changing rapidly, in part owing to the movement of musicians between different regions of Europe.[37] Many northern musicians moved to Italy, the heart of the Renaissance, attracted by the Italian nobility's patronage of the arts; while in Italy, these composers were influenced by the native Italian styles, and often brought those ideas with them back to their homelands. The sinuous musical lines of the Ockeghem generation, the contrapuntal complexity of the Netherlanders, and the homophonic textures of the Italian lauda and secular music began to merge into a unified style; indeed**



Figure 2.1: A woodcut depicting Josquin des Pres.

Josquin was to be the leading figure in this musical process, which eventually resulted in the formation of an international musical language, of which the most famous composers included Palestrina and Lassus.”

### 2.3 Orlando de Lassus (1532-1594)

Orlando de Lassus was born in Hapsburg Netherlands (modern-day Belgium). He is said to have been kidnapped three times because of his remarkably beautiful singing voice. He became one of the most influential composers of the late Renaissance. He travelled to Italy at an early age, and worked there for Cosimo di Medici.

At the age of only 21, Orlando de Lassus became maestro di cappella of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, the ecumenical mother church of Rome, a spectacularly important post for someone so young.

Later in his life, Orlando moved to Munich, joining the court of Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria where, who was trying to build up a musical establishment to match the courts of Italy. Orlando de Lassus settled in Munich with his wife and children, refusing to leave despite being offered important posts elsewhere.

Wikipedia says of him, **“One of the most prolific, versatile, and universal composers of the late Renaissance, Lassus wrote over 2,000 works in all Latin, French, Italian and German vocal genres known in his time. These include 530 motets, 175 Italian madrigals and villanellas, 150 French chansons, and 90 German lieder.**



Figure 2.2: Portrait of Orlando de Lassus.

## 2.4 William Byrd (1539-1623)

### One of the greatest English composers

William Byrd studied music under the famous English composer Thomas Tallis (1505-1585). According to Wikipedia he was **“Widely considered to be one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance and one of the greatest British composers, he had a huge influence on composers both from his native England and those on the continent. He wrote in many of the forms current in England at the time, including various types of sacred and secular polyphony, keyboard (the so-called Virginalist school), and consort music.”**

### Lincoln Cathedral and the Chapel Royal

William Byrd’s first employment was as organist and master of the choristers at Lincoln Cathedral, a post that he obtained in 1563 at the age of 24. He composed a number of his important works while at this post.

In 1572, Byrd obtained the prestigious post of Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. This post brought him into contact with Queen Elizabeth I, who was a music lover and an accomplished keyboard player.

### Persecuted as a Catholic during the reign of Elizabeth I

The time in which William Byrd lived was one in which many Catholics were persecuted for their beliefs. Byrd was originally an Anglican, but sometime during the 1570’s he became a Roman Catholic. This was dangerous at the time, although Queen Elizabeth I was somewhat more tolerant than her father Henry VIII had been. This was the era in which King Phillip II of Spain sent an armada to invade England and to bring England back within the authority of the Pope in Rome.

Because of Byrd’s conversion to Catholicism, his membership of the Chapel Royal was suspended, his movements were restricted, and his house was placed on the search list.



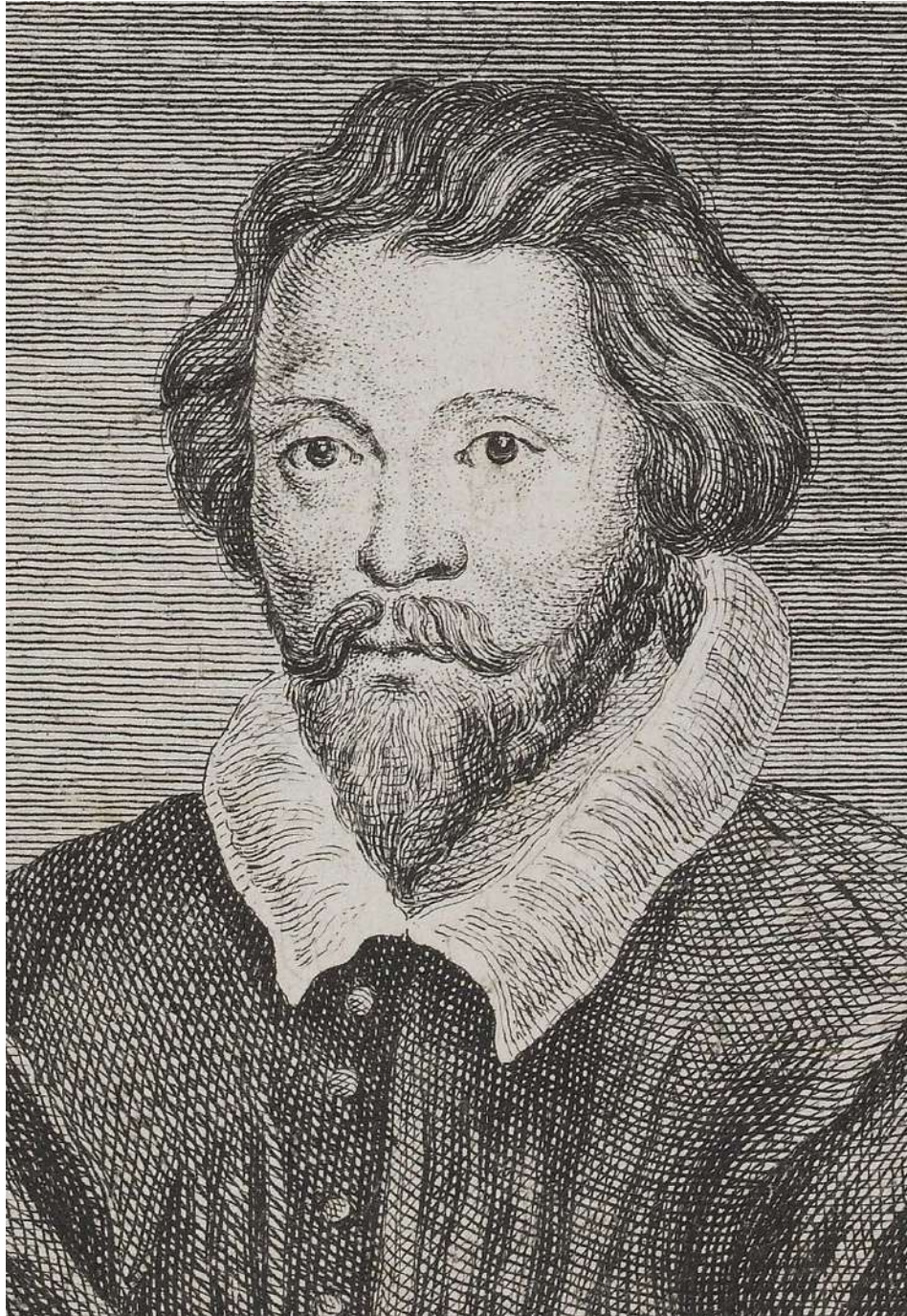


Figure 2.3: William Byrd

## 2.5 Giovanni Gabrielli (1554-1612)

### **Gabrielli studied music with his uncle and with Orlando de Lassus**

Although little is known with certainty about Gabrielli's early life, he is thought to have studied music with his uncle, the composer Andreas Gabrielli (1543-1585), who was employed at the Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice. He later traveled to Munich to the court of Duke Albert V, to study with the renowned composer Orlando de Lassus. He probably stayed there until about 1579, and de Lassus was an important influence on Giovanni Gabrielli's musical style.

### **At Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice**

In 1584, Giovanni Gabrielli became the principal organist of Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice. A year later, following the death of his uncle, he became the principal composer at Saint Mark's as well. In this double position, Gabrielli introduced antiphonal compositions, in which members of the choir were spatially separated from each other in two or three groups, and splendid effects were produced through call and response.

Today Giovanni Gabrielli is considered to be one of the most important and influential composers of the late Renaissance,

## 2.6 Carlo Gesualdo (1566-1613)

### **Famous for his music and for a double murder**

Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa, Italy, is famous not only for his daring musical compositions, but also for a double murder: Gesualdo was married to his first cousin, Donna Maria d'Avalos, the daughter of Carlo d'Avalos, prince of Montesarchio and Sveva Gesualdo, princess of Venosa. On the night of October 16, 1590, Gesualdo caught his wife in bed with Fabrizio Carafa, third Duke of Andrea and seventh Count of Ruovo, and he killed them both on the spot. A court later ruled that Gesualdo had not committed a crime but had only done his duty as a husband. Nevertheless, this double murder haunted Gesualdo and caused him to become depressed in his old age. He kept a special servant whose duty it was to beat him every day, and he tried to obtain a relic of a saint in the hope that he could, in this way, obtain absolution.

Meanwhile, Gesualdo had composed music so highly original and chromatic that its like was not seen until the late 19th century. He lived in his castle, where he hired a group of resident virtuoso musicians to perform his works.



Figure 2.4: Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa.

## 2.7 Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

### Italy during Monteverdi's lifetime

We speak of Claudio Monteverdi as an Italian composer, but it would perhaps be more correct to call him Venetian. During the time when he lived, Italy has no political unity. It was instead a collection of small states which were frequently at war with each other. Among these small states, Venice was the most prosperous and progressive, artistically developed and with freedom of expression for its citizens.

### Composer of madrigals

During the course of his life, Claudio Monteverdi composed nine books of madrigals. What are madrigals? They are a form of secular choral music, usually for soprano, alto, tenor and bass, and almost always relating to love, passion, jealousy and so on. During the Renaissance and Baroque periods, singing madrigals was a frequent after-dinner pass-time among well-educated people.

### Musical director of St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice

In 1613, Monteverdi became the musical director of the famous St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice (Basilico San Marco). He remained in this position for many years, and was given a generous salary. His duties included not only recruiting and instructing choir members and instrumentalists, but also composing works to celebrate special occasions, such as Holy Cross Day, Christmas Eve. and celebrations of the Doge. Monteverdi introduced works written in a more modern style into the repertoire of San Marco. His duties left him with some free time, and he used this to contribute compositions to other churches in Venice.

### Pioneer of opera

Wikipedia states that **“The Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), in addition to a large output of church music and madrigals, wrote prolifically for the stage. His theatrical works were written between 1604 and 1643 and included operas, of which three - *L'Orfeo* (1607), *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (1640) and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1643) - have survived with their music and librettos intact. In the case of the other seven operas, the music has disappeared almost entirely, although some of the librettos exist. The loss of these works, written during a critical period of early opera history, has been much regretted by commentators and musicologists.”**

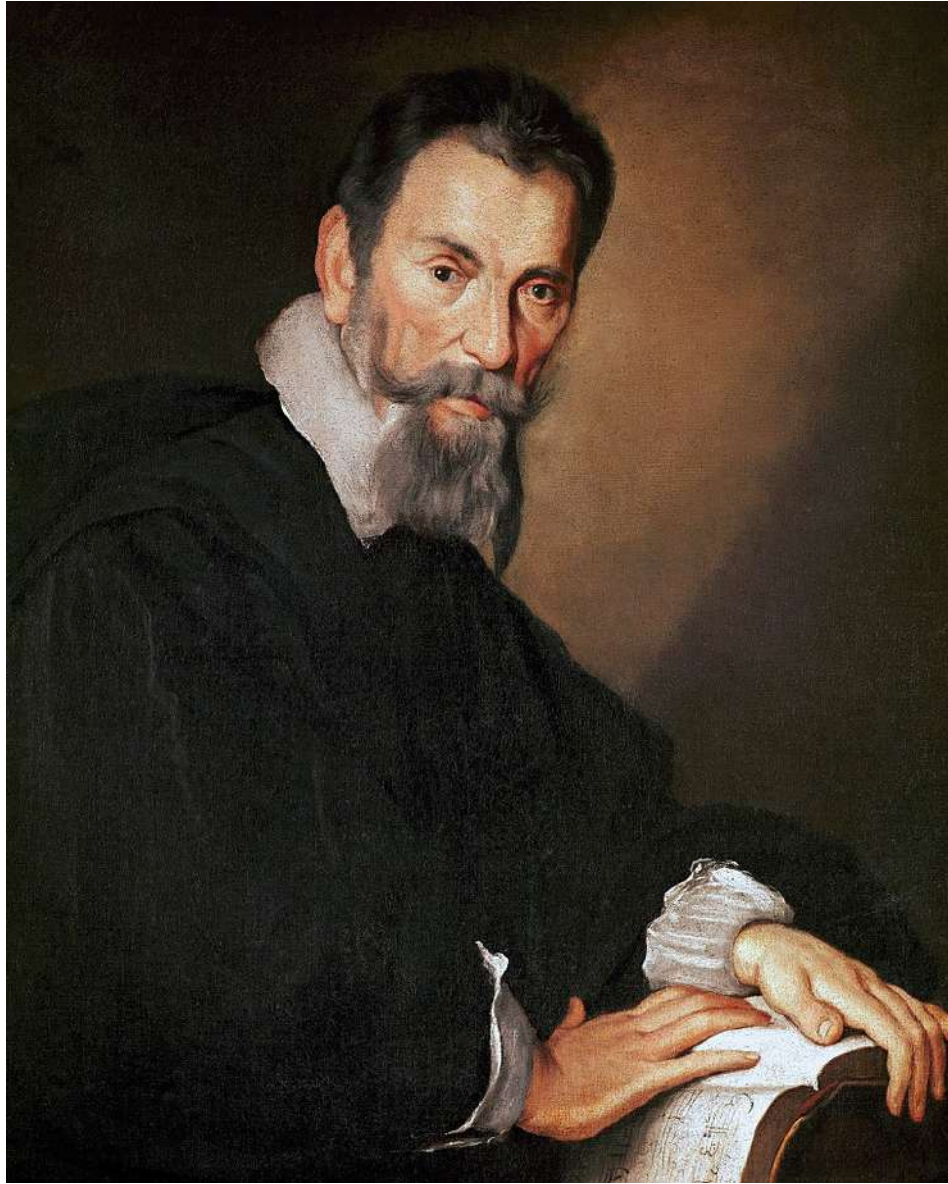


Figure 2.5: Claudio Monteverdi by Bernardo Strozzi.



# Chapter 3

## 17TH CENTURY COMPOSERS

### 3.1 Jean-Baptiste Lully

#### Lully's early life

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) was born in Florence, Italy. When he was 14 years old, Lully, dressed as a Harlequin, entertained bystanders at the Mardi Gras celebrations by his violin playing and clowning. In this way he attracted the attention of the chevalier de Guise, son of Charles, Duke of Guise, who was looking for someone to converse in Italian with his niece, Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans, Duchess of Montpensier. Thus, as a boy, Lully was brought to France, where he entered the service of the duchess. He probably honed his musical skills by learning from the court musicians.

#### Work in the court of Louis XIV of France

Lully spent most of his career working in the court of Louis XIV. By 1653, Lully had attracted the attention of the young Louis XIV, dancing with him in the *Ballet royal de la nuit*. Lully was then appointed as royal composer, and he soon made himself indispensable by composing both vocal and instrumental music for the court's ballets. He later became superintendent of the royal music and music master of the royal family.

#### Collaboration with Molière

Wikipedia states that “He [Lully] was a close friend of the playwright Molière, with whom he collaborated on numerous comédie-ballets, including *L'Amour médecin*, *George Dandin ou le Mari confondu*, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, *Psyché* and his best known work, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*.”



Figure 3.1: Jean-Baptiste Lully.

### **Lully's strange and tragic death**

Jean-Baptiste Lully died in a strange and tragic way. While conducting with a very long and heavy baton, he accidentally struck and wounded his foot. The foot became gangrenous, and doctors recommended that Lully's leg should be amputated. However, Lully refused to have this operation performed, because he so much wished to continue as a dancer. Thus the gangrene spread throughout poor Lully's body, and he died.

## **3.2 Johann Paschelbel**

### **Organist and composer**

Johann Paschelbel (1653-1706) was born in Nuremberg, Germany to middle-class parents. He was given a musical education, In 1677 he became the court organist in the employ of Johann Georg I, Duke of Saxe-Eisenach.





Figure 3.2: Johann Paschelbel.

### Friendship with the Bach family

In Eisenach, Paschelbel met, and became a close family friend of, the Bach family, including Johann Ambrosius Bach, the father of Johann Sebastian Bach. Wikipedia states that “Paschelbel became godfather to Johann Ambrosius’ daughter, Johanna Juditha, taught Johann Christoph Bach (1671-1721), Johann Sebastian’s eldest brother, and lived in Johann Christian Bach’s (1640-1682) house.”

### Pachelbel’s most famous works

Wikipedia states that “He composed a large body of sacred and secular music, and his contributions to the development of the chorale prelude and fugue have earned him a place among the most important composers of the middle Baroque era... Today, Paschelbel is best known for the *Canon in D*; other well known works include the *Chaconne in F minor*, the *Toccatina in E minor for organ*, and the *Hexachordum Apollinis*, a set of keyboard variations.”

Pachelbel’s compositions were immensely popular during his own lifetime, and they are performed and admired today.

### 3.3 Dieterich Buxtehude

#### Buxtehude's early life and education

Helsingborg and Helsingør lie on opposites of a narrow sound that separates today's Sweden from Denmark. In the 17th century, both sides were part of Denmark. Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707) was born in Helsingborg, which is today part of Sweden. His father, Johannes Buxtehude, was the organist at St. Olaf's Church in Helsingør. Undoubtedly, Dieterich received a musical education from his father.

#### Organist in Helsingborg, Helsingør and Lübeck

For two years, 1657 and 1658, Dieterich Buxtehude worked as an organist in Helsingborg. Then during the period 1660-1668, he was the organist at St. Mary's Church in Helsingør, a church that still has the original organ on which Buxtehude played. Finally, his last post was in Lübeck in northern Germany, at the Marienkirche. There, he married the daughter of the previous organist, Franz Tunder. Buxtehude and his wife had seven daughters.

#### Buxtehude's influence on Johann Sebastian Bach

J.S. Bach, who was then twenty years old, walked 400 kilometers to Lübeck to visit Buxtehude, who was then an old man. Bach stayed for three months to meet the famous organist, to hear him play and as Bach explained, "to comprehend one thing or another about his art". After visiting Buxtehude for three months, Bach walked 400 kilometers back again.

#### Dieterich Buxtehude's legacy

Wikipedia states that

**"The bulk of Buxtehude's oeuvre consists of vocal music, which covers a wide variety of styles, and organ works, which concentrate mostly on chorale settings and large-scale sectional forms. Chamber music constitutes a minor part of the surviving output, although the only chamber works Buxtehude published during his lifetime were fourteen chamber sonatas. Unfortunately, many of Buxtehude's compositions have been lost. The librettos for his oratorios, for example, survive; but none of the scores do, which is particularly unfortunate, because his German oratorios seem to be the model for later works by Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Philipp Telemann. Further evidence of lost works by Buxtehude and his contemporaries can be found in the recently discovered catalogue of a 1695 music-auction in Lübeck"**

Today, Buxtehude's compositions are regularly performed as part of the standard musical repertoire of churches.



Figure 3.3: Dieterich Buxtehude.

## 3.4 Archangelo Corelli

### Corelli's childhood and musical education

Archangelo Corelli (1653-1713) was born in a northeastern district of Italy known as Romagna. There are many anecdotes about his early life and musical education, but these stories lack firm evidence.

Corelli's parents were prosperous land-owners, but they almost certainly did not belong to the nobility.

According to a friend who knew the composer well, Corelli initially studied music under a priest, before moving to Bologna in 1666. In Bologna, which at the time was a major musical center, Corelli studied the violin under several master violinists. The papal contralto, Matteo Simonelli is said to have taught him to compose in the "Palestrina style".

### Professional success

Wikipedia states that

**"In 1687 Corelli led the festival performances of music for Queen Christina of Sweden. He was also a favorite of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, grandnephew of another Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, who in 1689 became Pope Alexander VIII. From 1689 to 1690 he was in Modena. The Duke of Modena was generous to him. In 1706 Corelli was elected a member of the Pontificia Accademia degli Arcadi (the Arcadian Academy of Rome). He received the Arcadian name of Arcomelo Erimanteo."**

### Corelli's influence on other composers

Corelli's compositions greatly influenced other composers. Johan Sebastian Bach studied the works of Corelli, and based an organ fugue on Corelli's Opus 3 of 1689. George Frederic Handel's Opus 6 Concerti Grossi use Corelli's earlier compositions as a model.

### Corelli's wealth at the time of his death

At the time of his death, Archangelo Corelli was an extremely wealthy man. Besides possessing a fortune of marks, he also owned a valuable art collection and a collection of fine violins. He was buried in the Pantheon at Rome.

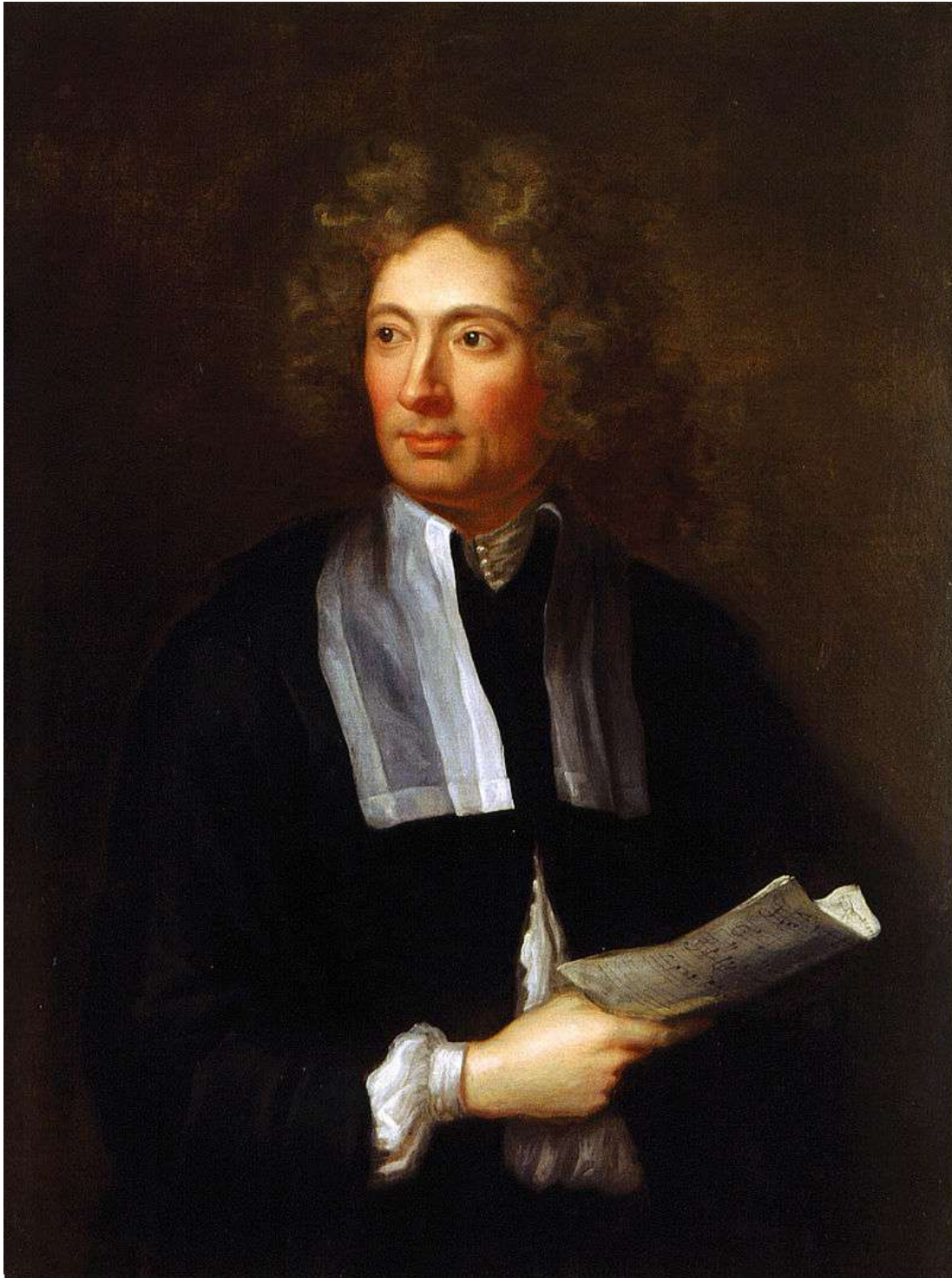


Figure 3.4: Archangelo Corelli.

## 3.5 Henry Purcell

### A rebus on the name of Henry Purcell

Here is a poem composed by Purcell's friends, who also set it to music:

The mate of the cock, and corn tall as wheat,  
Is the first name of him who in music's complete.  
His surname begins with the noise of a cat,  
And concludes with the home of a hermit, mark that!  
His skill in performance each auditor wins,  
But the poet deserves a good kick in the shins.

### Purcell's life

Henry Purcell's (1659-1695) was born into a family of musicians. His first compositions were made at the age of nine, but the first presently existing composition that can certainly be attributed to him is his *Ode for the King's Birthday*, written when he was 11.

Wikipedia states that “Purcell worked in many genres, both in works closely linked to the court, such as symphony song, to the Chapel Royal, such as the symphony anthem, and the theatre. Among Purcell's most notable works are his opera *Dido and Aeneas* (1688), his semi-operas *Diocletian* (1690), *King Arthur* (1691), *The Fairy-Queen* (1692) and *Timon of Athens* (1695), as well as the compositions *Hail! Bright Cecilia* (1692), *Come Ye Sons of Art* (1694) and *Funeral Sentences and Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary* (1695).”

### The greatest English composer until modern times

No native-born English composer approached Henry Purcell's fame, until the 20th century, when Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, William Walton and Benjamin Britten approached Purcell's level of recognition.

### Purcell's early death, aged 35

Henry Purcell died at the young age of 35. One can only speculate at what he would have achieved if he had lived longer. The cause of his death is uncertain. One theory is that he caught a chill when returning late from the theatre, only to find that his wife had locked him out. Another theory is that he died of tuberculosis.



Figure 3.5: Henry Purcell.

## 3.6 Antonio Vivaldi

### The “Red Priest”

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice, Italy. On the day of his birth, the city was shaken by an earthquake. His mother, terrified by the earthquake, may have prayed for deliverance and promised that her newborn son should become a priest. In any case, at the age of 15, Antonio Vivaldi began studying for the priesthood. He was nicknamed *il prete rosso*, “The Red Priest”, because of his hair color, a flaming red.

### Virtuoso violinist and teacher

Antonio Vivaldi spent most of his working life as “master of violins” at an orphanage called *Pio Ospedale della Pietà* in Venice. The boys at the orphanage learned a trade and left at the age of 15, but the girls were given a musical education and remained much longer. Under Vivaldi’s direction, the girls’ musical performances became renowned. Vivaldi himself, having been given a musical education by his father, became a virtuoso violinist and a prolific and highly influential composer. A German visitor who heard Vivaldi play said “The famous composer and violinist Vivaldi... played a solo accompaniment excellently, and at the conclusion he added a free fantasy [an improvised cadenza] which absolutely astounded me, for it is hardly possible that anyone has ever played, or ever will play, in such a fashion.”

### Some of Vivaldi’s greatest compositions

Vivaldi composed more than 500 concerti and 97 operas, 50 of which survive. He also composed oratorios, motets, and large scale choral works, as well as many sonatas for violins and basso continuo, sonatas for cello, sonatas for flute, sonatas for oboe, sonatas for recorder and bassoon, and trio sonatas for violin and lute.

When we think of Vivaldi today, we immediately think of his set of four violin concerti entitled *The Four Seasons*. This famous and immensely popular composition was probably inspired by the countryside near to Mantra, where Vivaldi was staying when he composed it. In the composition we hear “flowing creeks, singing birds (of different species, each specifically characterized), barking dogs, buzzing mosquitoes, crying shepherds, storms, drunken dancers, silent nights, hunting parties from both the hunters’ and the prey’s point of view, frozen landscapes, ice-skating children, and warming winter fires.”

### Admired by the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles VI

Charles VI admired Vivaldi’s music so much that he gave the composer the title of knight, a gold medal, and an invitation to Vienna. Vivaldi accepted the invitation, and moved, but Charles VI died, and Vivaldi himself also died soon afterward.



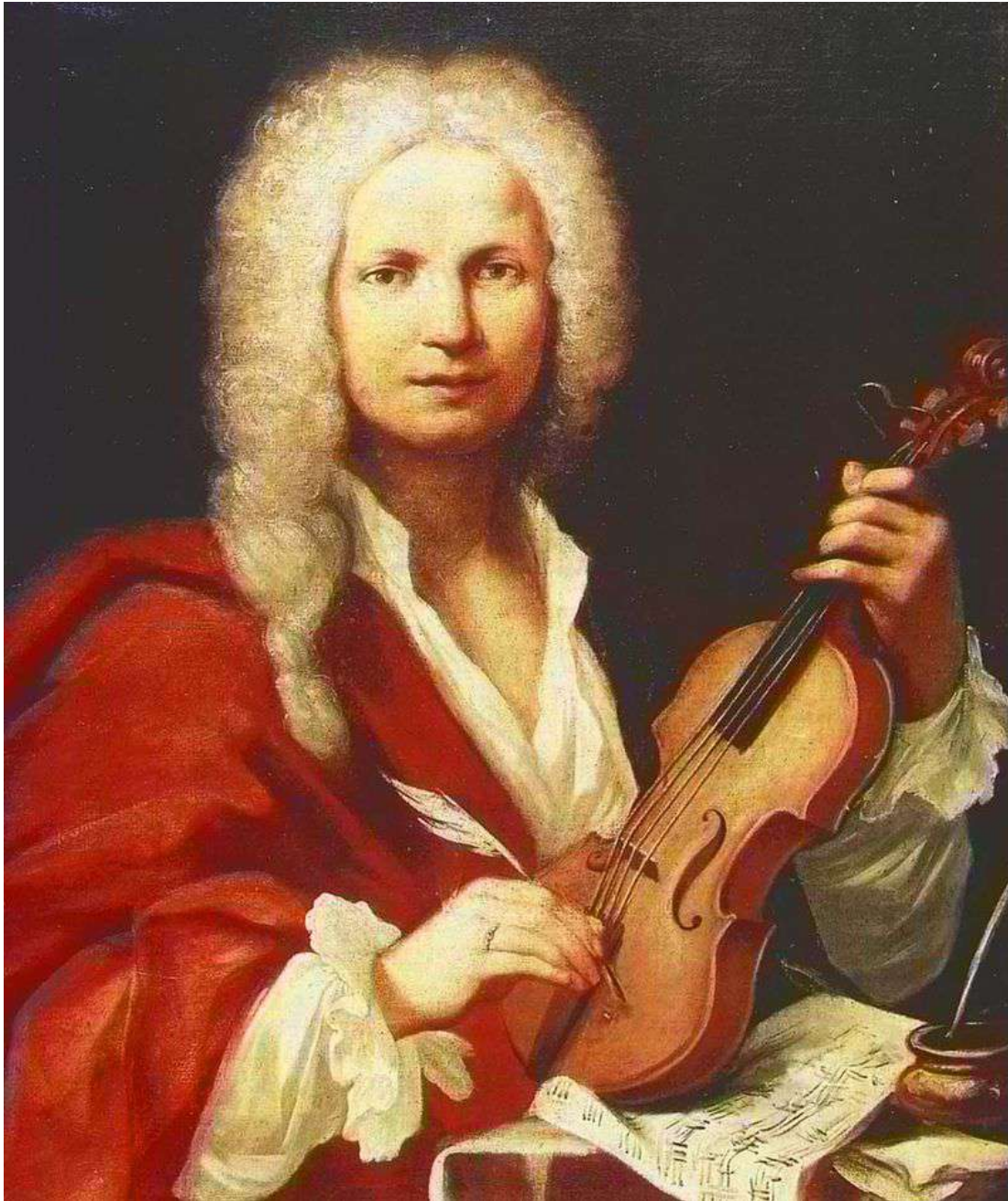


Figure 3.6: Antonio Vivaldi.

## 3.7 Johann Sebastian Bach

### Bach's family background

Today, Johann Sebastian Bach is generally regarded as the greatest composer in the history of the western world. He was born into a family of distinguished musicians, and many of his numerous children also had outstanding musical careers.

### Influences on Bach, and some of his great compositions

Bach's musical style was influenced by Antonio Vivaldi's works, many of which he transcribed. He was also influenced by the Danish organist and composer, Dieterich Buxtehude. To visit Buxtehude in the northern city of Lübeck, Bach traveled 450 kilometers, both ways reportedly on foot.

Bach's compositions are very numerous. He composed keyboard music, vocal music, and chamber music, often involving four-part harmony, counterpoint and fugues. Among his many great compositions are *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, the *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*, the *Cello Suites*, the *Goldberg Variations*, the *Brandenburg Concertos*, the *St. Matthew Passion*, and the *Mass in B Minor*.

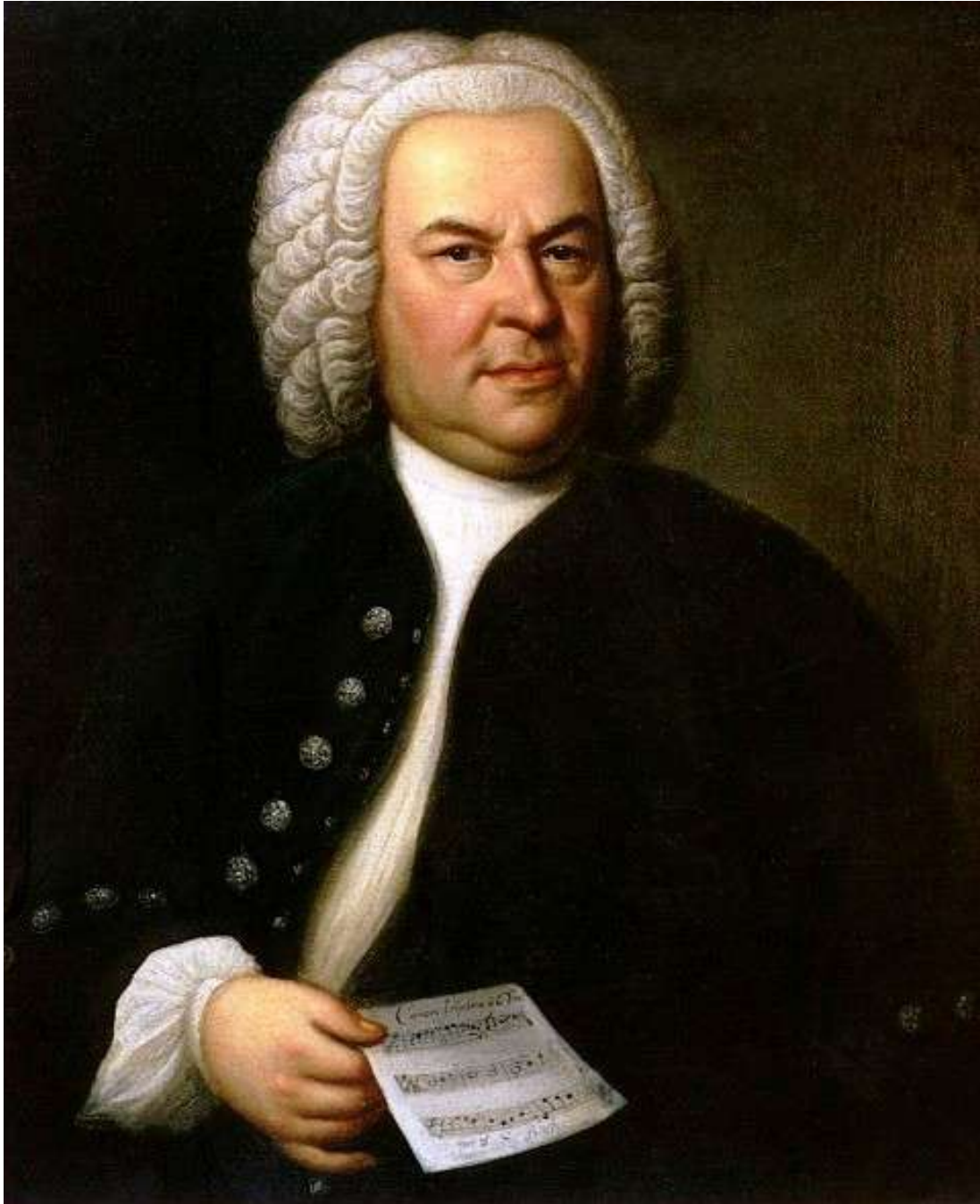


Figure 3.7: Johann Sebastian Bach.

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## Chapter 4

# HANDEL, HAYDEN, MOZART AND BEETHOVEN

### 4.1 Handel

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759) was born in Halle, Germany. Initially, his father was violently opposed to a musical career for his son. There is a story of the young boy secretly taking a small clavichord to an attic room in the family's large house, and practicing on it when the others were asleep.

When the George Frederick Handel was between seven and nine years old, he accompanied his father to Weissenfels, where he was noticed by Duke Johann Adolf I. Somehow the boy found his way to the organ of the palace chapel, where he surprised and impressed everyone with his playing. Duke Johann then recommended to Handel's father that the boy should be given a musical education. It was more than a recommendation. It was a command!

#### Handel moves to England

In 1710, at the age of 25, Handel became Kapelmeister to Prince George, the Elector of Hanover, who became King George I of Great Britain and Ireland in 1714. Handel accompanied Prince George to England, and decided to remain there permanently.

#### Operas, Water Music and the Messiah

While in England, Handel composed and produced very many operas, oratorios, his famous Water Music, and the even more famous Messiah. Handel arranged a performance of the Messiah to benefit the Children's Foundling Home. The benefit concerts for the home continued with great success, and became a tradition.

When Handel died in 1759, he was both rich and famous. He was given a state funeral in Westminster Abby.



Figure 4.1: Handel House, birthplace of Handel.





Figure 4.2: George Frederic Handel by Balthasar Denner.



Figure 4.3: Handel (center) and King George I on the River Thames, 17 July 1717.



Figure 4.4: A painting of Handel by Philip Mercier (1730).

## 4.2 Hayden

### Childhood employment as a choirboy

Franz Joseph Hayden (1732-1809) has been called “the father of the symphony”. and “the father of the string quartet”. He was born in a small village on the border between Austria and Hungary. His parents recognized their son’s outstanding musical ability when he was very young, but their financial situation at first prevented them from helping him to study music. However, when Hayden was six years old, he was apprenticed to a relative named Frankh, who was a schoolmaster and choirmaster. The young Hayden began his musical training there. His singing as a choirboy was so impressive that he was brought to the attention of Georg von Reutter, the musical director of St. Steven’s Cathedral in Vienna. Hayden moved to Vienna in 1740, and worked there for the next nine years. The choirboys at St. Steven’s Cathedral were instructed in school subjects such as Latin, and in voice, violin and keyboard.

Hayden’s nine years at St. Steven’s Cathedral ended abruptly after his ninth year. His voice was changing, and he could no longer sing the high notes properly. Then, as a prank, he cut off the pigtail of a fellow choirboy. This was too much for Georg von Reutter, who immediately fired Hayden.

Luckily Hayden was taken in and cared for by friends while he searched for other employment. Hayden worked at a variety of freelance musical jobs, one of which was employment as the valet-accompanist for the Italian composer, Nicola Porpora, from whom he learned the fundamentals of musical composition. To increase his knowledge of the techniques of composition, he also diligently studied the works of Carl Philip Emanuel Bach.

### Growing fame as a composer

Hayden’s first success as a composer was the comic opera *Der krumme Teufel* (The Limping Devil). He continued to study compositional techniques, and produced many more musical works. Because of his growing reputation, Countess Thun engaged him as her singing and keyboard teacher.

In 1756 Hayden (then 24 years old) was employed by Baron Karl Josef Fürnberg at his country estate. Here Hayden wrote his first string quartets. They were enormously successful, and they marked a turning point in his career.

In 1757, Hayden was employed as Kapelmeister by Count Morzin, and in this position he wrote his first symphonies.

### Kapelmeister for the Esterházy

Count Morzin encountered financial difficulties which forced him to disband his musical establishment, including his Kapelmeister (Director of Music) Joseph Hayden. However, Hayden was quickly offered a similar position by the immensely rich Prince Paul Anton

Esterházy. Hayden went to live at the Esterházy family's palace in the remote Hungarian countryside, far from the influences of the Vienna musical scene. Hayden remained there for the next thirty years, and since his initial contract did not allow him to travel, he was forced to develop his own, very original, musical style.

### **Europe's most popular composer**

When Joseph Hayden's original contract with the Esterházys ran out in 1779, he was able to negotiate a new contract that allowed him much more freedom. He was not only free to travel during part of the year, but crucially, also free to sell his compositions to publishers. He began to write fewer operas and more symphonies and chamber music. He sold these compositions to publishers. Often he sold the same composition several times to publishers in different countries. The great success of these compositions made him the most popular composer in Europe.

### **Friendship with Mozart**

In about 1784, Hayden met Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. They played in string quartets together, and admired each other's work. Hayden and Mozart admired and praised each other's work unstintingly, and they became fast friends.

### **Hayden in England**

In 1790, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy died, and was succeeded by his son, Prince Anton, who sought to economize by dismissing most of the court musicians. Hayden retained a nominal position, with a reduced salary, and few duties. He was thus free to travel, and he made two trips to England, where his music was so popular that there was hardly a concert without the performance of at least one of his works.

Charles Burney, reviewing Hayden's first concert in England, wrote: "Haydn himself presided at the piano-forte; and the sight of that renowned composer so electrified the audience, as to excite an attention and a pleasure superior to any that had ever been caused by instrumental music in England." The success of his concerts in England made Hayden financially independent. He repeated the journey with equal success in 1794-1795.

### **Beethoven's teacher**

While traveling to London in 1790, Hayden met Ludwig van Beethoven in Bonn. He took Beethoven with him to Eisenstadt for the summer. Hayden spent the summer teaching Beethoven some of the elements of counterpoint and other techniques on composition.



Figure 4.5: Portrait of Joseph Haydn by Thomas Hardy (1791).



Figure 4.6: Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, Haydn's most important patron.



Figure 4.7: Haydn as portrayed by John Hoppner in England in 1791.



## 4.3 Mozart

### **The most spectacular child prodigy in musical history**

Mozart's elder sister Nannerl recalled that "In the fourth year of his age his father, for a game as it were, began to teach him a few minuets and pieces at the clavier. ... He could play it faultlessly and with the greatest delicacy, and keeping exactly in time. ... At the age of five, he was already composing little pieces, which he played to his father who wrote them down."

In 1762, when Mozart was six years old, he and Nannerl were already performing before European royalty as child prodigies.

### **More than 600 works in every genre**

Although he died at the early age of 35, Mozart left a huge body of musical works, which greatly influenced other composers. Among his 22 operas, are the well loved and frequently performed *Le nozze di Figaro*, K. 492 (1786), *Don Giovanni*, K. 527 (1787), *Così fan tutte*, K. 588 (1790), and *Die Zauberflöte*, K. 620 (1791).

### **Friendship with Hayden. Influence on Beethoven**

Hayden and Mozart were close friends, and they greatly admired each other's work. In 1785, Hayden told Mozart's father. "I tell you before God, and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer known to me by person and repute, he has taste and what is more the greatest skill in composition."

Beethoven was influenced by Mozart's compositions, and wanted to study with him, but there is no record of the two great composers ever having met.



Figure 4.8: Anonymous portrait of the child Mozart.



Figure 4.9: Mozart aged 14 in January 1770 (School of Verona, attributed to Giambettino Cignaroli).



Figure 4.10: Mozart, in 1781, detail from portrait by Johann Nepomuk della Croce.



Figure 4.11: Mozart wearing the badge of the Order of the Golden Spur which he received in 1770 from Pope Clement XIV in Rome. The painting is a 1777 copy of a work now lost.

## 4.4 Beethoven and Napoleon

Beethoven's 5th symphony is one of the most famous works in the history of music. It contains the dot-dot-dot-dash theme that was used in World War II to symbolize the Morse code for V, meaning Victory for the Allies in their struggle against Hitler. The theme has variously been interpreted as Fate, knocking on the door, or Beethoven, railing against his increasing deafness. But recent research points to another interpretation: The famous dot-dot-dot-dash theme of Beethoven's 5th symphony, both in rhythm and in tones, echos a revolutionary song with the words "Nous jurons tous, le fer en main!"

According to a recent article<sup>1</sup>, "...those first four notes, once heard, are never forgotten. The traditional wisdom has been that in the Fifth, Beethoven is railing against fate and his increasing deafness. But conductor John Eliot Gardiner believes that it contains a hidden, radical message. Expressing the composer's sympathy with the ideals of the French Revolution. Liberty, equality and brotherhood. It's not just a matter of his expressing his inner turmoil, it's also him nailing his colours to the political mast of the French Revolution. 'I believe in the rights of man, I believe in the brotherhood of all men.'"

When he composed his 5th symphony, Beethoven was living in Vienna, and the highly reactionary Austrian government would have arrested him if they had known the hidden meaning of the 5th symphony's famous theme. The French Revolution was followed by a period of reaction, during which the monarchies of Europe all united to overthrow the revolutionary government of France. Beethoven initially saw Napoleon as a defender of the ideals of the Enlightenment, and he dedicated his 3rd symphony to Napoleon. However, when Napoleon crowned himself as Emperor, Beethoven tore up the dedication in rage and disillusion. Napoleon, with his invasion of Russia, proved himself to be a megalomaniac, indifferent to the loss of innocent lives. The French Revolution itself degenerated into an orgy of violence and killing. Nevertheless, the ideals of the Enlightenment, the ideals that inspired Beethoven, can inspire us today.

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<sup>1</sup><https://subsaga.com/bbc/documentaries/music/2016/the-secret-of-beethovens-fifth-symphony.html>



Figure 4.12: Beethoven, a revolutionary in music, was profoundly sympathetic with the ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood which inspired the French Revolution.



Figure 4.13: Revolutionary France. Although at its start it embraced the ideals of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution later degenerated into an orgy of bloodshed, Robespierre's "Terror".





Figure 4.14: **Portrait of Beethoven as a young man.**



Figure 4.15: Portrait by Joseph Karl Stieler.

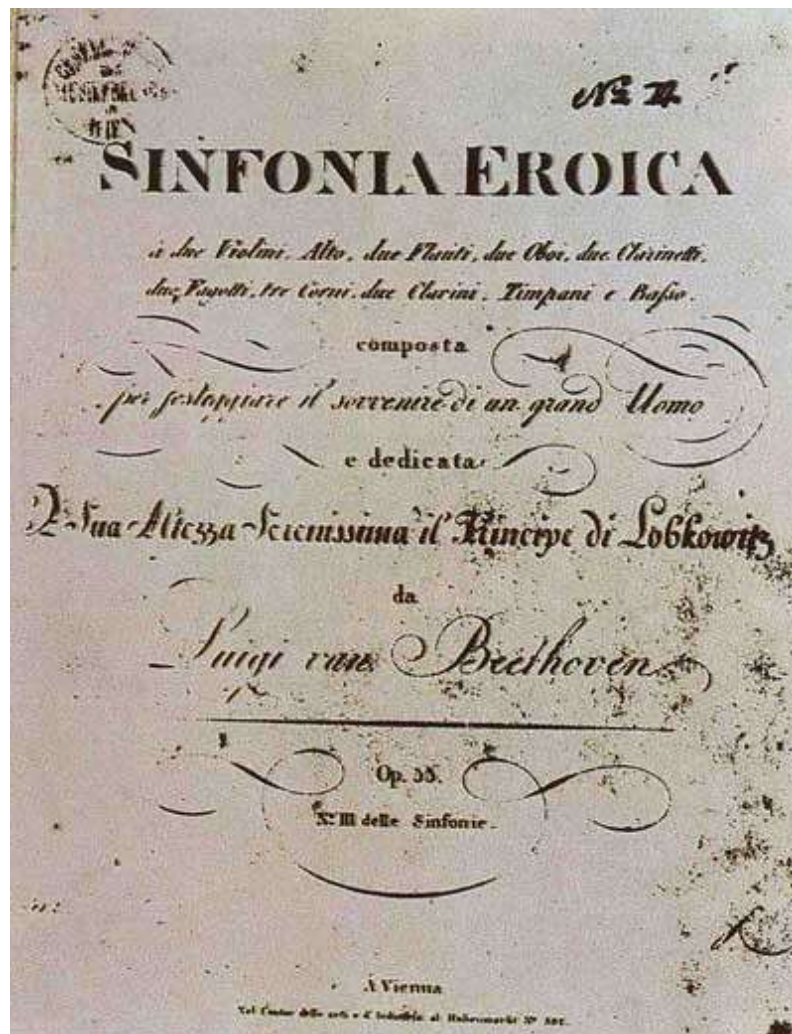


Figure 4.16: Beethoven's Third Symphony was originally dedicated to Napoleon; but when Napoleon crowned himself as Emperor, Beethoven was filled with rage and disillusion, and he tore up the dedication.



Figure 4.17: Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. Napoleon showed himself to be **totally self-centered and indifferent to human suffering and death as long as it served his personal ambitions.**



Figure 4.18: An old, disheveled and completely deaf Beethoven, conducting his great 9th Symphony. The ideals of the Enlightenment remain to inspire us today. In Beethoven's choral symphony, his great music combined with Schiller's words give today's world an anthem of universal human solidarity: All men and women are brothers and sisters! Not just some but all! All!

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# Chapter 5

## SOME 19TH CENTURY COMPOSERS

### 5.1 Johannes Brahms

#### Brahms and the Schumanns

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a major composer of the romantic era. His name is sometimes associated with Bach and Beethoven as one of the “three B’s” of music. The extraordinary talent of the then 20-year-old Brahms was recognized by Robert and Clara Schumann when Brahms visited them, and they wrote an article predicting that Brahms would soon take a place in musical history. Brahms fell deeply in love with Clara Schumann, and after Robert Schumann’s confinement to a mental hospital and death, a warm relationship between Brahms and Clara continued to the end of their lives.

#### Composer, virtuoso pianist, and conductor

Johannes Brahms became famous, not only as a composer, but also as a virtuoso pianist and conductor. Among his most famous compositions are his piano concertos and symphonies, the *German Requiem* and the enormously charming *Liebesslieder Waltzes*. Brahms’ compositions were based on the polyphonic structures of previous masters, such as Bach and Beethoven. He was sometimes criticized for being too formal and academic.

#### An essential bridge between two eras

Today Johannes Brahms is recognized as the composer who formed the essential bridge between Beethoven’s romantic era, and the modern musical era,



Figure 5.1: Ede Reményi (l.) and Brahms in 1852.



Figure 5.2: Brahms in 1853.



Figure 5.3: Clara Schumann in 1857, photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl.

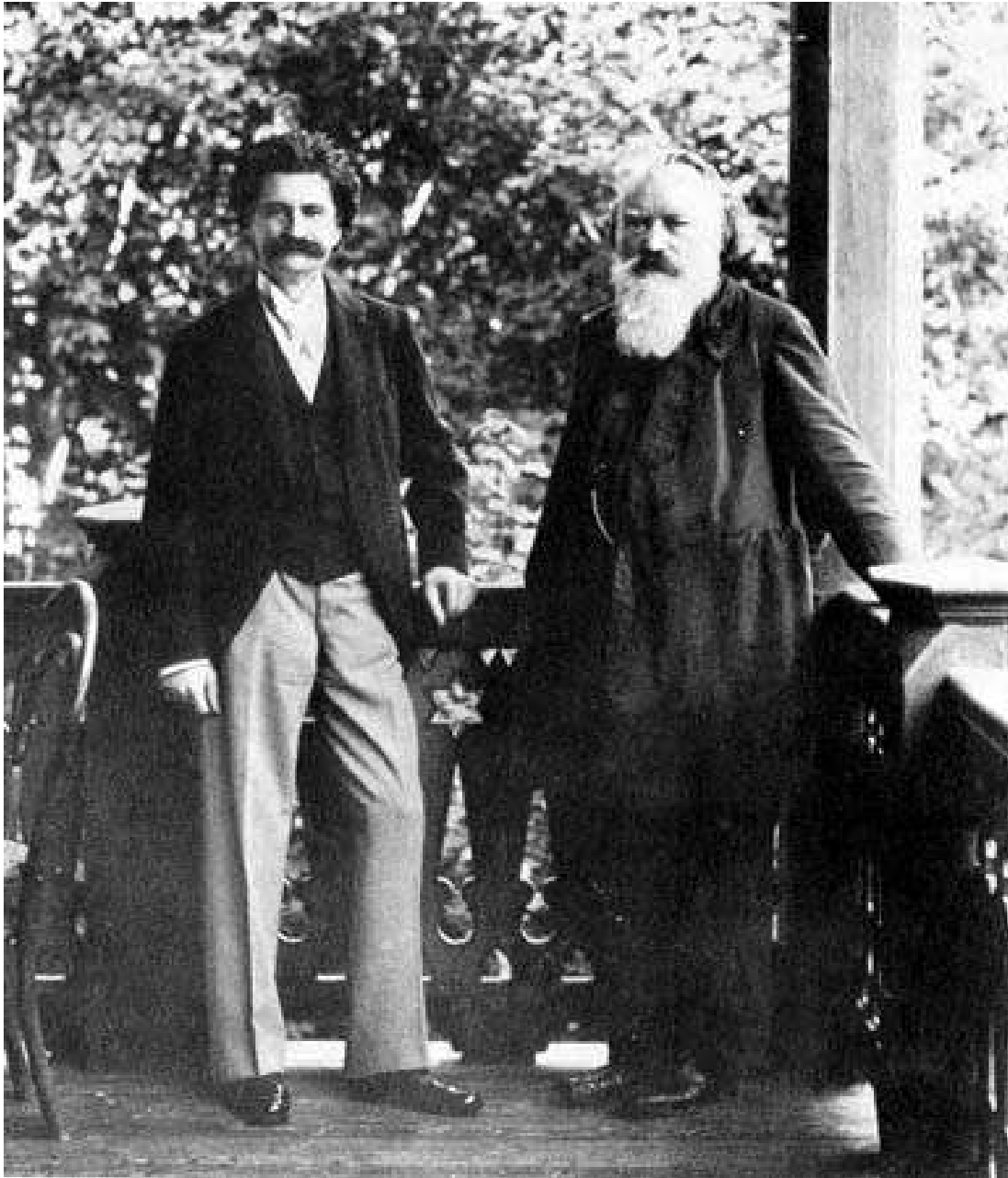


Figure 5.4: Johann Strauss II (or Johann Strauss the Younger, or Johann Strauss Jr., 1825-1899) with Johannes Brahms (1833-1897).

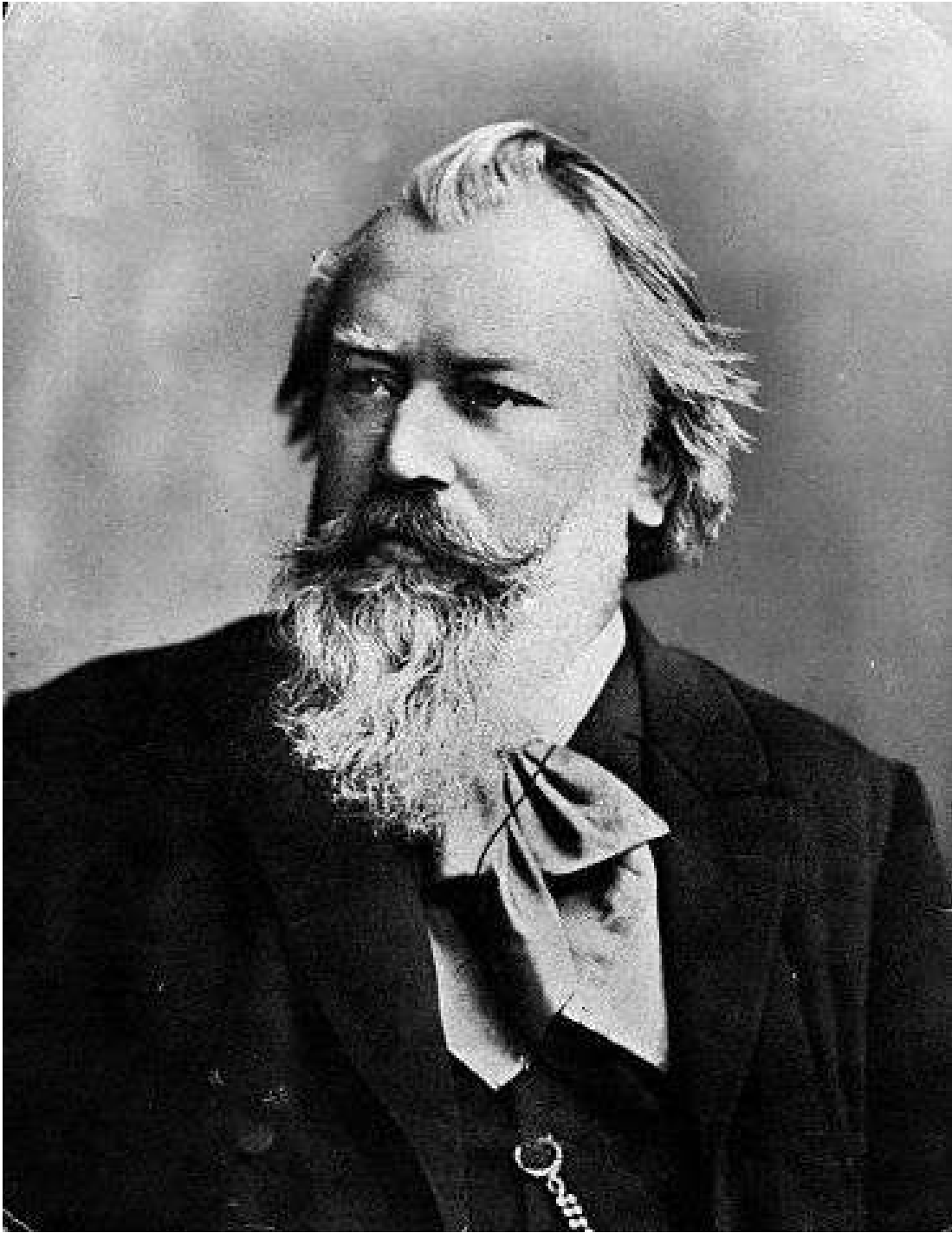


Figure 5.5: Johannes Brahms, 1889.

## 5.2 Franz Liszt

### A child prodigy

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was born in Hungary, which was then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father, Adam Liszt, was a musician in the service of Prince Nickolaus II Esterházy. Adam Liszt had personally known such great figures as Beethoven and Hayden. He began giving piano lessons to his son when Franz was seven. By the time Franz Liszt was nine years old he was an established concert pianist and composer. His talents so much impressed a group of wealthy sponsors that they offered to pay for his musical education in Vienna.

### Liszt's children with Countess Marie d'Agoult

In 1833, Liszt began an affair with Countess Marie d'Agoult, who left her husband and family to join him in Geneva. Their children were

- Blandine Rachel (1835-1862), who was the first wife of future French prime minister Émile Ollivier but died at the age of 26
- Francesca Gaetana Cosima (1837-1930), who first married pianist and conductor Hans von Bülow and then composer Richard Wagner
- Daniel (1839-1859), who was already a promising pianist and gifted scholar when he died of tuberculosis.

### Philanthropies

Liszt gave much of the money that he earned from his concerts to various charities. For example, he made generous donations to the Beethoven monument, the Hungarian National School of Music, the building fund of Cologne Cathedral, the establishment of a Gymnasium at Dortmund, and the construction of the Leopold Church in Pest. He also made donations to many hospitals, schools, and charitable organizations.

### Lisztomania

According to Wikipedia,

**“After 1842, ‘Lisztomania’ - coined by 19th-century German poet and Liszt’s contemporary, Heinrich Heine - swept across Europe. The reception that Liszt enjoyed, as a result, can be described only as hysterical. Women fought over his silk handkerchiefs and velvet gloves, which they ripped to shreds as souvenirs. This atmosphere was fuelled in great part by the artist’s mesmeric personality and stage presence. Many witnesses later testified that Liszt’s playing raised the mood of audiences to a level of mystical ecstasy.”**

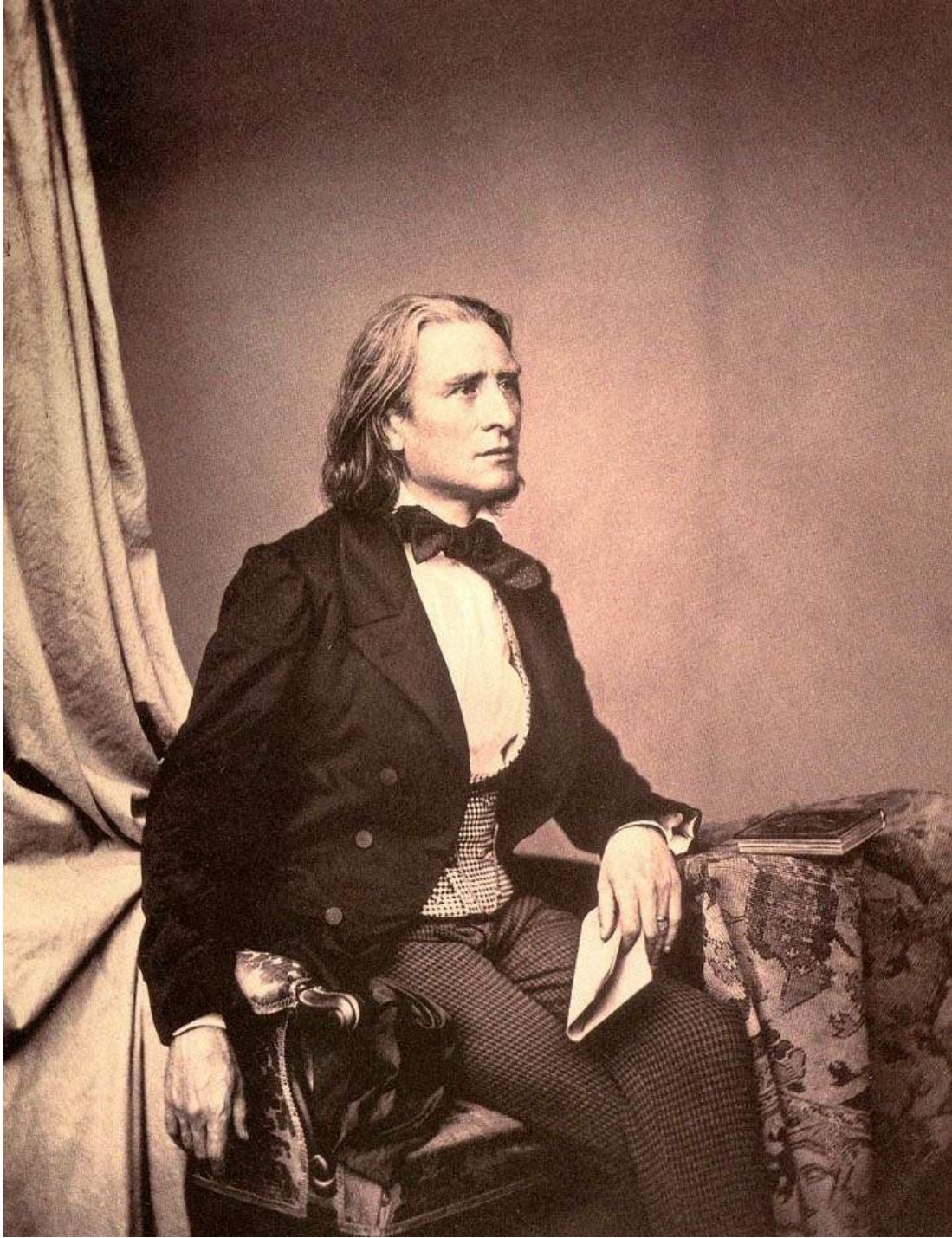


Figure 5.6: Composer and pianist Franz Liszt in 1858.





Figure 5.7: Franz Liszt, portrait by Hungarian painter Miklós Barabás, 1847.



Figure 5.8: **Franz Liszt Fantasizing at the Piano (1840)**, by Danhauser, commissioned by Conrad Graf. The imagined gathering shows seated Alfred de Musset or Alexandre Dumas, George Sand, Liszt, Marie d'Agoult; standing Hector Berlioz or Victor Hugo, Niccolò Paganini, Gioachino Rossini; a bust of Beethoven on the grand piano, a portrait of Lord Byron on the wall, and a statue of Joan of Arc on the far left.



Figure 5.9: Liszt giving a concert for Emperor Franz Joseph I .

## 5.3 Frédéric Chopin

### Chopin's genius was recognized early

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) was born in the Polish town of Zelazowa Wola, 46 kilometers west of Warsaw. His father and mother both played instruments and Chopin was given a musical education and piano lessons. It soon became apparent that he was a child prodigy. By the age of seven, he had begun giving public concerts. In 1817, when Chopin was still only seven years old, he composed two polonaises, in G minor and B-flat major.

### Living in Paris, Chopin still felt Polish

Chopin arrived in Paris in late September 1831 at the age of 21. Although he never returned to Poland, he always felt Polish rather than French. Often, inspiration for his compositions came from Polish folk music.

After one of Chopin's concerts, a music critic wrote, "Here is a young man who ... taking no model, has found, if not a complete renewal of piano music, ... an abundance of original ideas of a kind to be found nowhere else..." Also, Robert Schumann, reviewing the Op. 2 Variations, wrote: "Hats off, gentlemen! A genius."

In Paris, Chopin formed a close friendship with Franz Liszt. However, the friendship was later marred by professional jealousy.

### A winter visit to Majorca with George Sand

At a party in Paris, Chopin was introduced to the writer Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin, better known by her pen-name, George Sand. At that time, Sand was one of the most popular authors in Europe, but her appearance initially repelled Chopin. She was very short and dark, wore men's clothing, and smoked cigars. Chopin remarked, "Is this really a woman?" However, George Sand fell in love with Chopin, who was at that moment very dejected because of the news that his marriage to Maria Wodzińska could never take place because of the opposition of her parents. By the end of June, 1838, Chopin and Sand had become lovers.

During the winter of 1838, Chopin and Sand travelled to Majorca with Sand's two children, in the hope of improving Chopin's health. However, when they discovered that Chopin and Sand were not married, the deeply religious people of Majorca refused to give them accommodation. The party was forced to live in a former monastery, which offered them very little protection from the cold. Thus, instead of improving Chopin's health, the visit to Majorca worsened it.

Chopin died in 1849 at the early age of 39. His death was primarily due to tuberculosis, but is additional illnesses may also have contributed to his death. People came from many parts of Europe to attend his funeral, and many were unable to enter the church because they did not have tickets.

Today, Chopin's piano compositions are known and loved throughout the world.



Figure 5.10: Chopin, daguerreotype by Bisson, 1849.



Figure 5.11: Chopin plays for the Radziwills, 1829 (painting by Henryk Siemiradzki, 1887).



Figure 5.12: Chopin at 25, by his fiancée Maria Wodzińska, 1835.



Figure 5.13: Chopin at 28, from Delacroix's joint portrait of Chopin and Sand, 1838.



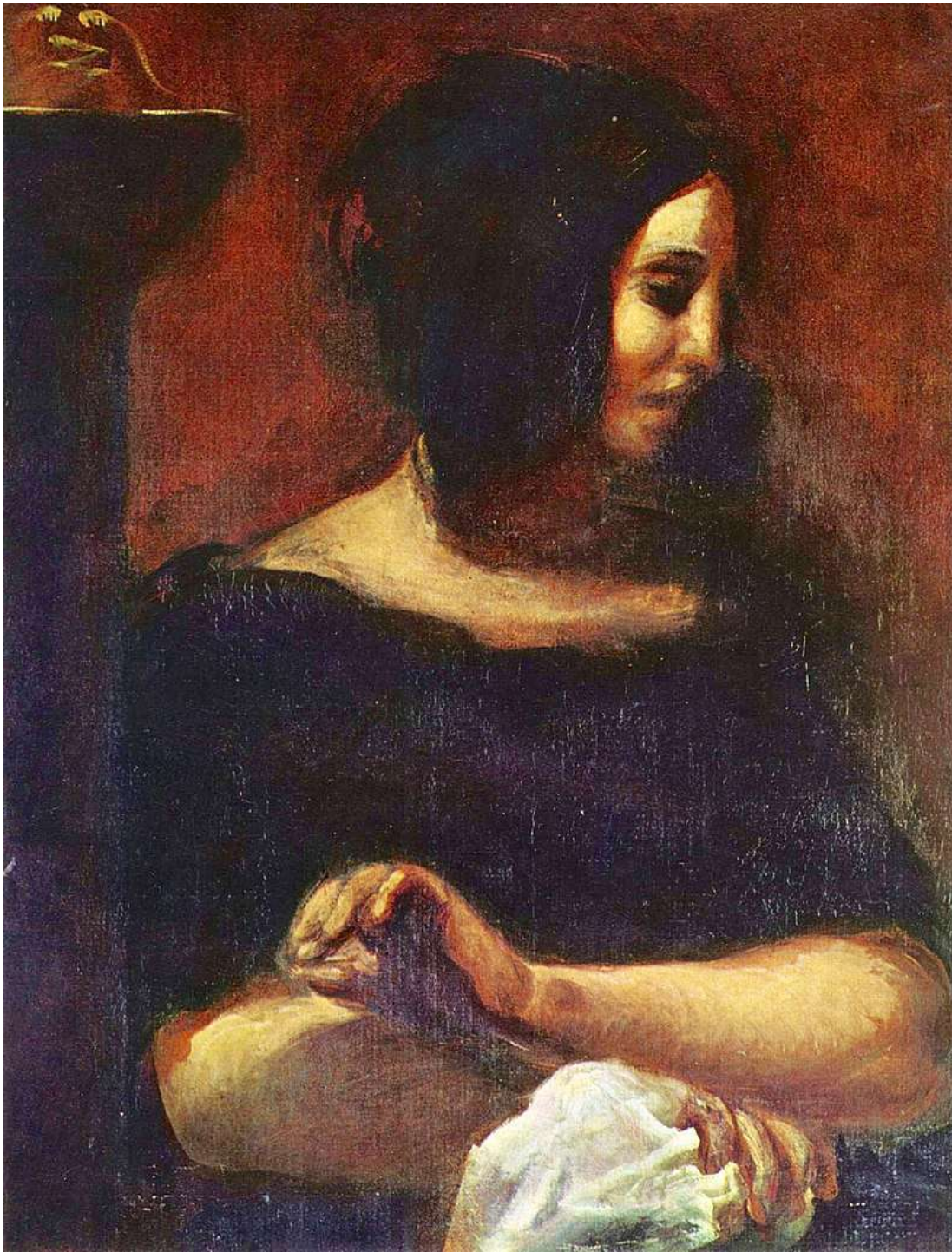


Figure 5.14: George Sand sewing, from Delacroix's joint portrait of Chopin and Sand, 1838.

## 5.4 Giuseppe Verdi

### Verdi's childhood and education

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) was born in the village of Le Roncole, in a region of Italy which was then a part of the French Empire. His father was an innkeeper and landowner. As a young boy, Verdi showed a strong interest in music, and this was encouraged by his ambitious father. By the time that Giuseppe Verdi was eight years old, he already held a paid position as a church organist. He was given an excellent education, both in humanities and in music.

Remembering his youthful days, Verdi wrote: "From the ages of 13 to 18 I wrote a motley assortment of pieces: marches for band by the hundred, perhaps as many little sinfonie that were used in church, in the theatre and at concerts, five or six concertos and sets of variations for pianoforte, which I played myself at concerts, many serenades, cantatas (arias, duets, very many trios) and various pieces of church music, of which I remember only a Stabat Mater."

### Verdi's Operas

Although he composed much non-operatic music, Verdi is best remembered for his operas. Here is a list of them:

1. **Roberto, Comte di San Bonifacio, 1839**
2. **Un giorno di regno, 1840**
3. **Nabucodonosor, 1842**
4. **I Lombardi alla prima crociata, 1843**
5. **Ernani, 1844**
6. **I due Foscari, 1844**
7. **Giovanna d'Arco, 1845**
8. **Alzira, 1845**
9. **Attila, 1846**
10. **Macbeth, 1847**
11. **I masnadieri, 1847**
12. **Il corsaro, 1848**
13. **La battaglia di Legnano, 1849**

14. Luisa Miller, 1849
15. Stiffelio, 1850
16. Rigoletto, 1851
17. Il trovatore, 1853
18. La traviata, 1853
19. Les vepres siciliennes, 1855
20. Simon Boccanegra, 1857
21. Un ballo in maschera, 1859
22. La forza del destino, 1862
23. Don Carlos, 1867
24. Aida, 1871
25. Otello, 1887
26. Falstaff, 1893

Today, Verdi's operas are performed and loved throughout the world.

### **Verdi and the movement to unify and liberate Italy**

Verdi was strongly dedicated to the movement that sought to unify Italy and to liberate it from foreign control. Some of the songs from Verdi's operas became marching songs or theme songs for this political movement. Ultimately the movement was successful, and a united Italy freed itself from foreign rule.

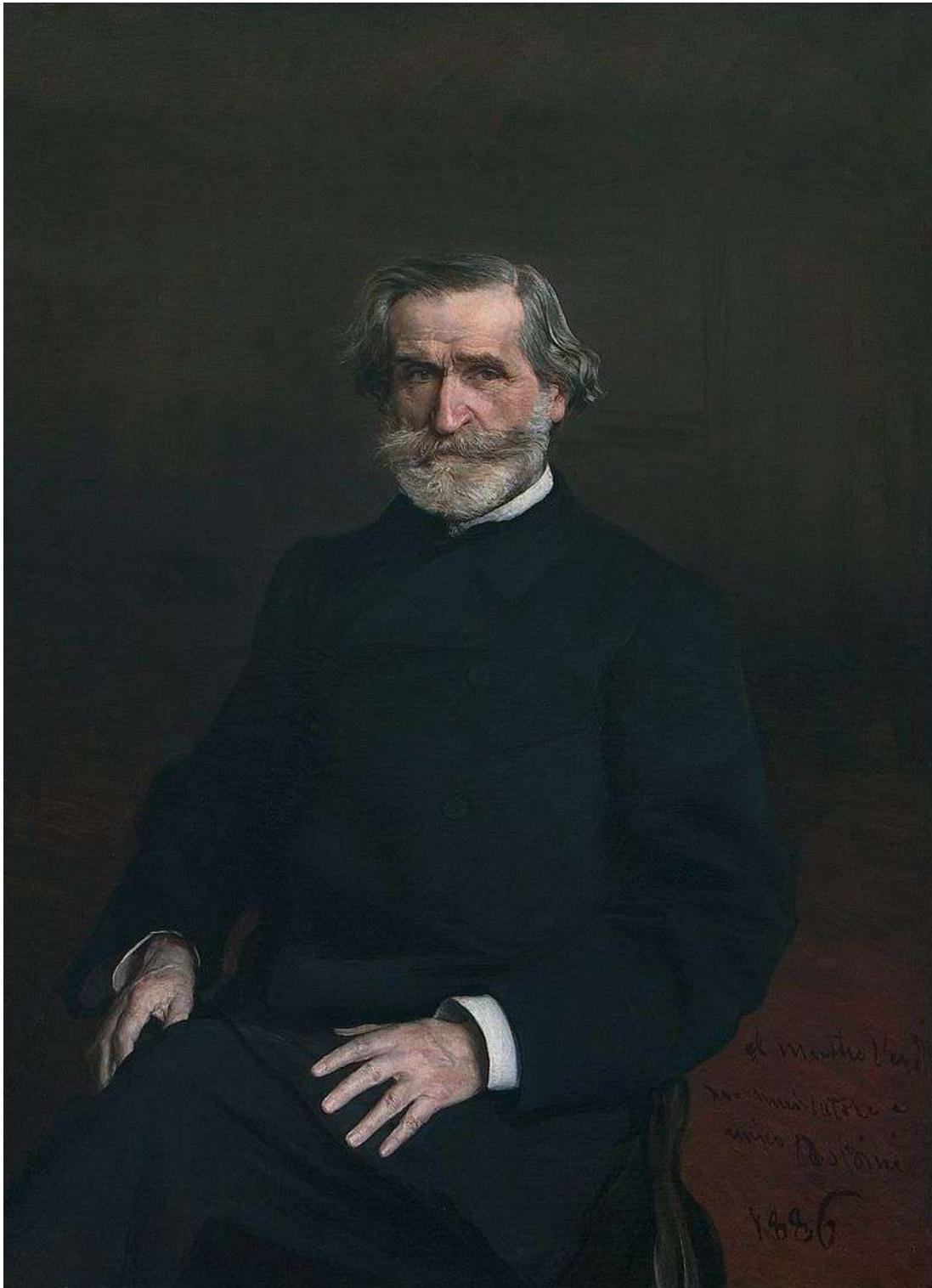


Figure 5.15: Portrait of Giuseppe Verdi by Giovanni Boldini, 1886.



Figure 5.16: Painting "Viva Verdi" slogans.



Figure 5.17: Verdi in Russia, 1861-62.



Figure 5.18: Verdi conducting the Paris Opera premiere of Aida in 1880.

## 5.5 Franz Schubert

### Schubert's childhood and education

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) was the son of an Austrian schoolmaster, who began giving him lessons at the age of five. He was also given instruction in the piano by his brother Ignaz, but the young Franz soon surpassed his brother, and required no further lessons from him. Ignaz wrote later, "I was amazed when Franz told me, a few months after we began, that he had no need of any further instruction from me, and that for the future he would make his own way. And in truth his progress in a short period was so great that I was forced to acknowledge in him a master who had completely distanced and outstripped me, and whom I despaired of overtaking."

When Franz Schubert was eight, his father began giving him violin lessons, and very soon he was able to play duets with great proficiency. He was also given organ lessons by the local church organist, who would often assure Schubert's father, with tears in his eyes, that he had never had such a pupil.

### Franz Schubert's important musical works

Wikipedia states that "Despite his short lifetime, Schubert left behind a vast oeuvre, including more than 600 secular vocal works (mainly lieder), seven complete symphonies, sacred music, operas, incidental music, and a large body of piano and chamber music. His major works include "Erlkönig" (D. 328), the Piano Quintet in A major, D. 667 (Trout Quintet), the Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D. 759 (Unfinished Symphony), the 'Great' Symphony No. 9 in C major, D. 944, the String Quintet (D. 956), the three last piano sonatas (D. 958-960), the opera *Fierabras* (D. 796), the incidental music to the play *Rosamunde* (D. 797), and the song cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* (D. 795) and *Winterreise*."

### Final years and death

Schubert's musical reputation had greatly increased, but nevertheless, his hopeless love for his student, Countess Caroline Esterhazy, went unrequited. Later, his health began to worsen. There is speculation that his symptoms may have been due to mercury poisoning. At that time mercury was commonly used as a treatment for syphilis.

Schubert died in Vienna, aged 31. The cause of his death was officially given as typhoid fever, but, as discussed above, other causes may have contributed.

Shortly before Schubert's death, his friend Karl Holz, and his string quartet visited to play for him. The musical work that Schubert wanted to hear was Beethoven's String Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor. Schubert was buried next to Beethoven, whom he had admired throughout his life.





Figure 5.19: Oil painting of Franz Schubert by Wilhelm August Rieder (1875), made from his own 1825 watercolour portrait.



Figure 5.20: Schubert, 1814, painted by Josef Abel.



Figure 5.21: **Portrait of Franz Schubert by Franz Eybl (1827).**



Figure 5.22: Franz Schubert by Josef Kriehuber (1846).

## 5.6 Georges Bizet

### A brilliant student

Georges Bizet (1838-1875) was born in Paris. His father was a singing teacher, and his mother was an accomplished pianist from a highly cultured and musical family. As a child, Georges Bizet received musical instruction, especially from his mother.

Georges Bizet was admitted to the Conservatoire while still only nine years old. He was a brilliant student, and he won many prizes, including the prestigious Prix de Rome. He was also awarded a travel grant which allowed him to live and study in other European countries for five years.

### Bizet's lack of success during his last years

After his travel grant had expired, Bizet was without a steady source of income. None of his operas had met with immediate success. Only his incidental music to the play, *L'Arlésienne* gained immediate popularity. Bizet was reduced to making a living by taking pupils, and by arranging the music of other composers. He died in 1875 from a heart attack after swimming in the Seine. The fact that he was a heavy smoker probably contributed to his death. More than 4,000 people were present at his funeral.

After Bizet's death many of his manuscripts were lost or scattered. During the 20th century, his music became extremely popular and widely performed, and some of his lost compositions were rediscovered.

### Carmen: the world's best loved and widely performed opera

A decade after Bizet's death- *Carmen* achieved great popularity, at first abroad, and later in France. Today, *Carmen* is the most frequently performed and best loved opera in the entire repertoire. Bizet's music is acclaimed for its brilliance, its harmonization, and for the way in which it expresses the emotions of the characters in the story.

In the United States, the Metropolitan Opera has performed *Carmen* more than a thousand times. According to Wikipedia, **"In February 1906 Enrico Caruso sang José at the Met for the first time; he continued to perform in this role until 1919, two years before his death."**

There have also been many adaptations of *Carmen*. An example is the film *Carmen Jones* (1954). The film uses Bizet's music, but the members of the cast are black, and the scene is modern. The toriador Escamillo becomes the prize-fighter Husky Miller, and his song becomes, "Stand up and fight until you hear the bell. Stand toe to toe. Trade blow for blow. Keep on punching 'til you make your punches tell. Show that crowd what you know. Until you hear that bell, that final bell, stand up and fight like hell." In the film, Don José becomes Joe, and his abandoned sweetheart laments (to Bizet's music) "Joe! You was always my Joe. And you certainly showed it. Reckon everyone knowed it."



Figure 5.23: Georges Bizet photographed in about 1860.



Figure 5.24: Geneviève Bizet, painted in 1878 by Jules-Élie Delaunay. She and Georges Bizet had one son.



Figure 5.25: Poster for the opera, Carmen.



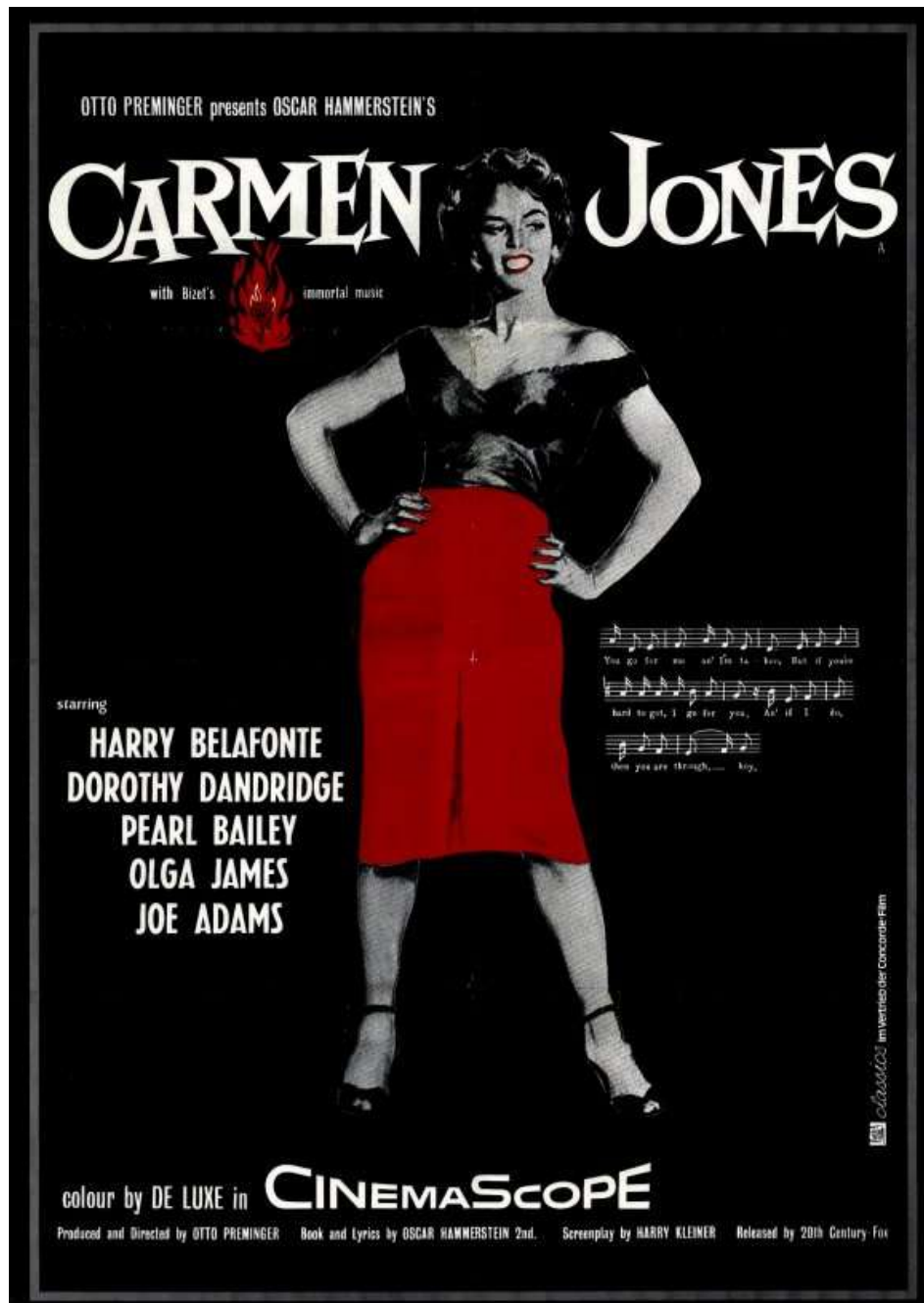


Figure 5.26: Theatrical poster for the film *Carmen Jones* (1954). The film uses Bizet's music, but the members of the cast are black, and the scene modern. The toriador Escamillo becomes the prize-fighter Husky Miller, and his song becomes, "Stand up and fight until you hear the bell. Stand toe to toe. Trade blow for blow. Keep on punching 'til you make your punches tell. Show that crowd what you know. Until you hear that bell, that final bell, stand up and fight like hell"

## 5.7 Clara Schumann

### Clara Wieck, a child prodigy

Clara Wieck (later Clara Schumann, 1819-1896) was born in Leipzig, where her father was a professional pianist and teacher, and her mother an accomplished singer. Clara Wieck was a child prodigy, acclaimed for her piano performances in Vienna, Paris and other cities at the age of eleven. She played her entire repertoire from memory, rather than reading the notes. At the time, this was a completely new practice. Her career as one of the most famous pianists of the Romantic Era stretched over 51 years.

### Marriage to Robert Schumann

The composer, Robert Schumann, was eight years older than Clara Wieck. In 1837, when she was eighteen, he proposed to her, and she accepted. They had eight children together. The Schumanns met and encouraged Johannes Brahms, who fell in love with Clara.

In 1854, Robert Schumann had a mental breakdown and attempted suicide. He was then admitted, at his own request, to a mental hospital, where he died two years later. Clara was left alone to care for their large family, in addition to all her other duties.

The friendship and love that Brahms gave to her was a help in these difficult times. Clara also formed a strong friendship with the violinist Joseph Joachim. Hearing Joachim play the solo part in Beethoven's violin Concerto, Clara wrote that he played "with a finish, a depth of poetic feeling, his whole soul in every note, so ideally, that I have never heard violin-playing like it, and I can truly say that I have never received so indelible an impression from any virtuoso."

A lasting friendship developed between Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim, which lasted forty years, and was a great help to her.

### One of the very few woman composers

Despite her heavy duties, both as a famous concert pianist and as a mother, caring for a very large family, Clara Schumann composed a very large number of excellent musical works. She composed solo piano pieces, piano concertos, chamber music, choral pieces and songs. A list of her compositions can be found on the Wikipedia website entitled "List of Compositions of Clara Schumann"



Figure 5.27: Clara Wieck, from an 1835 lithograph.



Figure 5.28: Joseph Joachim and Schumann, after a lost 1854 drawing by Adolph Menzel.



Figure 5.29: Clara and Robert Schumann, illustration from *Famous Composers and their Works*.



Figure 5.30: Schumann on the 100 DM banknote.

## 5.8 Claude Debussy

Wikipedia says of Debussy:

“Born to a family of modest means and little cultural involvement, Debussy showed enough musical talent to be admitted at the age of ten to France’s leading music college, the Conservatoire de Paris. He originally studied the piano, but found his vocation in innovative composition, despite the disapproval of the Conservatoire’s conservative professors. He took many years to develop his mature style, and was nearly 40 when he achieved international fame in 1902 with the only opera he completed, *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

“Debussy’s orchestral works include *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune* (1894), *Nocturnes* (1897-1899) and *Images* (1905-1912). His music was to a considerable extent a reaction against Wagner and the German musical tradition. He regarded the classical symphony as obsolete and sought an alternative in his ‘symphonic sketches’, *La mer* (1903-1905). His piano works include sets of 24 *Préludes* and 12 *Études*. Throughout his career he wrote *mélodies* based on a wide variety of poetry, including his own. He was greatly influenced by the Symbolist poetic movement of the later 19th century. A small number of works, including the early *La Damoiselle élue* and the late *Le Martyre de saint Sébastien* have important parts for chorus. In his final years, he focused on chamber music, completing three of six planned sonatas for different combinations of instruments.”

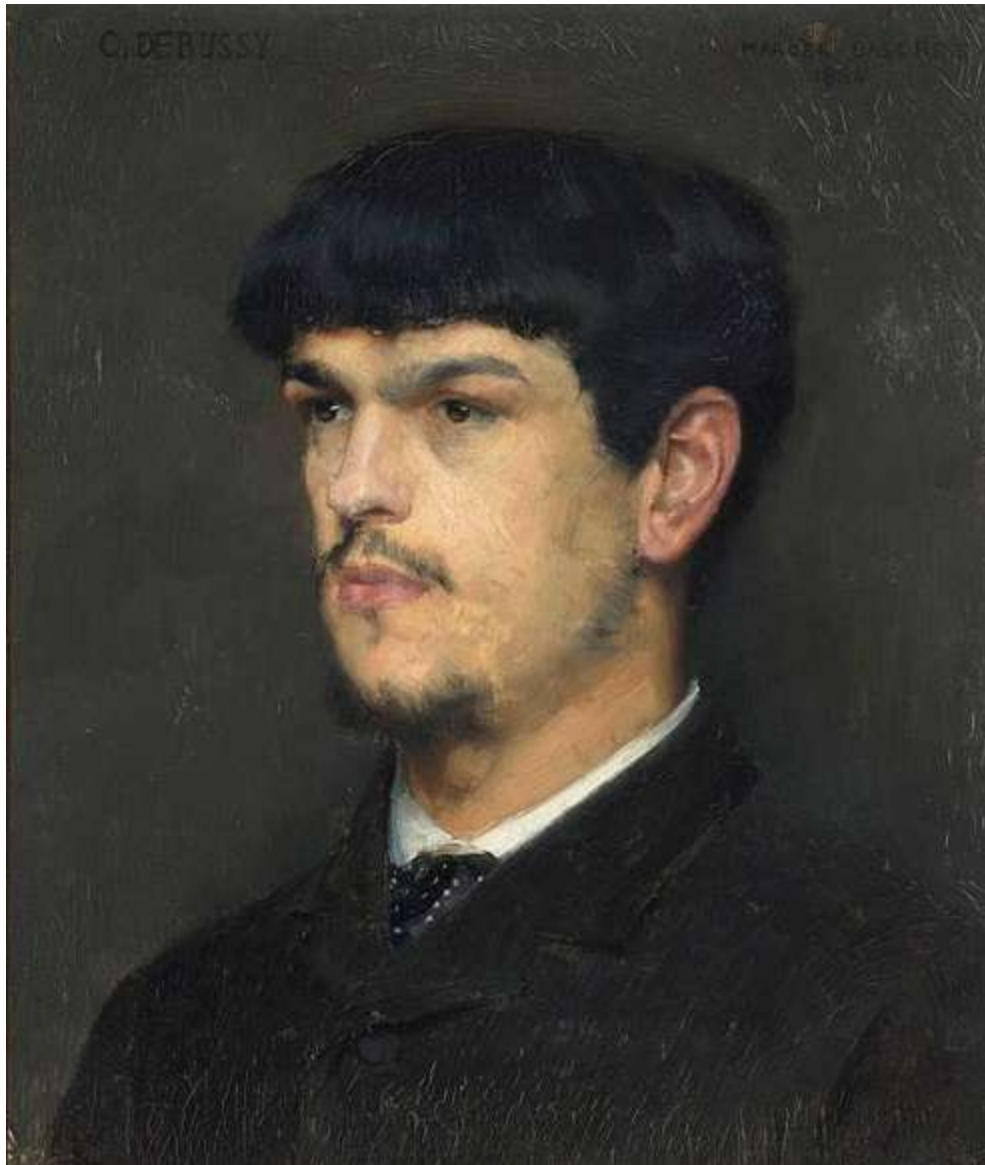


Figure 5.31: Debussy by Marcel Baschet, 1884.



Figure 5.32: Debussy in 1908.





Figure 5.33: Poster by Georges Rochegrosse for the premiere of *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902)..

## 5.9 Gustav Mahler

### Mahler's family and early years

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) was born into a Jewish family from Bohemia, which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father's family was of humble origin, but his father had become a prosperous innkeeper, and he married the daughter of a soap manufacturer.

When Gustav Mahler was four years old he began playing his grandmother's piano, and he became so skilled that he was regarded as a "wunderkind". At the age of ten, he gave a piano recital at the theatre of the town where the family was living.

In 1875, when Mahler was fifteen years old, his younger brother died after a long illness. With the help of a friend, Mahler composed an opera (now lost) as a memorial to his much-loved brother.

The same year, 1875, Gustav Mahler was accepted as a student at the Vienna Conservatory. While a student there, he won prizes at the end of each of his first two years. For his final year, he concentrated on composition. He attended lectures by Anton Bruckner, and was influenced by him.

### Mahler's work as a conductor

Wikipedia says of him;

**"After graduating from the Vienna Conservatory in 1878, he held a succession of conducting posts of rising importance in the opera houses of Europe, culminating in his appointment in 1897 as director of the Vienna Court Opera (Hofoper). During his ten years in Vienna, Mahler - who had converted to Catholicism to secure the post - experienced regular opposition and hostility from the anti-Semitic press. Nevertheless, his innovative productions and insistence on the highest performance standards ensured his reputation as one of the greatest of opera conductors, particularly as an interpreter of the stage works of Wagner, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky. Late in his life he was briefly director of New York's Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic."**

### Mahler's compositions

Gustav Mahler's compositions are rather few in number, since he earned his living by conduction, and the time that he could devote to composing was limited. However his compositions are of high quality and great importance, since they form a bridge between classical romantic composers such as Beethoven, and modern music. Below is a list of Mahler's works:

**Early works**

- 1876: Piano Quartet in A minor
- 1878-80: Das klagende Lied
- 1880: Three Lieder: "Im Lenz"; "Winterlied"; "Maitanz im Gr $\tilde{A}$  $\frac{1}{4}$ nen"
- 1880-83: Lieder und Gesänge Vol. I (five songs)
- 1885-86: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (four songs)
- 1884: Der Trompeter von Säckingen (lost, except for movement Blumine that was included in early versions of Symphony No. 1, see below)

**Wunderhorn period**

- 1887-88: Die Drei Pintos adaptation
- 1887-90: Lieder und Gesänge Vol. II (four songs)
- 1887-90: Lieder und Gesänge Vol. III (five songs)
- 1888-96: Symphony No. 1 in D
- 1888-94: Symphony No. 2
- 1892: "Das himmlische Leben" (Wunderhorn setting later used in Symphony No. 4)
- 1892-1901: Des Knaben Wunderhorn (12 songs)
- 1894-96: Symphony No. 3
- 1899-1901: Symphony No. 4

**Middle period**

- 1901-04: Rückert-Lieder (5 songs)
- 1901-04: Kindertotenlieder (5 songs)
- 1901-02: Symphony No. 5
- 1903-04: Symphony No. 6 in A minor
- 1904-05: Symphony No. 7
- 1906-07: Symphony No. 8 in E-flat

**Late works**

- 1908-09: Das Lied von der Erde
- 1909-10: Symphony No. 9
- 1910: Symphony No. 10 in F sharp (unfinished; continuous draft score)



Figure 5.34: Mahler in 1892.



Figure 5.35: 1902 portrait by Emil Orlik.



Figure 5.36: Alma Schindler, who married Mahler in 1902. After Mahler's death, she married the famous architect Walter Gropius, and afterwards the poet Franz Werfel.

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# Chapter 6

## A FEW 20TH CENTURY COMPOSERS

### 6.1 Edward Elgar

#### Family and early life

Edward Elgar (1857-1934) was born in a small village near Worcester, England. His father was a violinist, and held the post of organist of St George's Roman Catholic Church, Worcester. At the age of eight, Edward Elgar was taking piano and violin lessons, and was so skillful that his father would sometimes take him along to the grand houses where he tuned pianos, giving his son, Edward, a chance to display his skills.

When he was about ten years old, Elgar wrote a composition that, forty years later, he arranged and orchestrated as the suites, *The Wand of Youth*.

#### Marriage

When Elgar was 29, he began to teach music to a girl called Alice Roberts, the daughter of Major-General Sir Henry Roberts. She was eight years older than himself. They were married three years later. Alice's family was horrified by her intention to marry an unknown musician who was a Roman Catholic, and she was disinherited. However the marriage was a very happy one, and Alice was a great support for Elgar.

#### Fame as a composer

The performances of Elgar's *Enigma Variations* and his *Pomp and Circumstances* marches made Elgar famous. He was later made Master of the King's Music, and knighted.

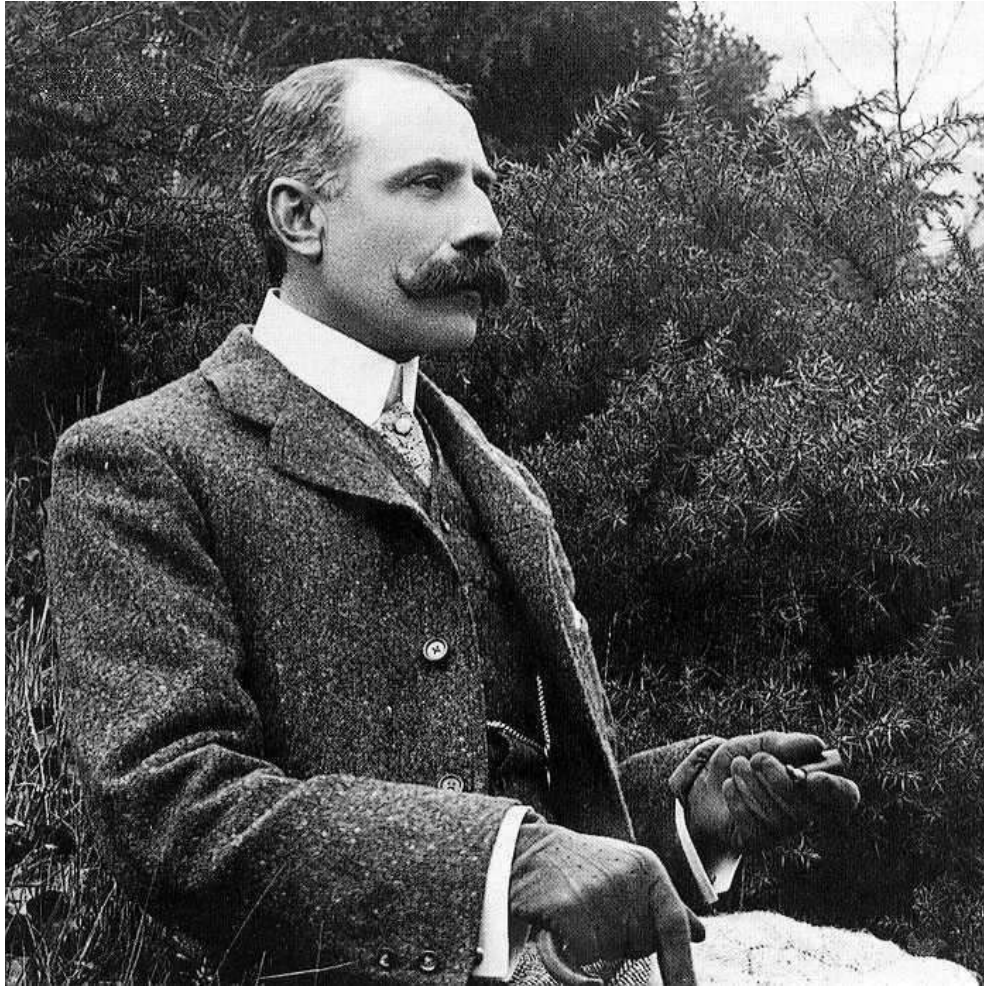


Figure 6.1: Edward Elgar, c. 1900.

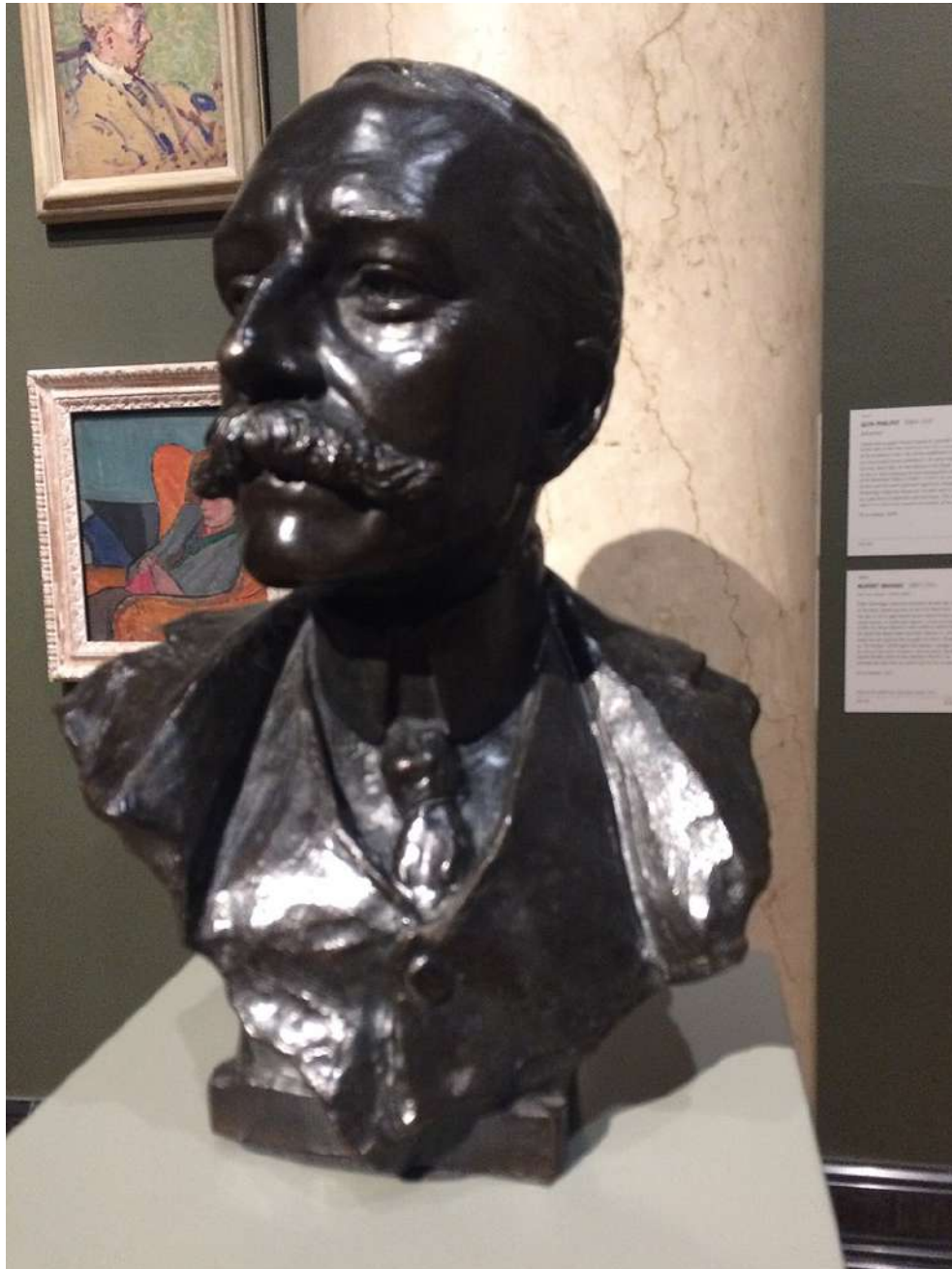


Figure 6.2: Elgar, by Percival Hedley, 1905.

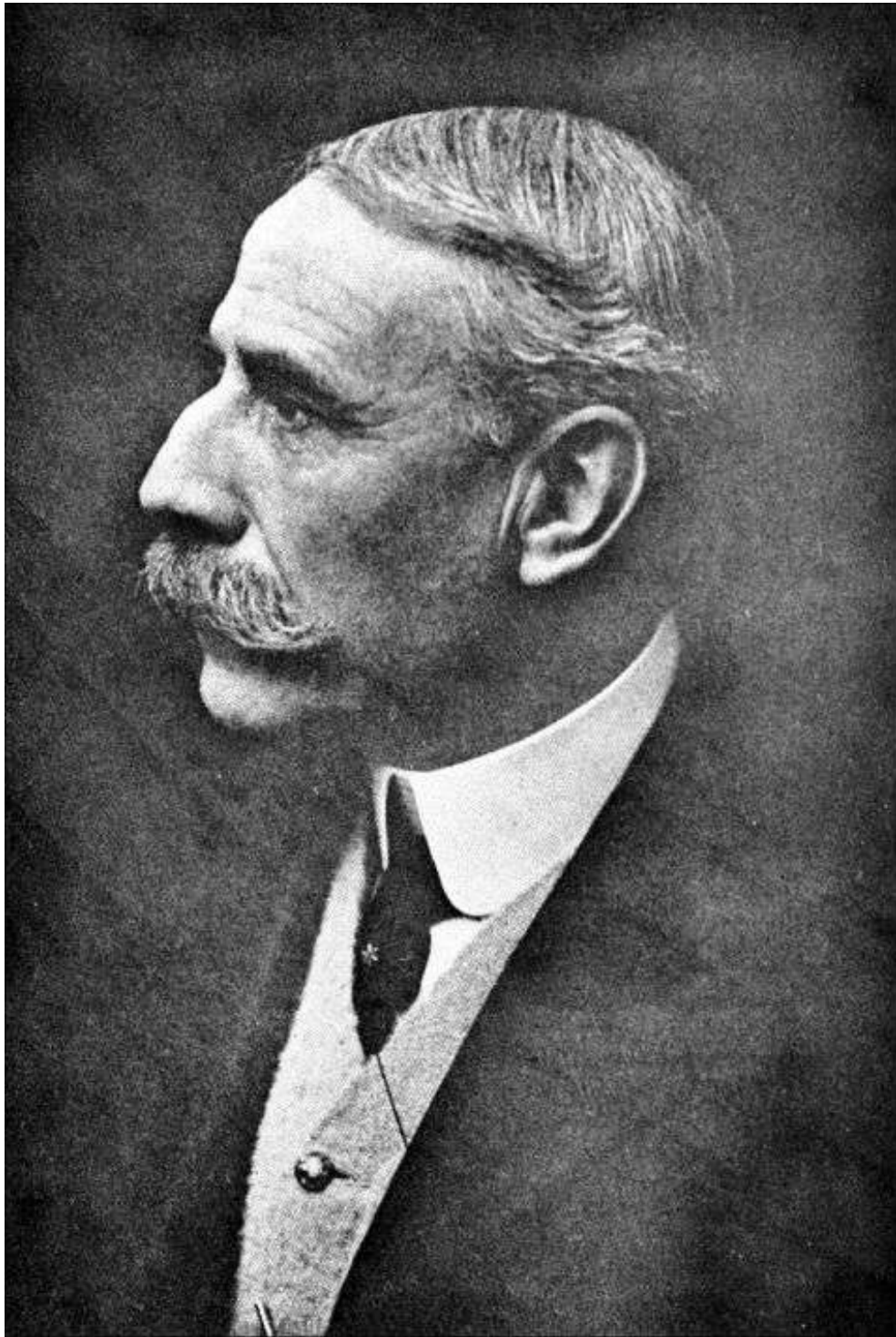


Figure 6.3: Elgar aged about 60.



Figure 6.4: Statue of Elgar with bicycle in Hereford.

## 6.2 Ralph Vaughan Williams

### Family background

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1956) was born into a respected and well-established family. The judges Sir Edward and Sir Roland Vaughan Williams were respectively his grandfather and uncle. Vaughan Williams' father was the Reverend Arthur Vaughan Williams, vicar at the town of Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, England. Ralph Vaughan Williams' mother was the niece of Charles Darwin, and also a descendent of Darwin's favorite uncle, Josiah Wedgwood.

### Early career in music

When Ralph Vaughan Williams was five years old, he began taking piano lessons from his aunt, Sophy Wedgwood. He was still five years old when he composed a piece for the piano, which he called "The Robin's Nest".

When he was eight years old, he took a correspondence course in music from Edinburgh University and passed the examinations.

In 1888, when he was 16 years old, he organized a concert at the boarding school that he was attending, which included a performance of his G major Piano Trio (now lost) with the composer as violinist.

In 1890, Vaughn Williams enrolled in the Royal College of Music, where one of his teachers was Hubert Parry. In his *Musical Autobiography*, Williams wrote: "Parry once said to me: 'Write choral music as befits an Englishman and a democrat'. We pupils of Parry have, if we have been wise, inherited from him the great English choral tradition, which Tallis passed on to Byrd, Byrd to Gibbons, Gibbons to Purcell, Purcell to Battishill and Greene, and they in their turn through the Wesleys, to Parry. He has passed on the torch to us and it is our duty to keep it alight."

In fact, the music which Ralph Vaughan Williams composed during his long career represents a revolt against the dominance of continental musical traditions, and a return to the musical traditions of England.

### Ralph Vaughan Williams' musical compositions

#### Operas

- Hugh the Drover, or Love in the Stocks (1910-14; revised 1924, 1933, 1956). Romantic ballad opera in 2 acts, with libretto by Harold Child (later revised by Ralph and Ursula Vaughan Williams)
- A Cotswold Romance, Cantata for tenor, soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra, adapted from Hugh the Drover by M. Jackson (1950)
- Sir John in Love (1924-28). Opera in 4 acts, based on *The Merry Wives of Windsor* by Shakespeare with interpolations from other authors.





Figure 6.5: Vaughan Williams in 1898.

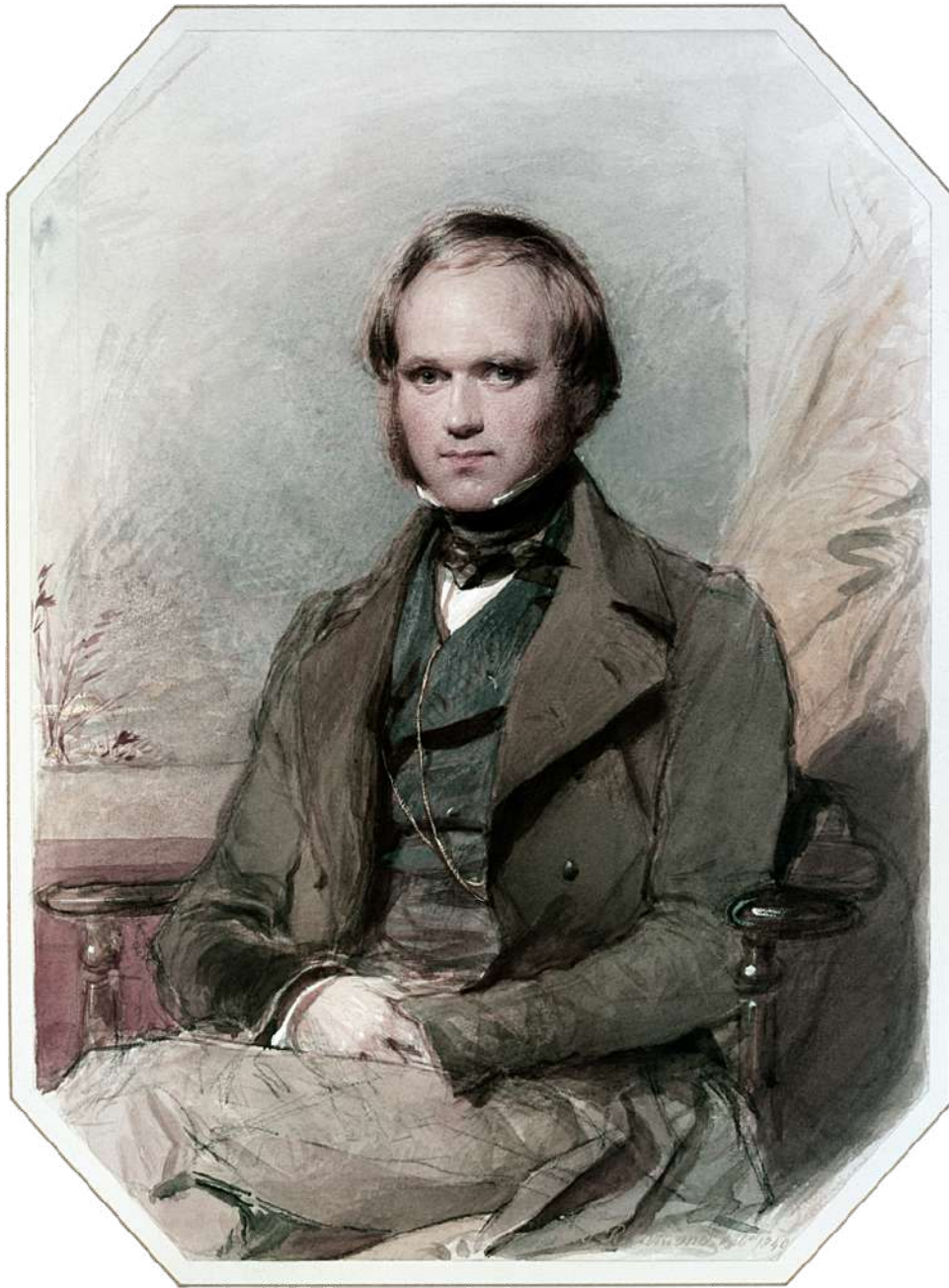


Figure 6.6: Charles Darwin. Ralph Vaughan Williams' mother was his niece, and she was also a descendent of Darwin's favorite uncle, Josiah Wedgwood. When the young Vaughan Williams asked his mother about Darwin's controversial book *On the Origin of Species*, she answered, "The Bible says that God made the world in six days. Great Uncle Charles thinks it took longer: but we need not worry about it, for it is equally wonderful either way"



Figure 6.7: Vaughan Williams in 1913.



Figure 6.8: Vaughan Williams in 1919, by William Rothenstein.

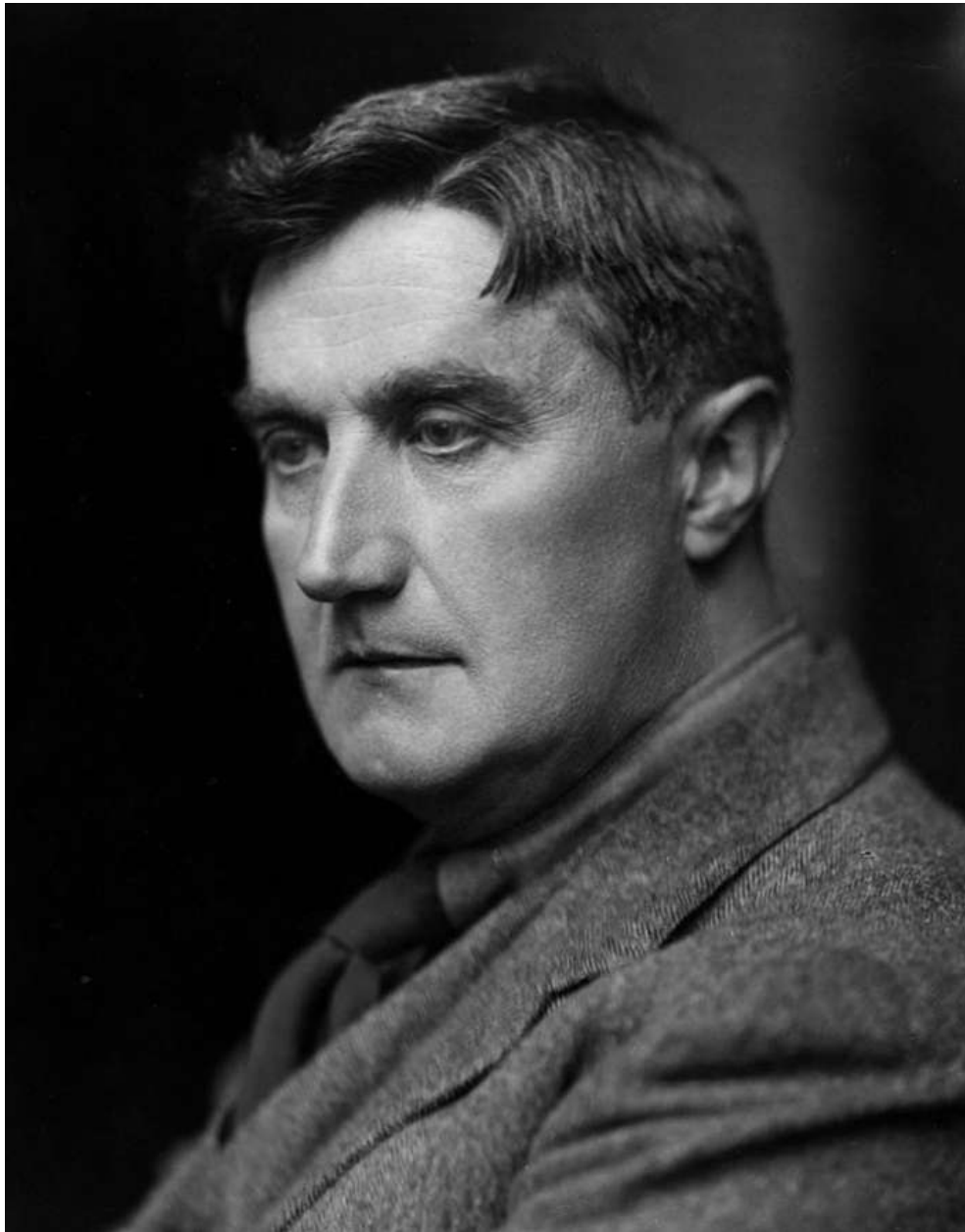


Figure 6.9: Vaughan Williams c. 1920.



Figure 6.10: **Statue of Vaughan Williams by William Fawke, Dorking.**



Figure 6.11: Bust of Vaughan Williams by Marcus Cornish, Chelsea Embankment.

- In Windsor Forest, Cantata for chorus and orchestra, adapted from Sir John in Love (1931)
- Fantasia on "Greensleeves" for strings and harp, adapted from Sir John in Love by Ralph Greaves (1889-1966) in 1934;
- The Poisoned Kiss, or The Empress and the Necromancer (1927-29; revisions 1936-37 and 1956-57). Romantic Extravaganza in 3 acts, with libretto by Evelyn Sharp (later amended by Ralph and Ursula Vaughan Williams)
- Riders to the Sea (1925-32), from the play by J. M. Synge
- The Pilgrim's Progress (1909-51). Morality in Prologue, 4 acts and Epilogue, based on John Bunyan's allegory
- The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains (1921). Libretto: Ralph Vaughan Williams (from John Bunyan) (Later incorporated, save for the final section, into The Pilgrim's Progress)
- "Seven Songs from The Pilgrim's Progress" for voice and piano (1952)
- "The 23rd Psalm" for soprano and chorus, arranged by John Churchill (1953)
- Pilgrim's Journey, Cantata for soprano, tenor, baritone, chorus and orchestra adapted from The Pilgrim's Progress by Christopher Morris and Roy Douglas (1962)
- Thomas the Rhymer, Opera in 3 acts to libretto by Ursula Vaughan Williams, based on traditional ballads Thomas the Rhymer and Tam Lin. Uncompleted.

### Incidental music

- The Wasps (1909): to Aristophanes's play The Wasps, Overture and 17 items
- Aristophanic Suite for orchestra (1912)
- The Bacchae (1911): to Euripides's tragedy
- The Death of Tintagiles (1913): to Maurice Maeterlinck's 1894 play[1]
- Incidental music to Shakespeare's plays (1913): The Merry Wives of Windsor; Richard II, Henry IV Part 2, Richard III, Henry V
- The First Nowell (1958): nativity play adapted from medieval pageants by Simona Pakenham; score completed by Roy Douglas

### Ballets

- Old King Cole (1923) for orchestra and optional chorus
- On Christmas Night (1926): masque adapted from A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
- Job: A Masque for Dancing (1930)
- The Voice out of the Whirlwind, Motet for mixed choir and organ or orchestra; adapted from "Galliard of the Sons of the Morning" from Job
- The Running Set (1933): Traditional Dance Tunes for orchestra
- The Bridal Day (1938-39): masque founded on Epithalamion by Edmund Spenser
- Revised as Epithalamion (1957), Cantata for baritone, chorus and small orchestra



**Orchestral**

- A Sea Symphony (Symphony No. 1) (1903-1909) (with chorus, on texts by Whitman)
- A London Symphony (Symphony No. 2) (1911-13; revised 1918, 1920 and 1933)
- Pastoral Symphony (Symphony No. 3) (1921)
- Symphony in F minor (Symphony No. 4) (1931-34)
- Symphony No. 5 in D major (1938-43)
- Symphony No. 6 in E minor (1944-47, rev. 1950)
- Sinfonia antartica (Symphony No. 7) (1949-52) (partly based on his music for the film *Scott of the Antarctic*)
- Symphony No. 8 in D minor (1953-55)
- Symphony No. 9 in E minor (1956-57)
- Serenade in A minor (1898)
- Heroic Elegy and Triumphal Epilogue (1900)
- Bucolic Suite (1901)
- Burley Heath, impression for orchestra (1902-03)
- The Solent, impression for orchestra (1902-03)
- In the Fen Country, for orchestra (1904)
- Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1, for orchestra (1906, rev. 1914)
- Norfolk Rhapsody No. 2, for orchestra (1906, subsequently withdrawn; reconstructed and recorded in 2002 - see Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1)
- Harnham Down, impression for orchestra (1904-07)
- Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (1910, rev. 1913 and 1919)
- Fantasia on "Greensleeves" (1934)[6] (for string orchestra and harp; arranged by Ralph Greaves from Vaughan Williams's treatment of folk tunes in his opera *Sir John in Love*)
- Two Hymn Tune Preludes (1936) for small orchestra: 1. Eventide; 2. Dominus regit me
- Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus (1939) for strings and harp
- Partita for Double String Orchestra (1948), rewritten from Double Trio for string sextet with new finale
- Concerto Grosso, for three groups of strings, each requiring different levels of technical skill (1950)
- Flourish for Glorious John (1957)

**Concerti**

- Fantasia for piano and orchestra (1896)
- The Lark Ascending for violin and orchestra (1914)
- Concerto Accademico for violin and string orchestra (1924-25)
- Flos Campi for viola, wordless chorus, and small orchestra (1925)
- Piano Concerto in C major (1926-31) Arranged as Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra (1946) by Joseph Cooper in collaboration with the composer

- Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes (1929) for cello and orchestra; withdrawn by the composer
- Suite for Viola and Small Orchestra (1934)
- Sketches for Cello Concerto (1942-43); incomplete 2nd movement completed by David Matthews (2009) as Dark Pastoral
- Oboe Concerto in A minor, for oboe and strings (1944)
- Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra (1946)
- Fantasia (quasi variazione) on the Old 104th Psalm Tune for piano, chorus, and orchestra (1949)
- Romance in D-flat major for harmonica and orchestra (1951) (written for Larry Adler)
- Tuba Concerto in F minor (1954)

### Choral

- Three Elizabethan Songs , partsongs for chorus 1. Sweet Day (setting by George Herbert) 2. The Willow Song (Othello) 3. O Mistress Mine (Twelfth Night) (1896)
- The Garden of Proserpine, cantata for soprano, chorus & orchestra, setting of Algernon Charles Swinburne (1899)[7]
- A Cambridge Mass, Missa brevis for SATB, double chorus & orchestra (1899); Doctoral exercise, first performed 3 March 2011.[8][9][10][11]
- “Rest”, for unaccompanied SSATB (1902)
- Willow-Wood, Cantata for baritone, women’s chorus and orchestra (1903, revised 1909), setting texts by Rossetti from The House of Life[12]
- Toward the Unknown Region, song for chorus and orchestra, setting of Walt Whitman (1906)
- The truth sent from above arranged for unaccompanied chorus (1909)
- Five Mystical Songs for baritone, chorus, and orchestra, settings of George Herbert (1911)
- Fantasia on Christmas Carols for baritone, chorus, and orchestra (1912); arranged also for reduced orchestra of organ, strings, percussion)
- Five English Folk Songs freely arranged for Unaccompanied Chorus (1913)
- O clap your hands, motet for chorus and orchestra, text from Psalm 47 (1920) [13]
- Lord, thou hast been our refuge, motet for chorus, semi chorus and orchestra (or organ); text from Psalm 90 (1921)
- “Ca’ the yowes” for tenor and chorus (1922), a setting of the folk song by Isabel Pagan/Robert Burns
- Mass in G minor for unaccompanied choir (1922)
- Sancta Civitas (The Holy City) oratorio, text mainly from the Book of Revelation (1923-25)
- Te Deum in G major (1928)
- Benedicite for soprano, chorus, and orchestra (1929)
- Three Choral Hymns (1929)

- Magnificat for contralto, women's chorus, and orchestra (1932)
- O How Amiable (1934) arrangement of a hymn for chorus and organ, originally written for the Abinger Pageant
- Five Tudor Portraits for contralto, baritone, chorus, and orchestra (1936)
- Dona nobis pacem, text by Walt Whitman and other sources (1936)
- Festival Te Deum for chorus and orchestra or organ (1937)
- Serenade to Music for sixteen solo voices and orchestra, a setting of Shakespeare, dedicated to Sir Henry Wood on the occasion of his Jubilee (1938)
- "Six Choral Songs To Be Sung In Time Of War" (1940)
- A Song of Thanksgiving (originally Thanksgiving for Victory) for narrator, soprano solo, children's chorus, mixed chorus, and orchestra (1944)
- An Oxford Elegy for narrator, mixed chorus, and small orchestra (1949)
- Folk Songs of the Four Seasons, Cantata for women's voices with orchestra or piano (1949). Suite for small orchestra from Folk Songs of the Four Seasons, arranged by Roy Douglas (1956)
- Three Shakespeare Songs for SATB unaccompanied, composed for The British Federation of Music Festivals National Competitive Festival (1951)
- The Sons of Light (1950), Cantata for chorus and orchestra; text by Ursula Vaughan Williams
- Sun, Moon and Stars (1955), Cycle of four songs from The Sons of Light with strings or piano
- O Taste and See, a motet setting of Psalm 34:8. The original SATB version was composed for the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey in June 1953. (1953)
- Hodie, a Christmas cantata (1954)
- A Choral Flourish for unaccompanied SATB chorus, composed for a large choral event in the Royal Albert Hall at the invitation of (and dedicated to) Alan Kirby (c. 1952)
- Nine Carols for Male Voices arrangements made during the Second World War at the request of the British Council for performance by H.M. Forces in Iceland.

### Hymn tunes and carols

- "Come Down, O Love Divine": entitled Down Ampney in honour of Vaughan Williams's birthplace
- "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" (Randolph)
- "Hail Thee, Festival day" (Salva festa dies)
- "Saviour, again to Thy dear name" (Magda)
- "The night is come like to the day" (Oakley)
- "Servants of God" (Cumnor)
- "England Arise! the long, long night is over" (Guildford)
- "At the Name of Jesus" (King's Weston)
- The Golden Carol ("Now is Christmas y-come")

- Wither's Rocking Hymn ("Sweet baby, sleep!")
- Snow in the Street ("From far away we come to you")
- Blake's Cradle Song ("Sweet dreams, form a shade")

## Vocal

- "Summum bonum", song (1891), setting text by Browning
- "To daffodils", song (1895), setting text by Herrick[17]
- "Dirge for Fidele", duet (1895), setting text by Shakespeare from *Cymbeline*, published 1922
- "Rondel", song (1896), setting text by Swinburne
- "How can the tree but wither", song (1896), setting text by Thomas, Lord Vaux
- "Claribel", song (1896), setting text by Tennyson
- "Linden Lea", song (1901); from the William Barnes poem "My Orcha'd in LindÃn Lea"
- "Blackmwore by the Stour", song (1902); from the William Barnes poem "Blackmwore MaÃdens"
- "Boy Johnny", song (1902), setting text by Christina Rossetti
- "Whither Must I Wander", song (1902)
- "If I were a Queen", duet (1903), setting text by Christina Rossetti
- "When I am dead, my dearest", song (1903), setting text by Christina Rossetti
- "Tears, idle tears", song (1903), setting text by Tennyson
- "The Splendour Falls", song, setting text by Tennyson
- "The Winter's Willow", song (1903); from the William Barnes poem of the same name
- "Adieu", duet, translated from German by Arthur Foxton Ferguson (1903)
- "Think of Me", duet, translated from German by Arthur Foxton Ferguson (1903)
- "Orpheus with his Lute", song (1904), setting text by Shakespeare
- The House of Life, six sonnets by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1904): 1. Lovesight; 2. Silent noon; 3. Love's minstrels; 4. Heart's haven; 5. Death-in-Love; 6. Love's last gift
- Two Vocal Duets, for soprano, baritone and violin with piano, setting texts by Walt Whitman (1904)
- Songs of Travel, song cycle for baritone and piano, setting texts by R. L. Stevenson (1901-04)
- Songs 1 3 8 arranged for baritone and orchestra (1905)
- "I have trod the upward and the downward slope" was added to the original eight songs in 1960, after the composer's death
- Songs 2 4 5 6 7 9 arranged for baritone & orchestra by Roy Douglas (1962)
- "Dreamland", song, setting text by Christina Rossetti (1906)
- "Nocturne", for baritone and orchestra, setting of "Whispers of Heavenly Death" by Walt Whitman (1908)[

- “The Sky Above The Roof”, song (1908), setting translation by Mabel Dearmer of Paul Verlaine poem ‘Le ciel est pardessus le toit’
- On Wenlock Edge, song cycle (1909) for tenor, piano and string quartet, setting texts by A. E. Housman
- Four Hymns: (1914) for tenor and piano (or strings) with viola obbligato
- Merciless Beauty, three rondels for tenor, two violins and cello (1921)
- Four Poems by Fredegond Shove: for baritone and piano (1922-25): 1. Motion and Stillness; 2. Four Nights; 3. The New Ghost; 4. The Water Mill
- Two Poems by Seumas O’Sullivan (1925): 1. The Twilight People; 2. A Piper;
- Three Songs from Shakespeare (1925): 1. Take, O take those lips away; 2. When icicles hang by the wall; 3. Orpheus with his lute
- Three Poems by Walt Whitman for baritone and piano (1925): 1. Nocturne; 2. A Clear Midnight; 3. Joy, Shipmate, Joy!
- “Along the Field”, for tenor and violin, setting texts by A. E. Housman (1927)
- “In the Spring”, song (1952); from the William Barnes poem of the same name
- Ten Blake Songs, song cycle for high voice and oboe (1957), written for film *The Vision of William Blake*
- Four Last Songs (1954-58) to poems of Ursula Vaughan Williams: 1. Procris; 2. Tired; 3. Hands, Eyes and Heart; 4. Menelaus
- Three Vocalises (wordless) for soprano and clarinet (1958)

### Chamber

- String Quartet in C minor (1898)
- Quintet in D major for clarinet, horn, violin, cello, and piano (1898)
- Piano Quintet in C minor for violin, viola, cello, double bass and piano (1903)
- Scherzo for string quintet (1904)
- Nocturne & Scherzo for string quintet (1906)[19]
- String Quartet No. 1 in G minor (1908)
- Phantasy Quintet for 2 violins, 2 violas, and cello (1912)
- Suite de Ballet for flute and piano (1913-24)
- Romance and Pastorale for violin and piano (1914)
- Romance for viola and piano (undated; possibly 1914)
- Six Studies in English Folk Song, for cello (or clarinet, violin, viola) and piano (1926)
- Double Trio for string sextet (1938): withdrawn and revised as *Partita for Double String Orchestra*
- Suite for Pipes (1939)
- Household Music: Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes for string quartet or other instruments (1941): 1. Fantasia, Crug-y-bar; 2. Scherzo, St. Denio; 3. Variation, Aberystwyth
- String Quartet No. 2 in A minor (“For Jean, on her birthday,” 1942-44. Dedicated to the violist Jean Stewart[20])
- Sonata in A minor for violin and piano (1952)

## Keyboard

- Pezzo Ostinato for piano (1905)
- Three Preludes for Organ founded on Welsh hymn tunes (1920); 1. Bryn Calfaria, 2. Rhosymedre, 3. Hyfrydol No. 2 & No. 3 arranged for orchestra by Arnold Foster Arranged for two pianos by Leslie Russell (1939)
- Suite of Six Short Pieces for piano (1921)
- Arranged for string orchestra by James Brown in collaboration with the composer as The Charterhouse Suite (1923)
- Prelude and Fugue in C minor for organ (1921) Version for orchestra (1930)
- Hymn Tune Prelude on 'Song 13' by Orlando Gibbons for piano (1930) Arranged for string orchestra by Helen Glatz
- Six Teaching Pieces for piano (1934)
- A Wedding Tune for Ann for organ (1943)
- A Winter Piece for piano (1943)
- Introduction and Fugue for two pianos (1947)
- The Old One Hundredth Psalm Tune, harmonisation and arrangement (1953)
- Two Organ Preludes founded on Welsh Folk Songs (1956): 1. Romanza, The White Rock; 2. Toccata, St. David's Day

## Film scores

- 49th Parallel, 1940, his first, talked into it by Muir Mathieson to assuage his guilt at being able to do nothing for the war effort Song The New Commonwealth (1943) adapted from Prelude to 49th Parallel, words by Harold Child The Lake in the Mountains for piano, based on episode from 49th Parallel (1947) Prelude to 49th Parallel for orchestra, published 1960
- Coastal Command, 1942
- The People's Land, 1943 [21]
- The Flemish Farm, 1943 Suite The Story of a Flemish Farm in 7 movements (1945)
- Stricken Peninsula, 1945
- The Loves of Joanna Godden, 1946
- Scott of the Antarctic, [22] 1948 Partially reused for his Sinfonia antartica (Symphony No. 7)
- The Dim Little Island, 1949
- Bitter Springs, 1950 (music composed jointly with Ernest Irving)[24]
- The England of Elizabeth, 1955
- Three Portraits from The England of Elizabeth: concert suite (1. Explorer; 2. Poet; 3. Queen) adapted by Muir Mathieson
- Two Shakespeare Sketches from The England of Elizabeth adapted by Muir Mathieson

**Scores for radio**

- BBC adaptation by Edward Sackville-West of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1942 Some of this music was later used in the Morality Play *The Pilgrim's Progress*
- *Richard II* (1944); not used
- Incidental music to BBC production of Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, 1951 *Prelude on an Old Carol Tune* (1953) was adapted from this incidental music

**Band**

- *Rhosymedre* (based on a Welsh hymn tune for organ) for concert band (1920)
- *English Folk Songs, Suite* for military band (1923) Arranged for brass band by Gordon Jacob (1924) Arranged for orchestra by Gordon Jacob (1942) Arranged for piano by Michael Mullinar (1949)
- *Sea Songs, Quick march* for military and brass bands (1923) Arranged by composer for orchestra (1942)
- *Toccata Marziale* for military band (1924)
- *Overture: Henry V* for brass band (1933/34)
- *Flourish for Wind Band* (1939)
- *Prelude on Three Welsh Hymn Tunes* for brass band (1955): 1. *Ebenezer*; 2. *Calfaria*; 3. *Hyfrydol*
- *Variations* for brass band (1957) Arranged for orchestra by Gordon Jacob (1960)

## 6.3 Igor Stravinsky

**Stravinsky's family background**

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) was a pivotal figure in modernist music. He was born into a family of Polish and Russian heritage, descended of Polish and Russian heritage, descended "from a long line of Polish grandees, senators and landowners.

When he was eight years old, Igor Stravinsky attended a performance of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*. This was the start of his lifelong interest in the ballet.

**Law or music?****Stravinsky's education**

Igor Stravinsky's parents wished him to study law, despite his enthusiasm and talent for music. Thus, in 1901, he enrolled in St. Petersburg University as a law student. However, his attendance at lectures on law was very poor. While at the university he met Vladimir Rimsky-Korsikov, the son of the famous composer. Stravinsky wished to meet Vladimir's father, and with Vladimir's help he spent the summer of 1902 with Rimsky-Korsikov and his family in Heidelberg, Germany.

After his father died of cancer, Igor Stravinsky decided to devote himself to music full time. He began studying with Rimsky-Korsikov twice a week, and the lessons continued until Rimsky-Korsakov's death in 1908. During this period, Stravinsky composed his Symphony in E-flat, Opus 1.

### **Marriage**

In 1906, Stravinsky married his first cousin, Katherina Gavrylovna Nosenko, in spite of the Orthodox Church's opposition to marriage between first cousins. At first they lived in the family's residence, but later they moved to a house that Stravinsky built, and which he described as his "heavenly place". It was here that he wrote many of his first compositions.

## **Stravinsky in France and Switzerland**

### **Ballets for Diaghilev and international fame**

In 1909, Sergei Diaghilev, a Russian impresario and owner of the Ballets Russes, attended the performance of one of Stravinsky's works. He was struck by the beauty and originality of the music. He gave the 26-year-old Stravinsky the task of composing music for a ballet based on the Russian fairy tale *The Firebird*. When the ballet was performed, it was a sensation, and Stravinsky was lifted instantly to international fame. *The Firebird* was followed by a second ballet, *Petrushka*, and a third, *The Rite of Spring*. Like *The Firebird*, *The Rite of Spring* caused a sensation when it was performed.

When World War I and the Russian Revolution made it impossible for Stravinsky to return to Russia, he became a French citizen. He and his family spent the war years in Switzerland.

## **Stravinsky in the United States**

In 1939, Stravinsky accepted an invitation to lecture at Harvard University for a year, and the family moved to the United States. Later, Stravinsky was invited to Hollywood to write music for films. There he became the friend of several famous writers: W. H. Auden, Christopher Isherwood, Dylan Thomas and Aldous Huxley.





Figure 6.12: Stravinsky in 1903, age 21.

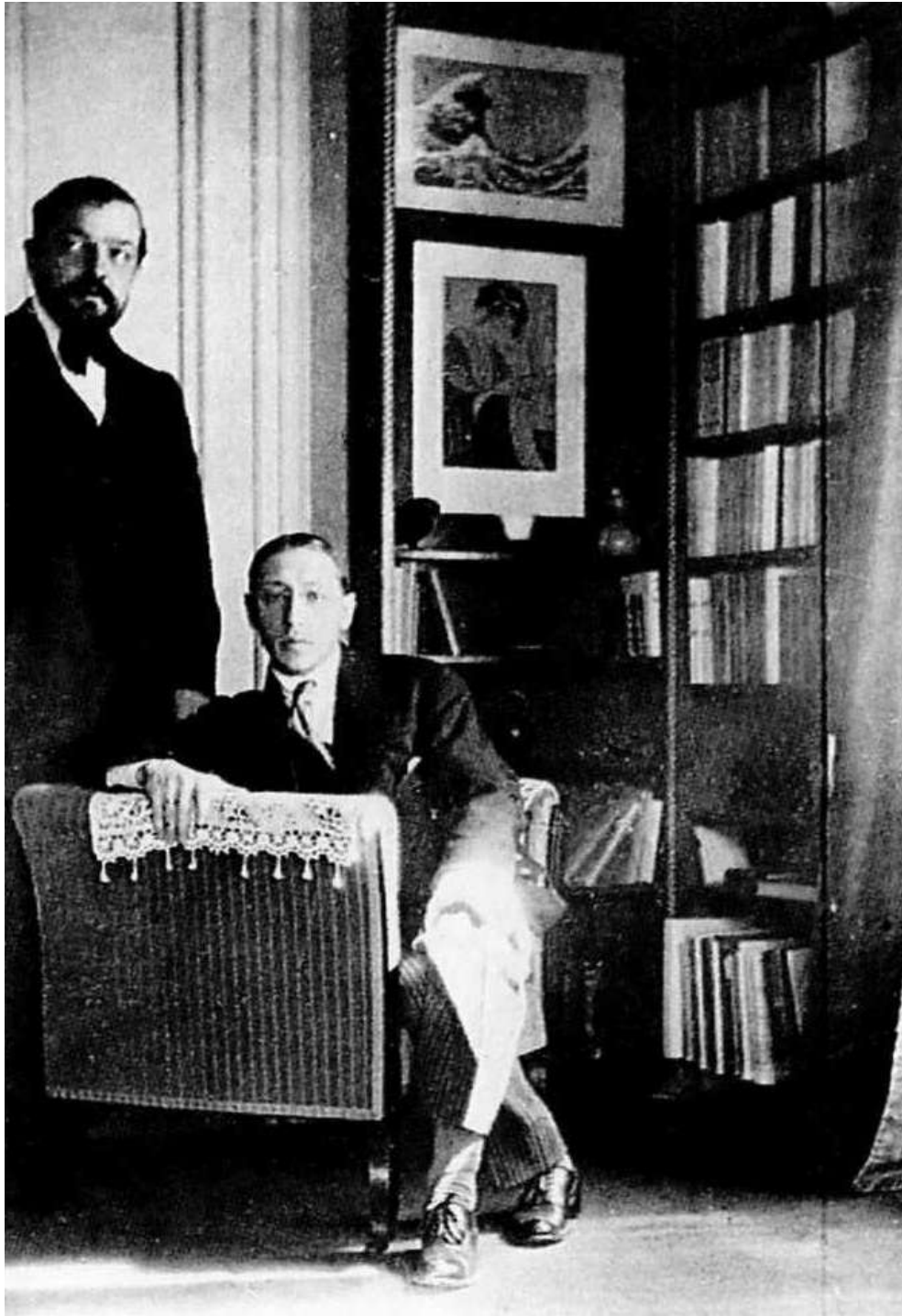


Figure 6.13: Debussy with Igor Stravinsky: photograph by Erik Satie, June 1910.

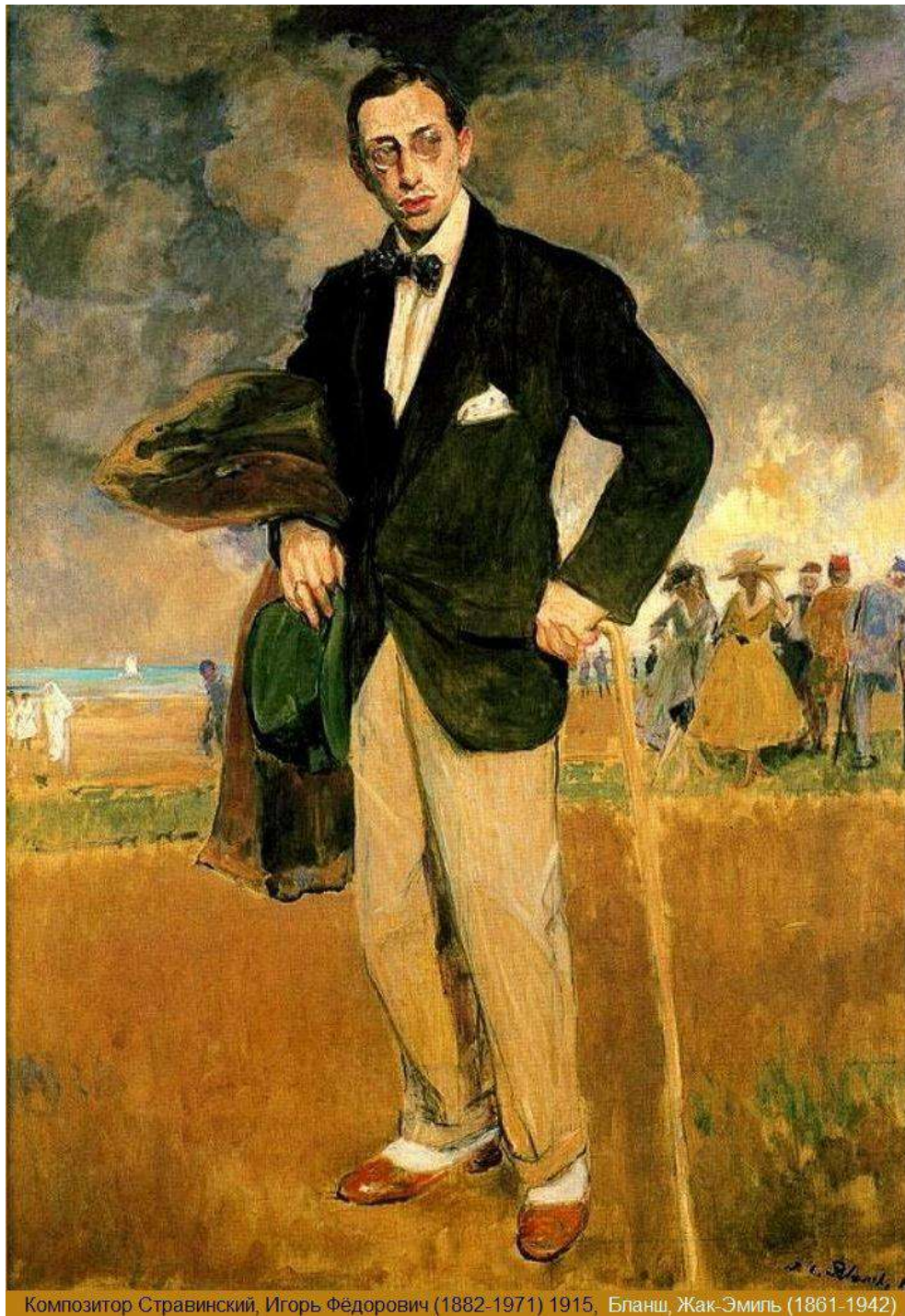


Figure 6.14: Portrait of Igor Stravinsky by Jacques-Émile Blanche (1915).



Figure 6.15: Stravinsky as drawn by Picasso in 1920.



**STRAVINSKY by Picasso**

Figure 6.16: Stravinsky and Pablo Picasso collaborated on *Pulcinella* in 1920. Picasso took the opportunity to make several sketches of the composer.



Figure 6.17: Stravinsky, sometime between 1920 and 1925.



Figure 6.18: Stravinsky on the cover of Time in 1948.

## 6.4 Dmitri Shostakovich

### Family and early life

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (1906-1975) was born in St. Petersburg, in what was then the Russian Empire. His father, Dmitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich, studied physics and mathematics at Saint Petersburg University. After graduating in 1899, he worked for Dmitri Mendeleev (famous for inventing the periodic table of the elements). He married the composer's mother in 1903.

As a young boy, Dmitri Shostakovich displayed remarkable musical ability. At the age of 12 he composed a funeral march in memory of two leaders of the Kadet party murdered by Bolshevik sailors. He was admitted to the Petrograd Conservatory at the age of 13.

Here is a contemporary account of Shostakovich conducting Beethoven's 1st Symphony at the age of 19:

**“Shostakovich stood at the podium, played with his hair and jacket cuffs, looked around at the hushed teenagers with instruments at the ready and raised the baton. ... He neither stopped the orchestra, nor made any remarks; he focused his entire attention on aspects of tempi and dynamics, which were very clearly displayed in his gestures. The contrasts between the ‘Adagio molto’ of the introduction and ‘Allegro con brio’ first theme were quite striking, as were those between the percussive accents of the chords (woodwinds, French horns, pizzicato strings) and the momentarily extended piano in the introduction following them. In the character given to the pattern of the first theme, I recall, there was both vigorous striving and lightness; in the bass part there was an emphasized pliancy of tenderly threaded articulation. ... Moments of these sorts ... were discoveries of an improvised order, born from an intuitively refined understanding of the character of a piece and the elements of musical imagery embedded in it. And the players enjoyed it.”**

### Shostakovich and the Soviet Union

Wikipedia says of him:

**“Shostakovich combined a variety of different musical techniques in his works. His music is characterized by sharp contrasts, elements of the grotesque, and ambivalent tonality; he was also heavily influenced by neoclassicism and by the late Romanticism of Gustav Mahler. His orchestral works include 15 symphonies and six concerti (two each for piano, violin, and cello). His chamber works include 15 string quartets, a piano quintet, and two piano trios. His solo piano works include two sonatas, an early set of 24 preludes, and a later set of 24 preludes and fugues. Stage works include three completed operas and three ballets. Shostakovich also wrote several song cycles, and a substantial**



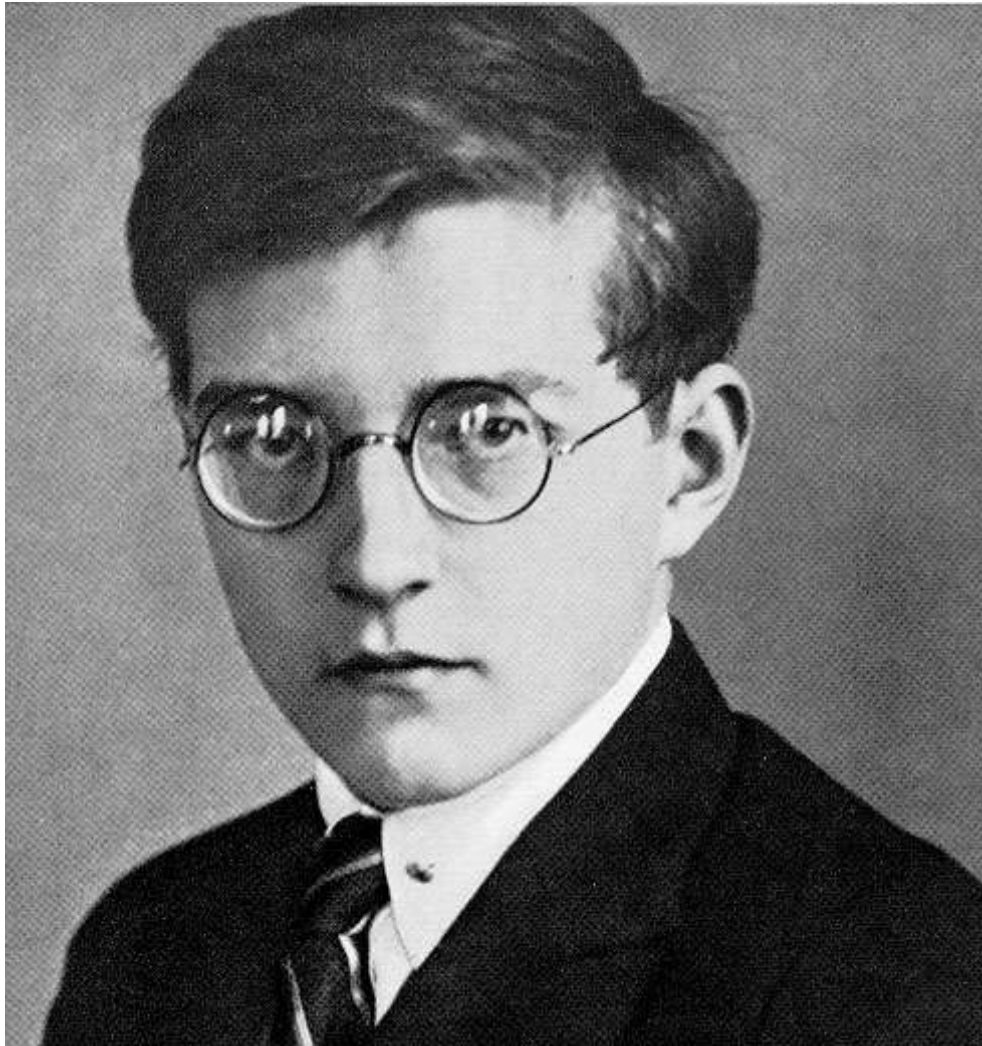


Figure 6.19: Shostakovich in 1925, aged 19 but already a musical celebrity because of his *1st Symphony*.

quantity of music for theatre and film.

“Shostakovich’s reputation has continued to grow after his death. Scholarly interest has increased significantly since the late 20th century, including considerable debate about the relationship between his music and his attitudes to the Soviet government.”



Figure 6.20: Left to right, 4 October 1946: Sergei Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Aram Khachaturian.



Figure 6.21: Shostakovich in 1950.



Figure 6.22: A Russian stamp in Shostakovich's memory, published in 2000.

## 6.5 Benjamin Britten

### Family and early years

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was born in the fishing port of Lowestoft in Suffolk, England. His father was a dentist, and his mother, Edith, a talented amateur musician. She was the secretary of the Lowestoft Musical Society. The family often invited their friends to musical soirées at their house.

Benjamin Britten's mother was delighted to find that her son was musically gifted, and she gave him piano lessons at an early age. He made his first attempts at composition at the age of five.

In 1924, when Britten was eleven years old, he heard Frank Bridge's orchestral poem, *The Sea*, conducted by the composer. It was the first piece of modern music that he had heard, and, as he said later, "It knocked me sideways!"

In 1927, Benjamin Britten was introduced to Frank Bridges, who was impressed by the boy's musical knowledge and ability. After looking at some of Britten's compositions, Bridges invited him to come to London to take lessons from him.

### The Royal College of Music

While at preparatory school, Benjamin Britten won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music. His examiners in the competition for the scholarship were the composers John Ireland and Ralph Vaughan Williams and a third examiner from the school.

Britten attended the Royal College of Music for three years, 1930-1933. There, he won several prizes for his compositions: the Cobbett Prize for chamber music, the Ernest Farrar Prize for composition (twice), and the Sullivan Prize for composition.

While in London, Britten attended concerts featuring the music of Stravinsky, Shostakovich and, most particularly, Mahler.

### World War II and America

In 1939, Benjamin Britten, who was a pacifist, sailed for America with his personal and musical partner, the tenor Peter Pears. However, they returned to England in 1942. After his return, Britten applied for exemption from military service as a conscientious objector. This was initially denied to him, but after an appeal, granted.

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### Snape Maltings concert hall and the the Aldeburgh Festival

Britten had used money left to him by his mother to buy the Old Mill in Snape, Suffolk, and it became his country home. He spent most of 1944 there, composing the opera, *Peter Grimes*. Later, the building was converted into the main concert hall of the Aldeburgh Festival, which he and Peter Pears founded



Figure 6.23: **Frank Bridge, Britten's teacher.**

Peter Grimes opened in June 1945, and the opera was both a great critical and financial success.

### **Elevation to a life peerage**

Shortly before his death, the British government made Britten a Life Peer. He was the only composer ever to receive this honor.



Figure 6.24: Early influences, on Britten: Clockwise from top left: Mahler, Ireland, Shostakovich, Stravinsky.



Figure 6.25: Mstislav Rostropovich and Britten, 1964.





Figure 6.26: Britten in 1968, by Hans Wild.



Figure 6.27: Blue plaque at 137 Cromwell Road in London.



Figure 6.28: Snape Maltings concert hall, a main venue of the Aldeburgh Festival, founded by Britten, Pears and Crozier.

## 6.6 Leonard Bernstein

### Bernstein's family and early life

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts. His Ukrainian Jewish parents had immigrated to the United States where his father became a moderately prosperous businessman.

When Leonard Bernstein was ten years old, his aunt left her upright piano at his parent's house, and he clamored for lessons. Bernstein's father initially opposed his son's musical ambitions, and refused to give money for piano lessons, but eventually he relented.

### Education at Harvard

In 1935, Bernstein became an undergraduate at Harvard, where he studied music. The first of his surviving compositions, *Psalm 148 set for voice and piano*, is dated 1935. He graduated from Harvard in 1939 with a Bachelor of Arts *cum laude*.

### Leonard Bernstein's compositions

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) was not only a famous composer, but also famous as a conductor, pianist, music educator, author, and humanitarian. In the words of the music critic Donal Henahan, he was "one of the most prodigiously talented and successful musicians in American history".

Here is a list of Leonard Bernstein's musical compositions:

#### Ballet

- Fancy Free (later provided material for "On the Town" and "West Side Story") (1944)
- Facsimile, Choreographic Essay for Orchestra (1946)
- Dybbuk (1974)

#### Opera

- Trouble in Tahiti (1951)
- Candide (1956, new libretto in 1973, operetta final revised version in 1989)
- A Quiet Place (1983)

#### Musicals

- On The Town (1944)
- Peter Pan (1950)
- Wonderful Town (1953)
- West Side Story (1957)
- A Party with Betty Comden and Adolph Green (1958, collaboration)

- The Race to Urga (1969 - incomplete)
- "By Bernstein" (a Revue) (1975)
- 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (1976)
- The Madwoman of Central Park West (contributed to 1979)

### **Incidental music and other theatre**

- The Birds (1938)
- The Peace (1940)
- The Lark (1955)
- Salome, for Chamber Orchestra and Solo Voices
- The Firstborn, for Voice and Percussion (1958)
- MASS: A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players, and Dancers (1971)

### **Film scores**

- On the Town (1949) (only part of his music was used)
- On the Waterfront (1954)
- West Side Story (1961)

### **Orchestral**

- Symphony No. 1 Jeremiah (1942)
- Suite from Fancy Free (concert premiere 1945)
- Three Dance Episodes from "On the Town" (concert premiere 1946)
- Symphony No. 2 The Age of Anxiety (after W. H. Auden) for Piano and Orchestra (1949, revised in 1965)
- Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, for Solo Clarinet and Jazz Ensemble (1949)
- Serenade after Plato's "Symposium" (1954)
- Symphonic Suite from On the Waterfront (1955)
- Overture to Candide (1956)
- Symphonic Dances from West Side Story (1960)
- Fanfare for the Inauguration of John F. Kennedy, (for the inauguration of John F. Kennedy) for Orchestra (1961)
- Fanfare II, (for the 25th anniversary of the High School of Music and Art) for Orchestra (1961)
- Symphony No. 3 Kaddish, for Orchestra, Mixed Chorus, Boys' Choir, Speaker and Soprano Solo (1963, revised in 1977)
- Three Meditations from "Mass", for Orchestra (1972)
- Dybbuk, Suites No. 1 and 2, for Orchestra (Originally Dybbuk Variations from 1974, concert premieres 1975 and 1977)
- Songfest: A Cycle of American Poems for Six Singers and Orchestra (1977)
- Three Meditations from "Mass", for Violoncello and Orchestra (1977)
- Slava! A Political Overture, for Orchestra (1977)

- CBS Music, for Orchestra (1977)
- Divertimento for Orchestra (1980)
- A Musical Toast, for Orchestra (1980)
- Halil, nocturne for Solo Flute, Piccolo, Alto Flute, Percussion, Harp and Strings (1981)
- Opening Prayer (originally Jubilee Games from 1986, revised in 1988 and 1989)

### Choral

- Hashkivenu, for Cantor (tenor), Mixed Chorus and Organ (1945)
- Simchu Na, arrangement of a traditional Hebrew song for Mixed Chorus and Piano or Orchestra (1947)
- Reena, arrangement of a traditional Hebrew song for Mixed Chorus and Orchestra (1947)
- Yigdal, Hebrew liturgical melody for Mixed Chorus and piano (1950)
- Harvard Choruses, for Mixed Chorus (1957)
- Chichester Psalms, for Boy Soprano (or Countertenor), Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra (Reduced version for Organ, Harp and Percussion) (1965)
- Warm-Up, round for Mixed Chorus (1970)
- A Little Norton Lecture, (after E. E. Cummings) for Men's Chorus (1973)
- White House Cantata, for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass, Mixed Chorus and Orchestra (1976). See 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (musical).
- Olympic Hymn, for Mixed Chorus and Orchestra (1981)
- Missa Brevis, for Mixed Chorus and Countertenor Solo, with Percussion (1988)

### Chamber music

- Piano Trio (1937)
- Violin Sonata (1940)
- Four Studies for two Clarinets, two Bassoons and Piano (c. 1940)
- Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1942)
- Fanfare for Bima, for Brass Quartet (composed as a birthday tribute to Koussevitzky using the tune he whistled to call his cocker spaniel) (1948)
- Elegy for Mippy I, for Horn and Piano (1948)
- Elegy for Mippy II, for Trombone Solo (1948)
- Waltz for Mippy III, for Tuba and Piano (1948)
- Rondo for Lify, for Trumpet and Piano (1948)
- Shivaree: A Fanfare, for Double Brass Ensemble and Percussion (commissioned by and dedicated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in honor of its Centenary; musical material later used in "Mass.") (1969)
- Dance Suite, for Brass Quintet (1989)
- Variations on an Octatonic Scale, for Recorder and Violoncello (1989)

**Vocal music**

- Psalm 148, for voice and piano (1935)
- I Hate Music: A cycle of Five Kid Songs for Soprano and Piano (1943)
- Big Stuff, sung by Billie Holiday (1944)
- Afterthought, study for the ballet “Facsimile” for Soprano and Piano or Orchestra (1945)
- La Bonne Cuisine: Four Recipes for Voice and Piano (1947)
- Two Love Songs on Poems by Rainer Maria Rilke for Voice and Piano (1949)
- Silhouette (Galilee), for Voice and Piano (1951)
- On the Waterfront, for Voice and Piano (1954)
- Get Hep!, Marching Song written for the Tercentary of Michigan State College for Voice and Piano (1955)
- So Pretty, for Voice and Piano (1968)
- Haiku Souvenirs, five songs for voice and piano
- Vayomer Elohim, for Voice and Piano (1974)
- My New Friend, for Voice and Piano (1979)
- Piccola Serenata, for Voice and Piano (1979)
- Opening Prayer, for Baritone and Orchestra (written for the reopening of Carnegie Hall) (1986)
- Arias and Barcarolles, for Mezzo-Soprano, Baritone and Piano four-hands (1988)
- My Twelve Tone Melody, for Voice and Piano (written for Irving Berlin’s 100th birthday) (1988)

**Piano music**

- Music for Two Pianos (1937)
- Non troppo presto (Music for the Dance No. I) (1938)
- Sonata for the Piano (1938)
- Music for the Dance No. II (1938)
- Scenes from the City of Sin, eight miniatures for Piano four-hands (1939)
- Arrangement of Aaron Copland’s El Salón MÃ©xico for piano or two pianos (1941)
- Seven Anniversaries (1943)
- Four Anniversaries (1948)
- Four Sabras (1950)
- Five Anniversaries (1951)
- Bridal Suite (1960)
- Moby Diptych (1981) (republished as Anniversaries nos. 1 and 2 in Thirteen Anniversaries)
- Touches (1981)
- Thirteen Anniversaries (1988)

**Other music**

- Babel: a holocaust opera
- The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Songs after Bertold Brecht
- The Skin of Our Teeth (1964): an aborted work from which Bernstein took material to use in his “Chichester Psalms”
- Alarums and Flourishes (1980): an aborted work from which Bernstein took material to use in “A Quiet Place”
- Tucker: an aborted concept for a musical version of the 1988 film “Tucker: The Man and His Dream”



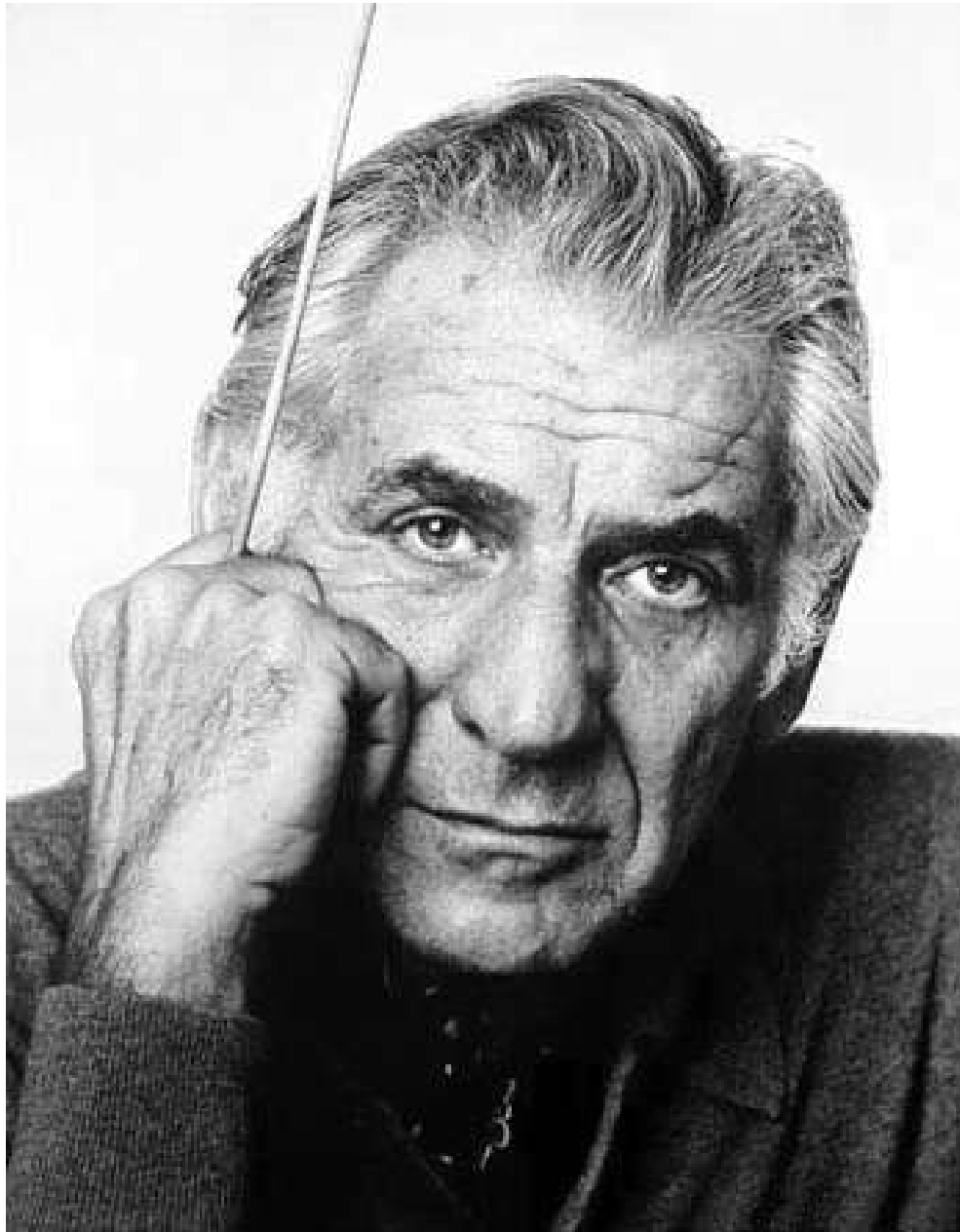


Figure 6.29: Leonard Bernstein.



Figure 6.30: Bernstein conducting the New York City Symphony (1945).



Figure 6.31: Bernstein, c. 1950s.

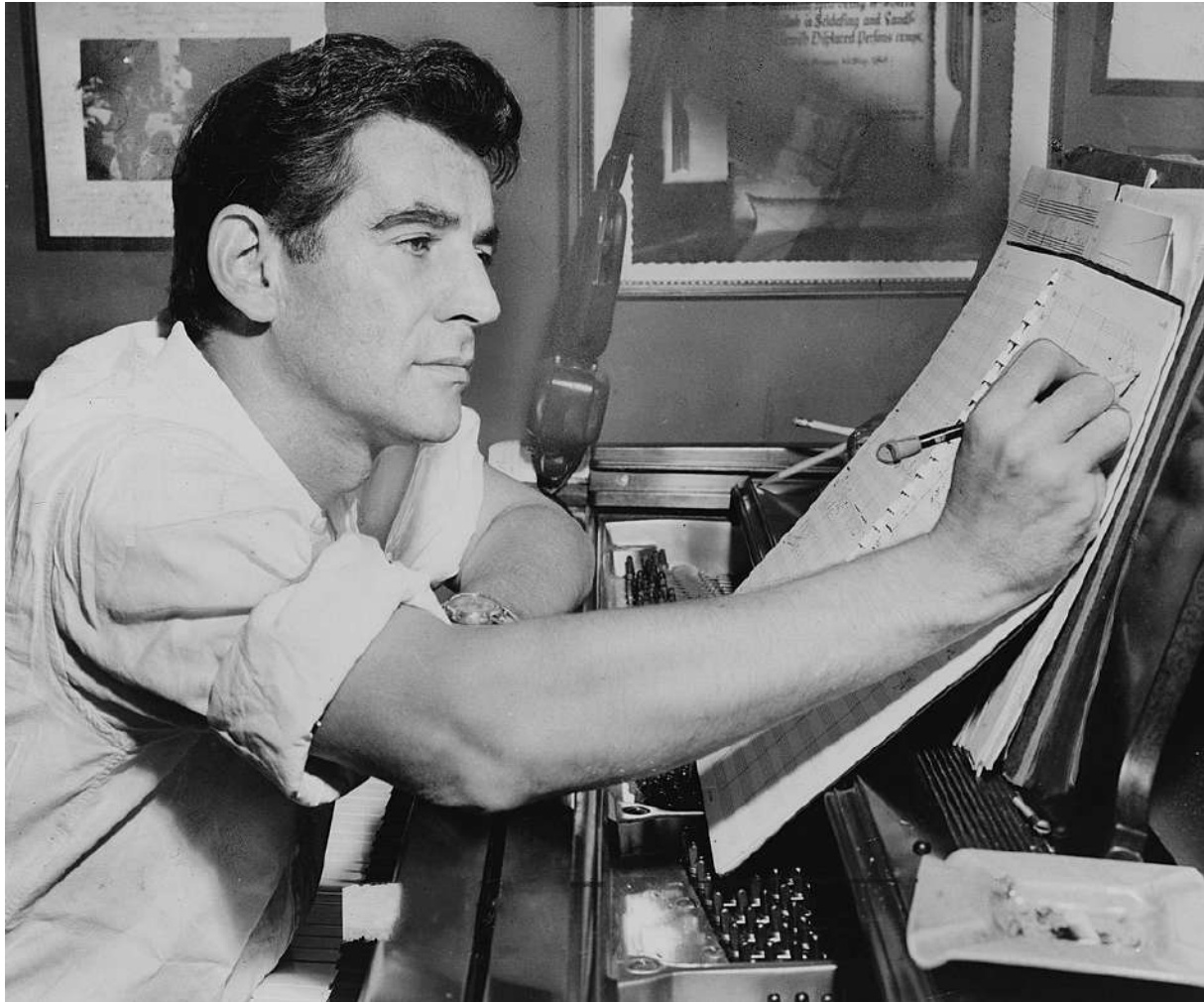


Figure 6.32: Bernstein at the piano, making annotations to a musical score.



Figure 6.33: Bernstein in Amsterdam, 1968.



Figure 6.34: Leonard Bernstein by Allan Warren.



Figure 6.35: Bernstein with Maximilian Schell on PBS Beethoven TV series (1982).



Figure 6.36: **Conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra, 1985.**



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