

WHAT IS A COMPOSER?

- A composer is someone who writes music.
- The composers in this set span the years 1600-present. They come from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern Eras.
- Composers can write many different genres, or types, of music. You will discover that through this set of cards.
- Composers are most often influenced by their family, teachers, other composers, and the time in which they are living.



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SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

- Print cards on heavy card stock, double-sided. Cut out and laminate for best use.
- Find all teaching suggestions, listening links, and more ideas at www.squiltmusic.com/composer-flash-cards (Use the password **compositions** to access the page)
- Use flash cards as you work your way through other SQUILT volumes, during Morning Time, or during a study of composers.
- This flashcard set is designed to be flexible for maximum learning. It is intended to give students a **broad overview** of famous composers.



www.squiltmusic.com

PRESENTED BY



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JOHANN PACHELBEL

(1653-1706)

Era: Baroque Nationality: German

- famous organist, composer, and teacher
- had many jobs as an organist
- was friends with Johann Ambrosias Bach, JS Bach's father
- Johann Christoph Bach (JS Bach's older brother) studied with Pachelbel; it is thought he passed on a lot of that to JS Bach
- very popular during his time

FAMOUS FOR:

Canon in D
Chaconne in F minor



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LOUIS COUPERIN

(1626-1661)

Era: Baroque Nationality: French

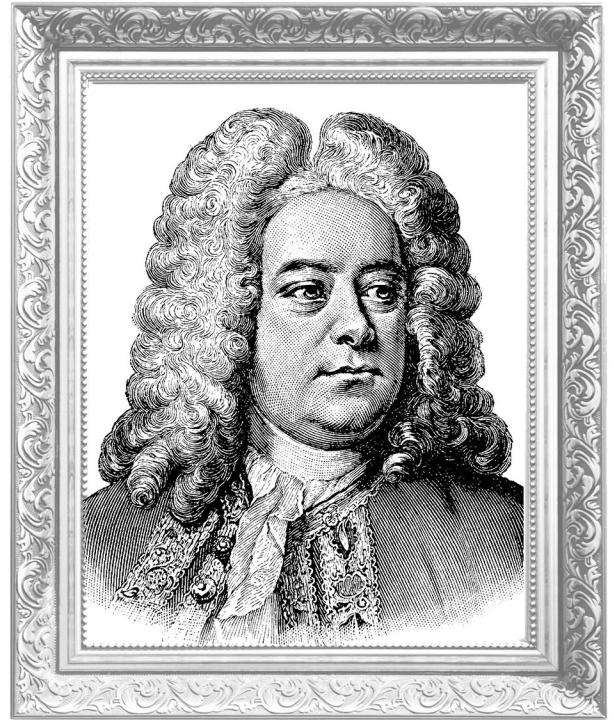
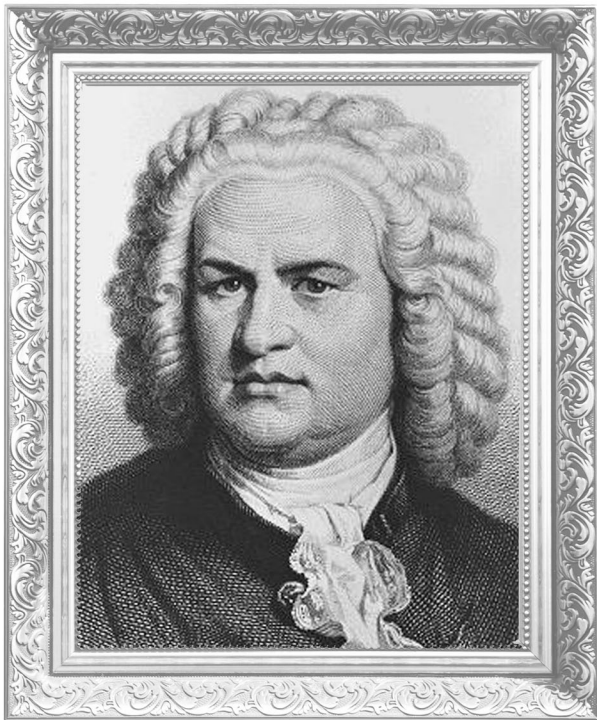
- composer, organist, and harpsichordist - father of the Couperin dynasty of musicians
- best known for his performing ability as a harpsichordist
- organist at the St. Gervais church in Paris
- composed more than 130 pieces for harpsichord - not published during his life
- career cut short by his early death at age 35

FAMOUS FOR:

Chaconne in G minor
Pieces de Clavecin



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ANTONIO VIVALDI

(1678-1741)

Era: Baroque Nationality: Italian

- as a child would play the violin with his father
- nicknamed "The Red Priest" because of his red hair, and he was actually a priest
- wrote music and taught music in an orphanage
- wrote over 500 concertos ("The Four Seasons" is his most famous set.)
- also wrote operas, church music, and other types of music

FAMOUS FOR:

The Four Seasons
Argippo and Bajazet (operas)



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HENRY PURCELL

(1659-1695)

Era: Baroque Nationality: English

- one of the greatest English composers of all time
- organist at Westminster Abbey - also buried there
- wrote very little music for the organ (even though he was an organist)
- royal instrument keeper and court composer
- most of his compositions were for church use

FAMOUS FOR:

Dido & Aeneas
Jubilate Deo in D Major



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GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

(1685-1759)

Era: Baroque Nationality: German/English

- father did not want him to study music - would not even permit Handel to own a musical instrument; mother believed in him, though, and helped him secretly pursue his music
- he mastered composing for the organ, oboe and violin by the time he was 10 years old
- his skill on the organ and harpsichord began to earn him fame and gave him opportunities to perform in operas
- 1719 - became the Master of the Orchestra at the Royal Academy of Music, the first Italian opera company in London
- wrote 30 oratorios and 50 operas

FAMOUS FOR:

"Hallelujah Chorus" from The Messiah
Water Music



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JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

(1685-1750)

Era: Baroque Nationality: German

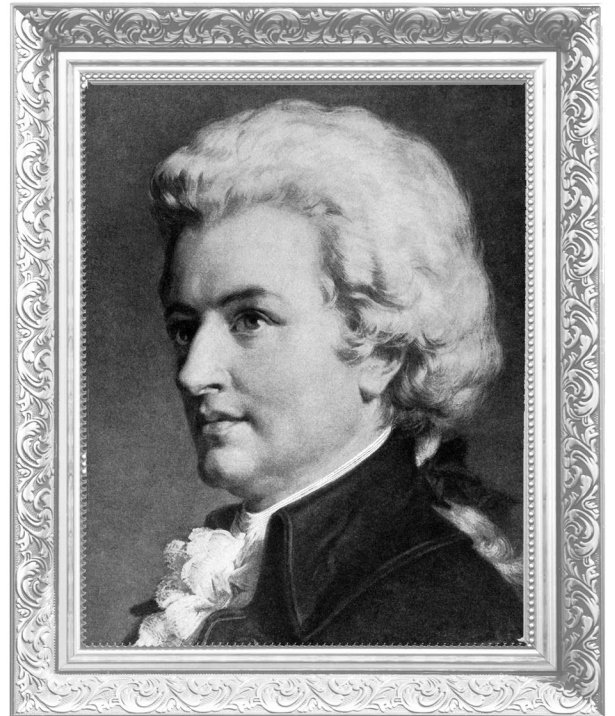
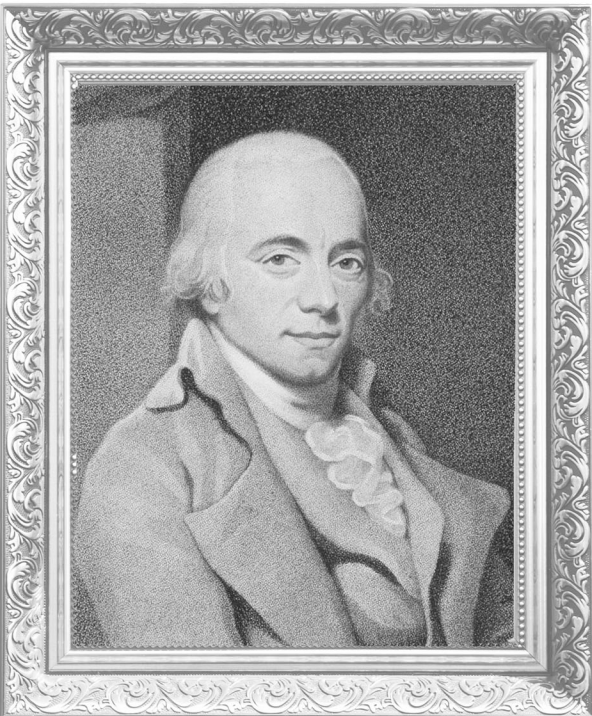
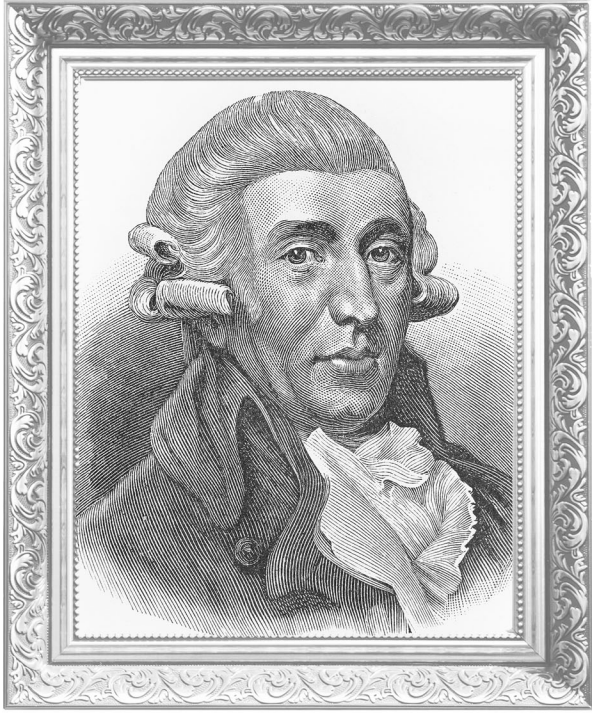
- learned violin and harpsichord as a child
- from a musical family - most "Bachs" were musicians
- spent most of his career as cantor, organist, and music composer for St. Thomas Lutheran Church
- most well known for his abilities as an organist
- had 20 children, many of them named Johann

FAMOUS FOR:

Brandenburg Concertos
Toccat & Fugue in D minor



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LUIGI BOCCHERINI

(1743-1805)

Era: Classical Nationality: Italian

- lived at the same time as Haydn - their music is so closely related, historians sometimes call Boccherini the "wife of Haydn."
- well known for works for the cello and guitar
- influenced the development of the string quartet
- composed approximately 500 works
- died in poverty in 1805

FAMOUS FOR:

The "Celebrated" Minuet
Cello Concerto in B Flat Major



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FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

(1732-1809)

Era: Classical Nationality: Austrian/Hungarian

- originally went to choir school because of his good voice, but was dismissed after puberty because his voice changed.
- In 1761, he began a lifelong relationship with the wealthiest family among Hungarian nobility, the Esterhazy family. They funded his music endeavors.
- moved to London in 1791, which was the high point of his career
- he wrote 104 symphonies - nicknamed "The Father of the Symphony"
- friends with Mozart

FAMOUS FOR:

"Surprise" Symphony
The Creation Oratorio



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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

(1756-1791)

Era: Classical Nationality: Austrian

- started playing the piano when he was 6 years old
- Mozart's father introduced him to music at a very young age - and taught Mozart and his sister, Nanerl.
- His meeting with Johann Christian Bach (Johann Sebastian Bach's youngest son) in London had a strong influence on him.
- When Haydn visited Vienna, he and Mozart performed concerts with string quartets. Between 1782 and 1785 Mozart wrote six quartets dedicated to Haydn.
- He wrote in ALL the musical genres of his day and excelled in every one. This is what sets him apart from all other composers, and makes him probably the most popular composer of all time.

FAMOUS FOR:

The Magic Flute (opera)
Concerto for Flute & Harp



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MUZIO CLEMENTI

(1752-1832)

Era: Classical Nationality: English

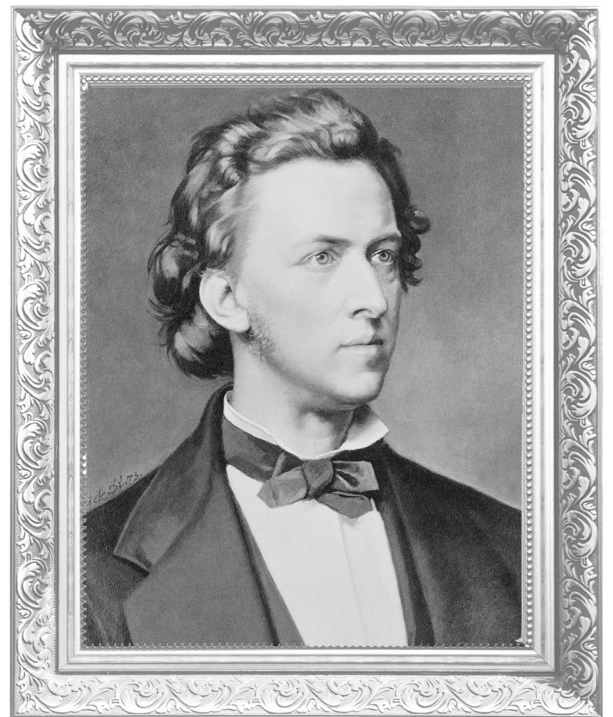
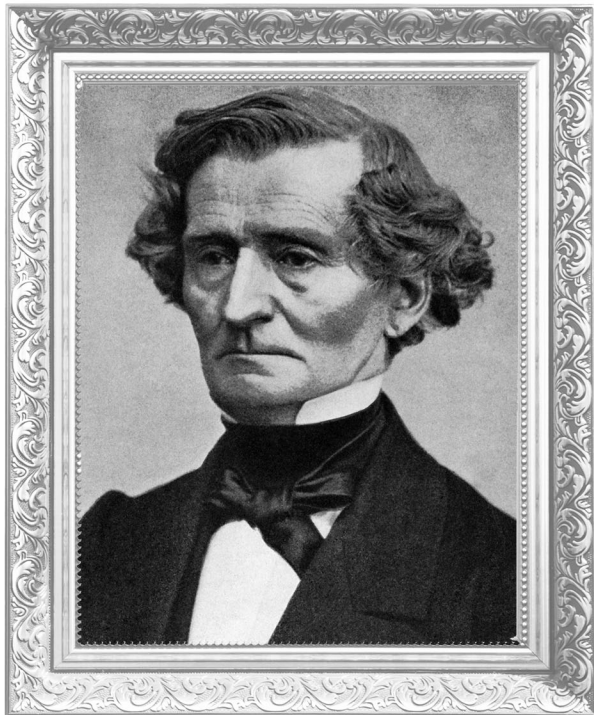
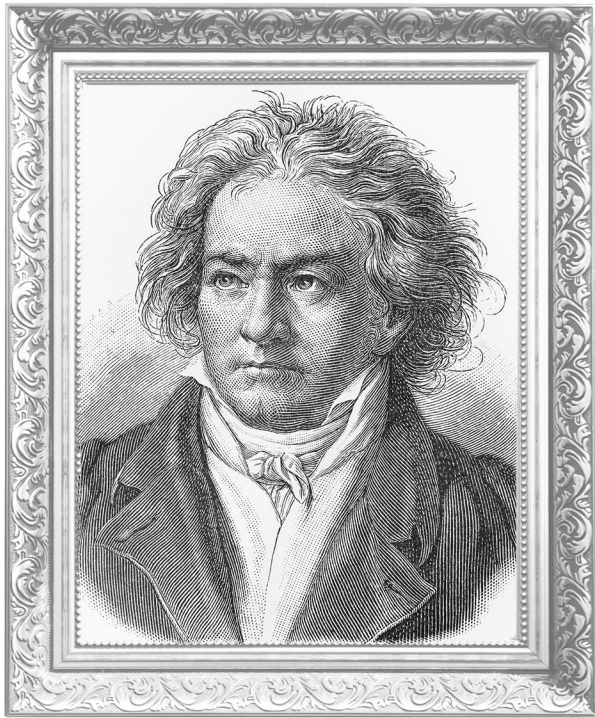
- Clementi was a child prodigy - having his first appointment to a court at age 9
- Sonatas and small studies explored the possibilities of the early piano and taught the technique of the piano to early pianists
- known as "The Father of the Piano"
- In 1799, he co-founded a company that published music and manufactured pianos.
- Traces of his influence may be found in the piano works of Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart.

FAMOUS FOR:

Piano Sonatina in C Major
Gradus ad Parnassum (piano studies)



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FRANZ SCHUBERT

(1797-1828)

Era: Classical/Romantic Nationality: Austrian

- Schubert wrote his first masterpiece at 17 – a setting of Goethe's 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' (Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel)
- In 1815, Schubert wrote more than 20,000 bars (measures) of music, including 9 sacred works, a symphony, and 150 songs
- Schubert enjoyed a good time and, in his day, he was famous for his musical parties known as 'Schubertiads'
- Schubert was in LOVE with Mozart's music

FAMOUS FOR:

Unfinished Symphony
Der Erlkönig



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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)

Era: Classical Nationality: German

- Beethoven had a difficult childhood: At age 11 he had to leave school; at 18 he was the breadwinner of the family.
- Beethoven is known for composing music that conveys a philosophy of life without words; his music shows the power of the human will.
- His music helped pave the way into the Romantic era, because it was full of strong and powerful emotions
- While he was gradually going deaf, he said "I will seize fate by the throat..." and "If only I were rid of my affliction I would embrace the whole world."
- He wrote one sonata entirely at night — the "Moonlight Sonata"

FAMOUS FOR:

Symphony #9
Für Elise



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FREDERIC CHOPIN

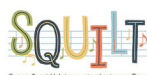
(1810-1849)

Era: Romantic Nationality: Polish/French

- Chopin began composing and writing poetry at 6, and gave his first public performance at age 8.
- Chopin loved Bach. His piano students were made to practice Bach every day to strengthen their fingers and exercise their minds.
- He went to Paris in 1831, and never returned to his homeland of Poland.
- Chopin is known as "The Poet of the Piano".
- Chopin's "Minute" Waltz lasts 60 seconds. Well, almost: the 138 bars of music usually take between a minute and a half and two minutes to play.

FAMOUS FOR:

Minute Waltz
Black Key Etude



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HECTOR BERLIOZ

(1803-1869)

Era: Romantic Nationality: French

- Berlioz was born in the French Alps.
- From age 12 he took music lessons. He studied flute and then guitar; these were the only instruments he ever played.
- Berlioz was extremely fond of the works of Shakespeare.
- Berlioz wrote operas, symphonies, choral music, overtures, songs and cantatas.
- Berlioz had a very interesting and dramatic romantic life!

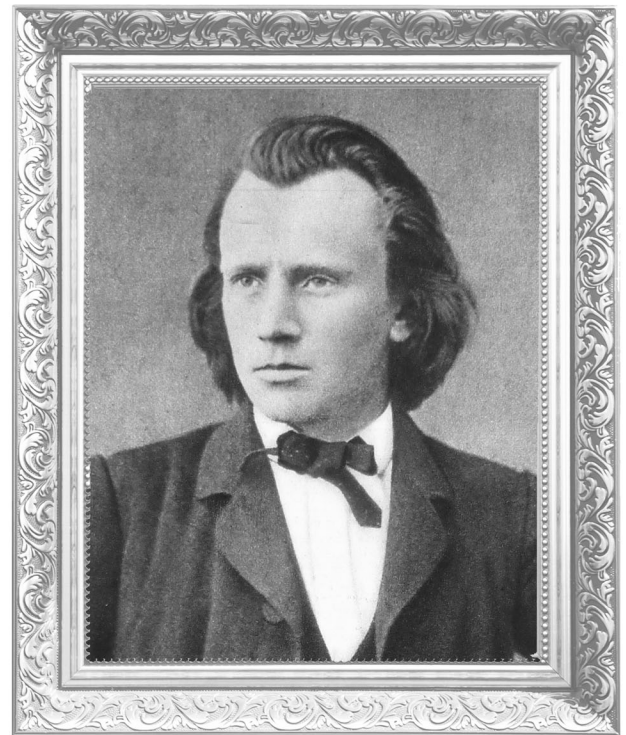
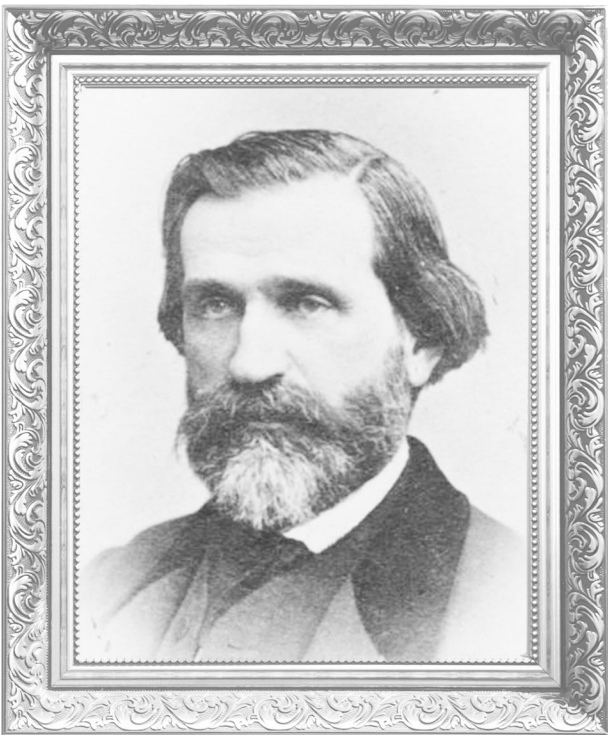
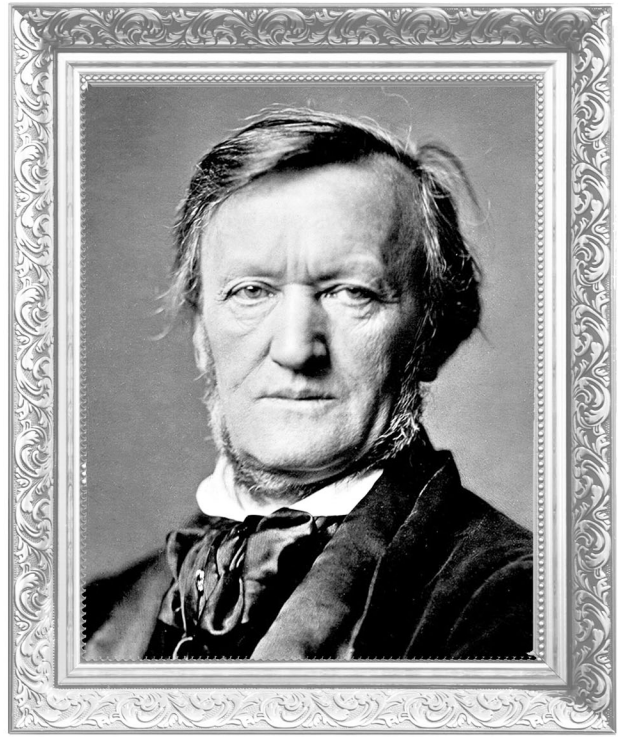
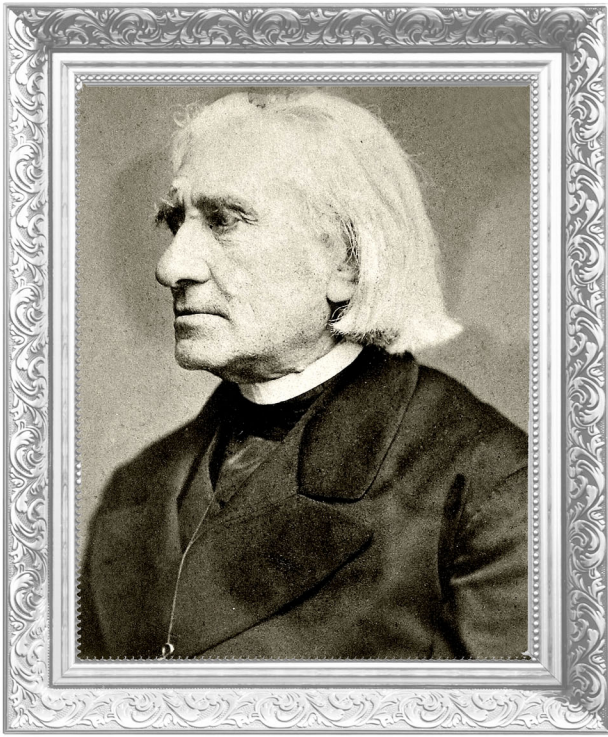
FAMOUS FOR:

Symphonie fantastique
Roméo et Juliette (a choral symphony)



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RICHARD WAGNER

(1813-1883)

Era: Romantic Nationality: German

- His name is pronounced “vAa-g-ner” (most people don’t know this!)
- He was one of the most important composers of opera in Germany during the Romantic Era.
- He popularized leitmotifs - melodies associated with specific characters.
- He had little interest in music as a child.
- Wagner’s opera, “The Ring Cycle” is the longest opera in existence.

FAMOUS FOR:

Ride of the Valkyries
The Ring



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FRANZ LISZT

(1811-1886)

Era: Romantic Nationality: Hungarian

- Liszt appeared in concerts at the age of 9 and attracted wealthy sponsors who financed his musical education abroad.
- He was one of the greatest pianists who has ever lived.
- Most of his music is for piano, and it is VERY difficult to play.
- Pianos in Liszt’s time weren’t as strong as they are now. Liszt often broke piano strings when he played.
- He was known for his generosity towards and support of other composers.

FAMOUS FOR:

Hungarian Rhapsodies (for piano)
Faust Symphony



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JOHANNES BRAHMS

(1833-1897)

Era: Romantic Nationality: German

- Young Brahms was forced to play the piano in dance halls to contribute to the family’s income because they were so poor.
- Brahms once fell asleep during a performance by Franz Liszt!
- Brahms was influenced by folk and gypsy music.
- Brahms loved to be outside - he would take “walking holidays” in the hills of Italy.
- Brahms died of cancer in 1897.

FAMOUS FOR:

Hungarian Dances
Brahms Lullaby



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GIUSEPPE VERDI

(1813-1901)

Era: Romantic Nationality: Italian

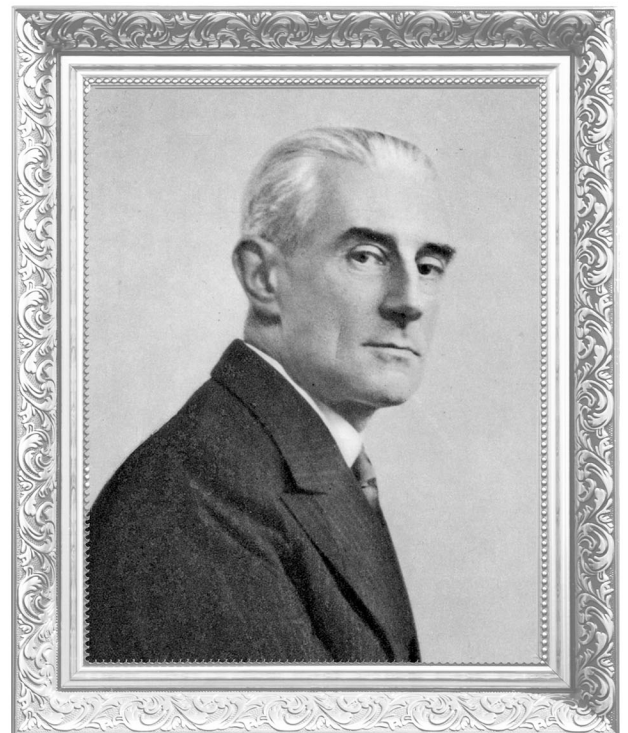
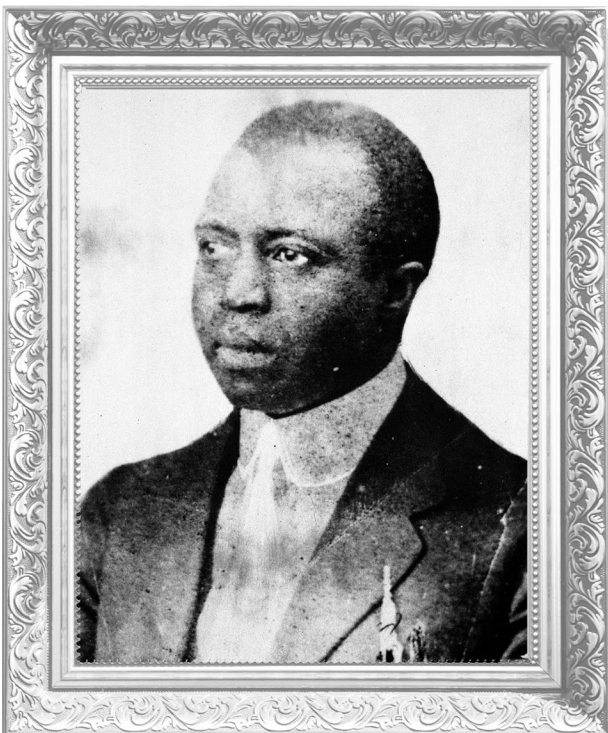
- Along with Wagner, considered the most important opera composer of the 19th century. The two had a long-standing rivalry.
- His most famous opera, “La Traviata” is the most performed opera in history.
- Verdi’s music has been used in many modern film scores.
- In addition to being a fan of music, Verdi was a fan of FOOD!
- Verdi’s funeral in 1901 was the largest public assembly of any event in the history of Italy.

FAMOUS FOR:

Aida
Otello



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RICHARD STRAUSS

(1864-1949)

Era: Romantic/Modern Nationality: German

- Strauss wrote his first composition at age 6.
- He maintained his romanticism in music, even while being part of one of the most chaotic ages of world history - (World War I).
- He wrote tone poems, operas, and solo and chamber works.
- He had a fondness for the French Horn, because his father was a horn player.
- In 1874 he heard Wagner's works, and this made a profound impact on his life and musical style.

FAMOUS FOR:

Horn Concerto #1
Also Sprach Zarathustra



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PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

(1840-1893)

Era: Romantic Nationality: Russian

- Tchaikovsky could speak German & French (in addition to Russian) by age 6.
- He was the first Russian composer to acquire a solid reputation and career abroad.
- He appeared at the inaugural concert of Carnegie Hall in New York in 1891.
- His Piano Concerto #1 is one of the most well known and loved of all piano concertos
- While it is popular today, "The Nutcracker" wasn't appreciated by the critics when it was first performed.

FAMOUS FOR:

The Nutcracker
Piano Concerto #1



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MAURICE RAVEL

(1875-1937)

Era: Modern Nationality: French

- Maurice Ravel is most closely associated with Impressionism.
- Ravel's father was an inventor, he invented the "Whirlwind of Death" circus machine.
- Ravel had strong opinions on music and musicians, describing much of Beethoven "exasperating", Wagner's influence "pernicious" and Berlioz's harmony "clumsy".
- Ravel was a master orchestrator.
- Ravel spent World War I as a truck driver stationed at the Verdun front.

FAMOUS FOR:

Bolero
Daphnis et Chloé (ballet)



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SCOTT JOPLIN

(1867-1917)

Era: Modern Nationality: American

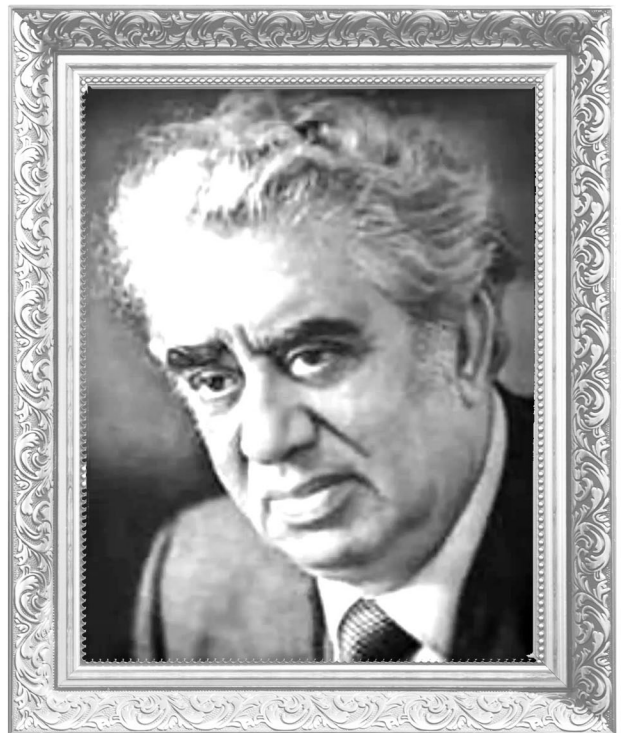
- Joplin is the King of Ragtime (a mixture between Black American folk music and classical music).
- His most famous piece, "Maple Leaf Rag" sold 75,000 copies in the first month.
- Joplin's father was a slave.
- Most Black American children around the time Scott Joplin was born didn't learn music. A kind local music teacher taught him for free.
- After Scott Joplin died, ragtime music was almost forgotten about as jazz became popular - it became popular again in the 1970s.

FAMOUS FOR:

The Entertainer
Maple Leaf Rag



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IGOR STRAVINSKY

(1882-1971)

Era: Modern Nationality: Russian

- Stravinsky's father was a singer with the Imperial Orchestra, and his mother was a skilled pianist.
- The eruption of World War I and the later Russian revolution caused him to take up residence in Switzerland, and then he moved to France.
- After the death of his wife in 1939, he moved to the United States.
- Stravinsky was also a notable author.
- He was regarded as a revolutionary who toyed with, crossed, and violated the traditionally held boundaries of musical design.

FAMOUS FOR:

Rite of Spring
The Firebird



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BELA BARTOK

(1881-1945)

Era: Modern Nationality: Hungarian

- He exhibited remarkable musical talent from early childhood. By age 4 he could play 40 different pieces on the piano.
- Together with Franz Liszt, Bartok is among the greatest composers from Hungary.
- He is regarded as the founder of ethnomusicology (which is the study of music of different cultures).
- His melodies were deeply influenced by the folk music of Hungary, Romania, Turkey and other nations.
- In the build-up to the World War II and the increasing Nazi terror in the late 1930s, he chose to leave Hungary and immigrated to the United States, becoming a citizen in 1945.

FAMOUS FOR:

Romanian Folk Dances
Music for Percussion, Strings & Celesta



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ARAM KHACHATURIAN

(1903-1978)

Era: Modern Nationality: Soviet Armenian

- Although he began to study biology at Moscow University, he took cello lessons as well at the Gnessin Music School.
- Over the next several years, Khachaturian studied and taught at the Moscow Conservatory.
- One of his best known works is "Sabre Dance". It is rhythmically stirring and was immediately popular.
- Khachaturian wrote many musical works, including marches, dances, chamber music, and film scores.
- In 1954, he was named People's Artist of the Soviet Union.

FAMOUS FOR:

Sabre Dance
Piano Concerto



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GEORGE GERSHWIN

(1898-1937)

Era: Modern Nationality: American

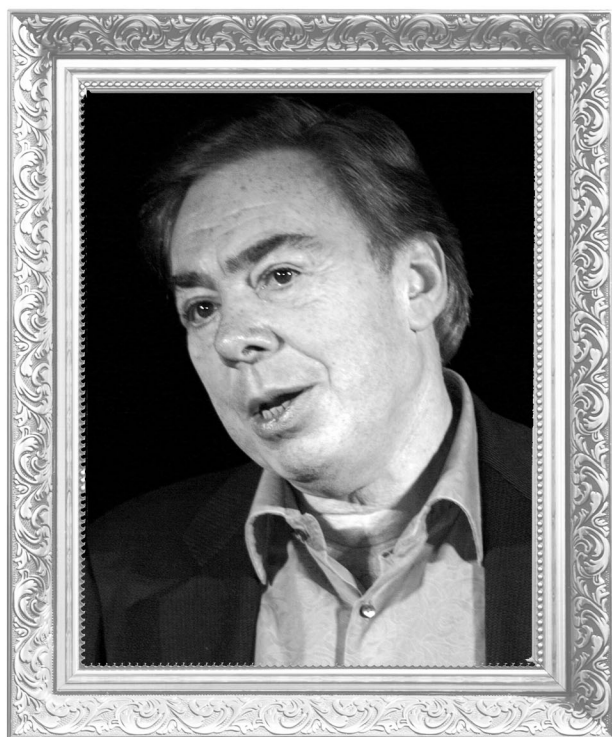
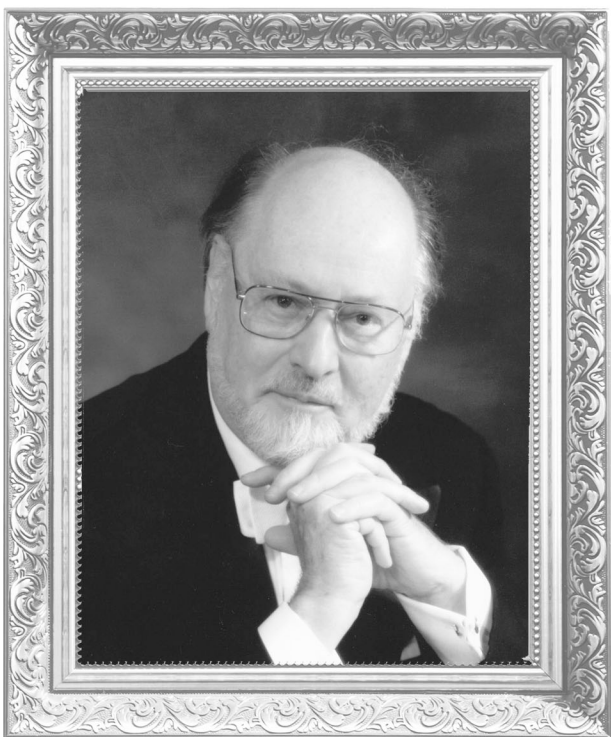
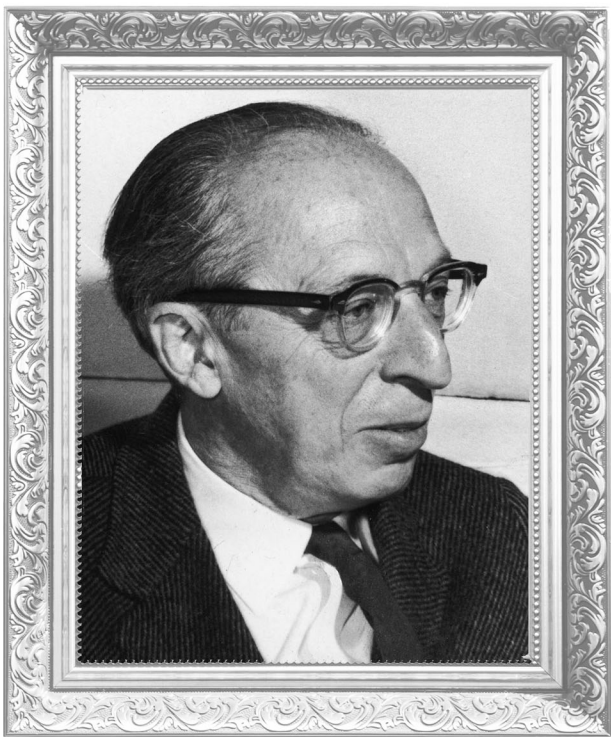
- George Gershwin was born in New York City into a Russian Jewish immigrant family - he started playing piano at age 10.
- To earn extra money, he worked as a rehearsal pianist for Broadway singers.
- In his 1920s, Gershwin started composing Broadway musical theatre works with his brother Ira writing the lyrics.
- Gershwin wrote "Rhapsody in Blue", considered a landmark piece in American music.
- Early in 1937, Gershwin began to complain of blinding headaches and coordination problems. He was diagnosed with a brain tumor and died at age 38.

FAMOUS FOR:

Porgy & Bess (Summertime)
Rhapsody in Blue



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LEONARD BERNSTEIN

(1918-1990)

Era: Modern Nationality: American

- Bernstein was introduced to the world of classical music by his brother, who often took him to listen to different orchestras.
- In 1940, Bernstein attended the Boston Symphony Orchestra Summer Institute upon the recommendation of Aaron Copland.
- Bernstein had a series of television shows which were known as the "Young People's Concerts for CBS", which was a 53 episode educational series.
- His 1957 musical "West Side Story" was a Broadway classic which ran for more than seven hundred performances in NYC.
- He was the director of the NY Philharmonic from 1957-1969.

FAMOUS FOR:

West Side Story
Candide



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AARON COPLAND

(1900-1990)

Era: Modern Nationality: American

- Copland decided to become a composer at the age of 15, after attending a concert by composer-pianist Paderewski.
- Copland's first musical loves as a teenager ran toward Chopin, Debussy, Verdi and the Russian composers.
- Copland was influenced by Igor Stravinsky. Copland used to idealize him and regard him as his hero and his favorite composer of the 20th century.
- He was awarded Pulitzer Prize in 1945 because of his work for "Appalachian Spring".
- Copland was a major influence on the compositional style of an entire generation of American composers, including his friend and protégé Leonard Bernstein.

FAMOUS FOR:

Appalachian Spring
Rodeo



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ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

(1948-)

Era: Modern Nationality: English

- Musical genes definitely run in the family - mother was a violinist, father was a composer, and brother is a famous cellist.
- At 9 he could play the organ and violin, and had already composed a series of musicals.
- He is the first composer, in 1983, to have three musicals play simultaneously on Broadway and London's West End.
- His musical, Cats, has played in more than 15 countries.
- Phantom of the Opera, produced in London in 1986, was one of the most awaited musicals of the 1988 Broadway season, and had an amazing \$16 million in advance ticket sales.

FAMOUS FOR:

Cats
Phantom of the Opera



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JOHN WILLIAMS

(1932-)

Era: Modern Nationality: American

- grew up in a musical family; his father was a jazz percussionist.
- Williams worked as a pianist in jazz clubs and eventually studios, most notably for the legendary Henry Mancini.
- From 1980 to 1993, Williams was Principal Conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra.
- His Star Wars soundtrack remains the best-selling non-pop record of all-time.
- With 48 Oscar nominations, he is second only to Walt Disney as most nominated person ever.

FAMOUS FOR:

Soundtrack from Star Wars
Soundtrack from Schindler's List



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