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How to Use This Book

Words on a page are not enough to make learning music history enjoyable. *Alfred's Teach Yourself Music History* combines the visual arts, world history, music performances, and audio examples to give you a rich, comprehensive experience. Look for the following icons throughout the book to get the full perspective on learning about music through the ages.



The **Listen to This** examples feature beautifully performed, high-quality recordings from one of the world's leading classical music labels, Naxos, to bring the music discussed in the book to life. There is no better way to appreciate music than listening to fantastic recordings! Simply go to www.alfred-music.com/MusicHistory and sign in with the unique code found on the inside front cover of this book to access over 13 hours of music.



Audio demonstrations and examples on the accompanying CD correlate with the **Sound Behind the Theory** sections, so you can *hear* how the music concepts covered in the book *sound*. You don't need a degree in music to learn a little bit of the music theory that helped shape the sound of a particular era of music.



The **Art of the Ages** sections showcase artwork that was created at around the same time the music being profiled was written, giving you a visual reference for the period.



What Happened in History at This Time highlights world events to provide you a glimpse into society, culture, and technology of the time.

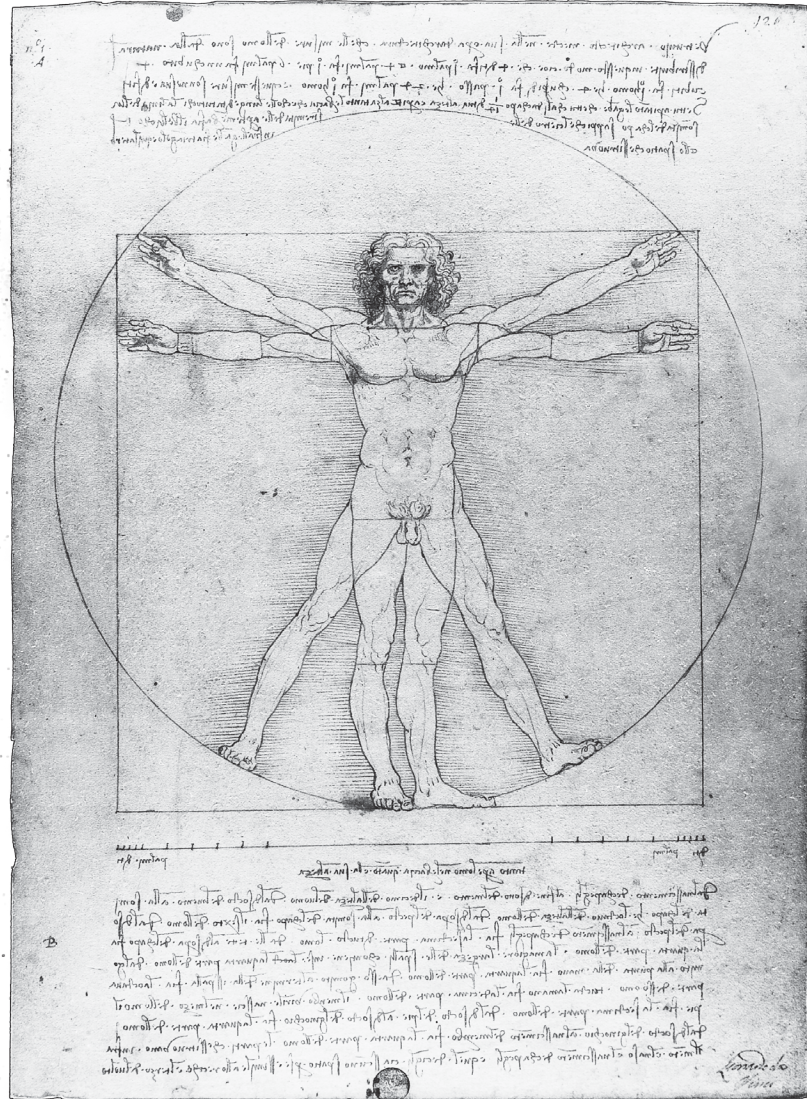
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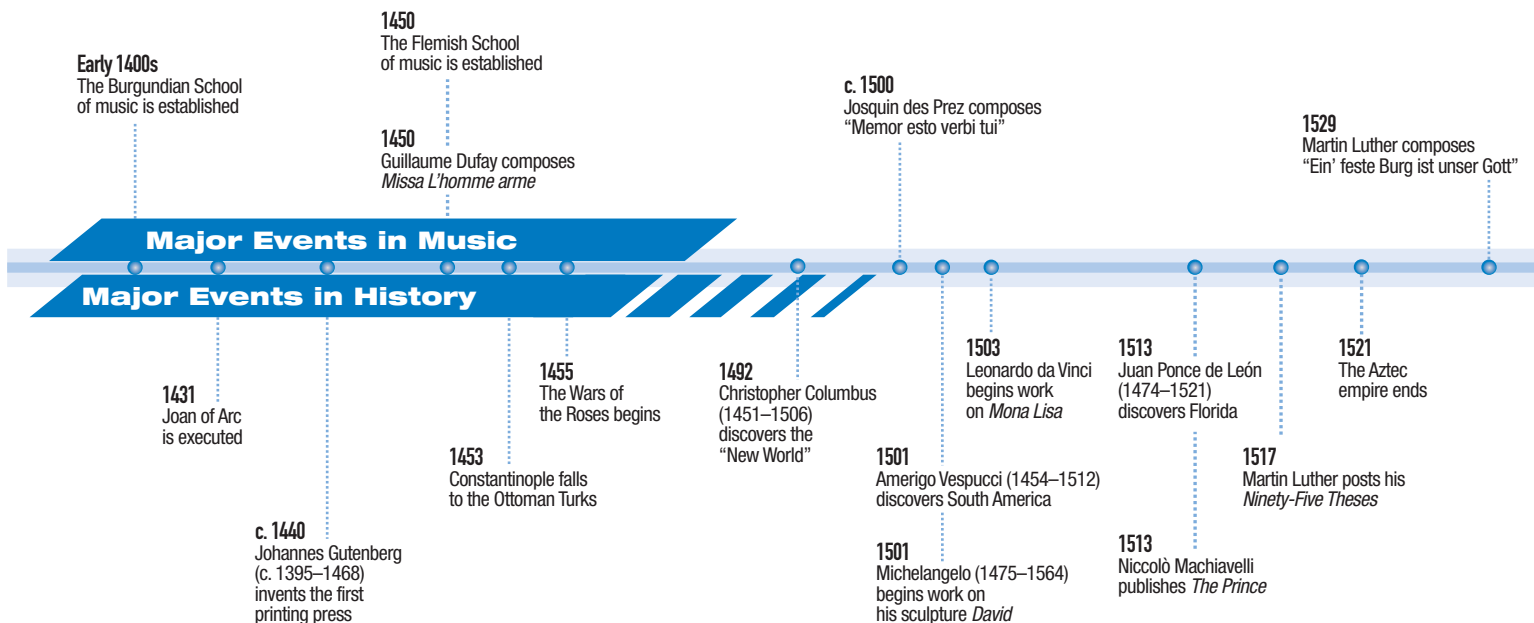
THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD (1400–1600)

Introduction to the Renaissance Period

The word *Renaissance* means “rebirth” in French, and this period received its name because of a major cultural and intellectual shift during this time from the previous, so-called Dark Ages. The Renaissance period was a time of great creativity and exploration. Artists and writers looked to ancient Greek and Roman models for inspiration, and explorers sailed the ocean to seek new worlds and cultures. It was one of the most fruitful and creative periods in history. People had multiple interests and were generally successful at them. (We use the term *Renaissance man* today to refer to someone who excels at multiple things.) Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) may be the greatest example of this. He was a visual artist, an inventor, a poet, a scientist, and even performed music. Throughout the Renaissance, there was a prevailing sense of excitement, adventure, and curiosity.



EXEMPLIFYING ART AND SCIENCE IN THE RENAISSANCE:
VITRUVIAN MAN (C. 1492) BY LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452–1519)



History and Happenings

The Renaissance was a period of discovery and innovation. Some of the most important are Christopher Columbus's discovery of America (the "New World") in 1492 and Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press (movable type) in 1440, which made it



possible for information to be shared more easily. Some of the world's greatest works of art were created at this time, including Michelangelo's *David* (1504) and Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (1503). In the literary world, William Shakespeare left a significant catalog of plays and poems. Politically, revolution and change was the order of the day. Most of Europe was under the authority of the Roman Catholic Church at the beginning of the period, but by the end, the Protestant Reformation together with the English Reformation divided



TOP LEFT: CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS (1519) BY SEBASTIANO DEL PIOMBO (1485–1547)

TOP RIGHT: MONA LISA (C. 1506) BY LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452–1519)

BOTTOM: ILLUSTRATION OF A 16TH CENTURY PRINTING PRESS (1568)

the majority of Europe politically and religiously. Numerous regions became self-sufficient and independent. England completely broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and established the Anglican Church.

Music and Arts in the Renaissance Period

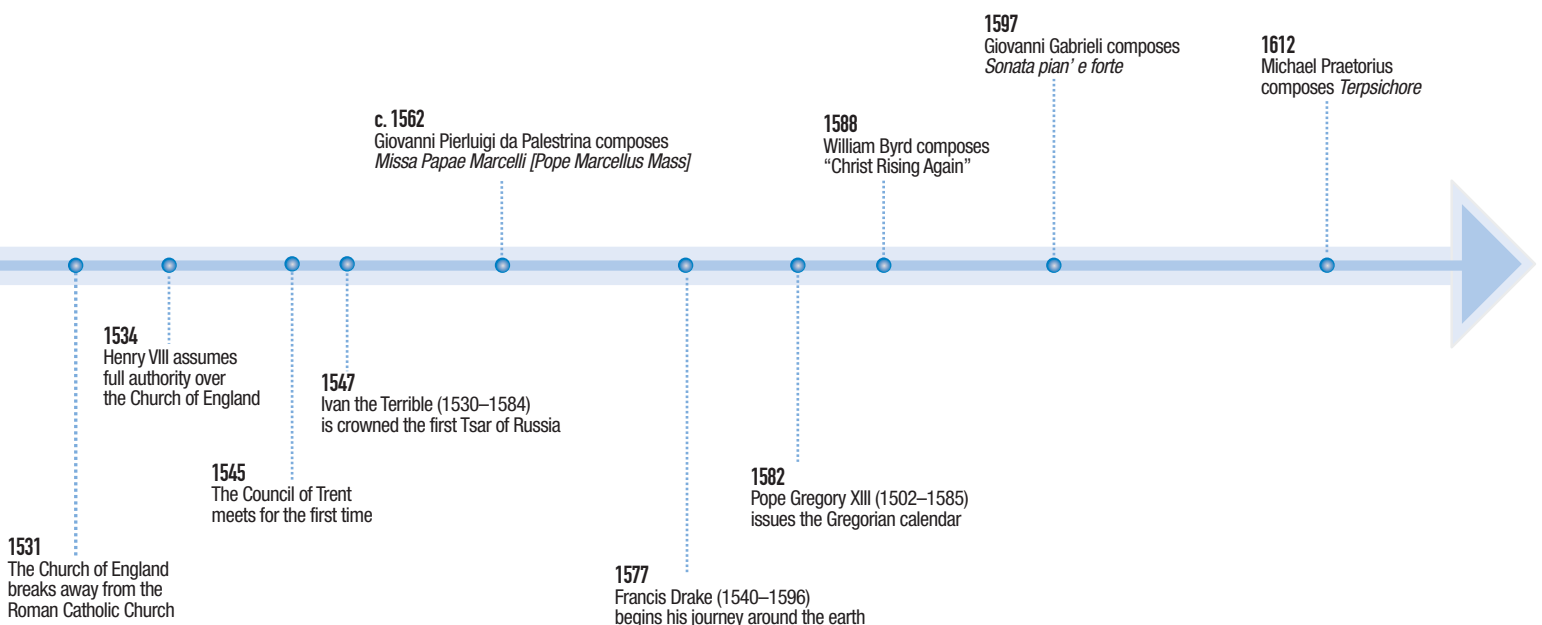
In music, there was no true rebirth since there was no ancient music culture. (Ancient Greek music was not discovered until later.) Music in the Renaissance has three significant characteristics:

- A gradual movement away from dissonance
- An improvement in the writing of counterpoint
- The continued development of vocal music

Church reforms led to many changes in musical performance and composition. *A cappella* music (vocal music without any accompaniment) was still dominant, but instrumental works rose in popularity and many new instruments were introduced.

Early Renaissance

In the early part of the Renaissance, groups of composers (or schools of music) began to emerge in different areas of



Russian composers were prominent in the Romantic period, with Tchaikovsky leading the way. Unlike his Russian contemporaries though, Tchaikovsky used Western European forms and harmony; other Russian composers were much more influenced by Russian folk music.

Other notable concert overtures include Felix Mendelssohn's *The Hebrides* (1830) and Johannes Brahms's *Academic Festival Overture* (1880).



Listen to This

1812 Overture (1880) by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

In the last section of the *1812 Overture*, listen for the French national anthem “La Marseillaise” followed by cannon fire. Later, the Russian hymn, “God Preserve Thy People” is played at the same time large bells are rung. The hymn is then combined with the Russian national anthem of that time, “God Save the Tsar.”



What Happened in History at This Time

The *1812 Overture* was written in 1880. The following events in history occurred around the same time:

- 1870—French writer Jules Verne (1828–1905) publishes *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*
- 1876—American writer Mark Twain (1835–1910) publishes *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
- 1877—American inventor Thomas Edison (1847–1931) develops the phonograph
- 1879—Thomas Edison invents electric light



Art of the Ages

The *1812 Overture* was written in 1880. *The 28th Regiment at Quatre Bras* (1875) by British artist Elizabeth Thompson (1846–1933) was completed at around the same time.



THE 28TH REGIMENT AT QUATRE BRAS (1875) BY ELIZABETH THOMPSON (1846–1933)

Richard Strauss and the Symphonic Poem

The greatest composer of Romantic symphonic poems is German Richard Strauss (1864–1949). Strauss wrote many symphonic poems (though Strauss preferred to call them tone poems), including *Also sprach Zarathustra* [Thus Spoke Zarathustra], which was completed in 1896. The music in this symphonic poem is freely based on the writings of the influential German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche.



PHOTOGRAPH OF A YOUNG RICHARD STRAUSS (1886) (PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN)



Listen to This

Also sprach Zarathustra (1896) by Richard Strauss

The famous opening section of *Also sprach Zarathustra* was described by Strauss as a sunrise where man feels the power of God. Strauss composed this piece for an enormous orchestra that featured a pipe organ to



Nationalism was very strong in Russia in the Romantic period. A group of five composers, called *The Five*, made Russian nationalism a musical philosophy. While the music of Tchaikovsky featured Western European forms and harmony, The Five developed a national style of Russian music. This group included Mily Balakirev (1837–1910), Alexander Borodin (1833–1887), César Cui (1835–1918), Modest Mussorgsky, and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Balakirev was the mentor of this group of influential amateur composers who taught each other using mutual advice and criticism.



Art of the Ages

The Planets was written in 1918. American artist John Singer Sargent's (1856–1925) *Gassed* (1919) was completed at around the same time.



GASSED (1919) BY JOHN SINGER SARGENT (1856–1925)

Spain

Spanish composer Manuel de Falla (1876–1946) captured the spirit of Spanish folk music in his compositions, and he also used Spanish folk tales as the basis for many of his works. His musical style was influenced by the French impressionists, Debussy and Ravel. Manuel de Falla's best-known works are the symphonic poem *Nights in the Garden of Spain* and the ballet *El amor brujo* [*Love, the Sorcerer*], both completed in 1915.



PHOTOGRAPH OF CHARLES IVES (LEFT) AS A STAR PITCHER FOR THE HOPKINS SCHOOL (C. 1894) (PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN)

The United States

The United States was a relatively young country in the Modern period. Even by the beginning of the 20th century, there had not been any significant American-born composers. American composers used the musical resources of their country—such as military music, hymns, and jazz—as well as music of the great European composers for inspiration. These eclectic influences were combined to create strikingly original music.

CHARLES IVES

Charles Ives (1874–1954) is the best-known American composer of the early 20th century. Characteristic of



Charles Ives grew up in Connecticut. He captained the baseball team at Hopkins School in New Haven, CT and later attended Yale University. We know him as a composer, but Ives didn't actually make a living in music. Instead, he was an insurance agent! He even formed his own agency, Ives & Myrick.

the time, Ives experimented freely and often wrote very dissonant music, even quoting pieces by other composers. Ives wrote vocal music, chamber music, symphonies, and works for solo instruments.



Listen to This

Symphony No. 2 (1901) by Charles Ives

Symphony No. 2 is a great example of truly American music. It combines many of the styles that influenced Ives in a well-crafted symphonic structure. In *Symphony No. 2*, there are fiddle tunes, hymns, Civil War tunes, college songs, excerpts from two Brahms symphonies, and more.



What Happened in History at This Time

Ives's *Symphony No. 2* was written in 1901. The following events in history occurred around the same time:

- 1898—The Spanish–American War occurs
- 1899—Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) publishes *The Interpretation of Dreams*
- 1900—Gamma rays are discovered by French chemist and physicist Paul Villard (1860–1934)
- 1903—American inventors the Wright Brothers fly an airplane for the first time