



# Music of the Renaissance

The Age of Enlightenment  
(1400 – 1600)

# Why Move from the Dark Ages?

- Moved away from the church as the sole governing body.
- Italian poet, Petrarch, wrote about examining life in terms of *Individualism* and *Humanism*.
- ***Individualism*** can be viewed as a new self awareness and self assurance.
- ***Humanism*** – refers to a belief in the importance of what we still call the humanities: the study of languages, literature, history, and philosophy in a secular (non-religious) framework.

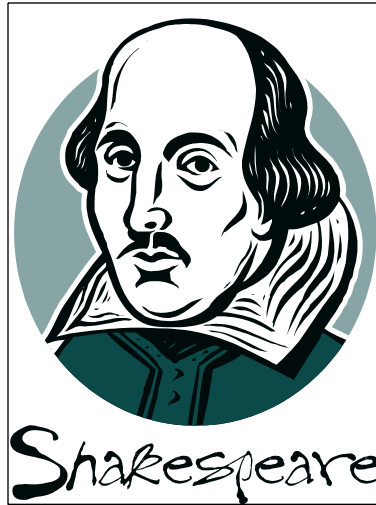
# Important Historical Events of the Times

- 1431 – Joan of Arc was burned at the stake
- 1435 – Gutenberg printing press is invented.
- 1455 – Printing press invented
- 1465 – 1<sup>st</sup> printed music appears
- 1475 – Michelangelo was born
- 1492 – Columbus discovers America

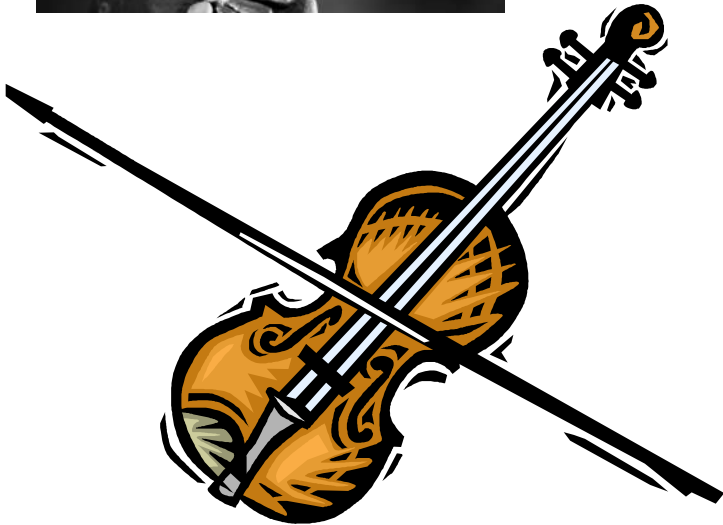
# Important Historical Events of the Times

- 1500 – 1<sup>st</sup> pencil
- 1503 – 1506 – *The Mona Lisa* is painted by Leonardo DaVinci
- 1508 – 1512 – The Sistine Chapel is painted by Michelangelo
- 1517 - Martin Luther begins to challenge the Catholic Church and posts the 95 *Theses*.

# Important Historical Events of the Times



- The Black Death sweeps through Europe
- 1553 – Violin began to develop
- 1564 – William Shakespeare was born



# *Renaissance*

- ***Renaissance*** means “rebirth”. The Renaissance became an age of enlightenment, of scientific, artistic, and philosophical development.
- These views of the people of the Renaissance profoundly affected the worlds of music and art.

# Renaissance Music

- During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, composers were creating polyphonic music by using ***counterpoint***.
- ***Counterpoint*** is a system of countering one note or point against another.

# Martin Luther

- After Martin Luther had posted his 95 *Theses* calling for reformation, the Catholic church launched what was known as the *counterreformation*.
- At the Council of Trent, the Catholic church declared its desire to eliminate all instrumental music from the mass and services as well as eliminate all use of polyphony by choirs.



# More on Martin Luther

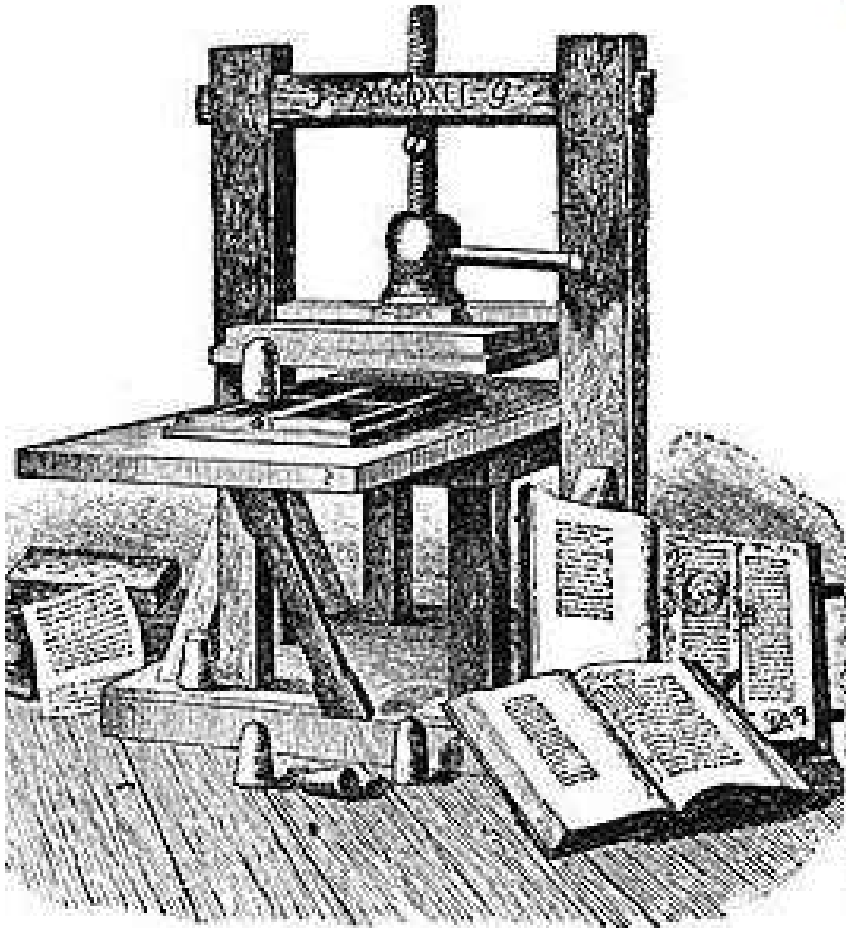
- Martin Luther was a monk and teacher. From 1512 until his death, he taught scripture at the University of Wittenberg in the German state of Saxony. He didn't plan on leading a religious revolution, all he wanted was to be a good christian. In 1517, Luther decided to take a public stand against actions of a friar named Johann Tetzel. Tetzel was raising money to rebuild St. Peters Cathedral in Rome by selling Indulgences.

# Giovanni Palestrina

- The church wanted to go back to using only Gregorian chants.
- At this point, Giovanni Palestrina stepped in and almost single-handedly changed the future for music.
- He was an Italian composer and choir master of several important choirs in Rome. He represented musicians at the Council of Trent.



# The Printing Press



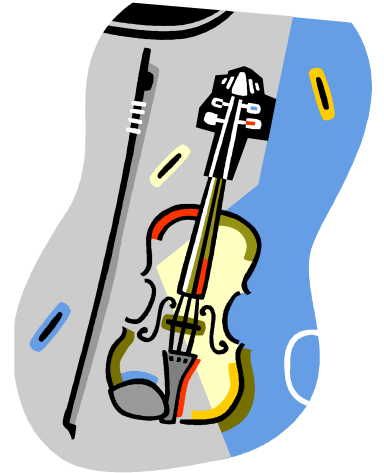
- An invention that greatly affected musical development is the printing press.
- The printing press allowed the reproduction of music so that it could be widely distributed geographically.
- This allowed the import and export of music to other areas.

# Giovanni Palestrina

- He convinced them that polyphony could be used tastefully and still be used in the church services.
- He also made some progress toward convincing the church that instruments could still have a place in church services.
- He was so well-respected that he was asked to rewrite the church's chant books.

# Instruments of the Renaissance

- Violin was developed
- Lute was at the height of popularity
- Bagpipes were created and played on Scottish battlefields



# Instruments of the Renaissance



- Clavichord was developed (early piano)
- Instruments were used for dance music
- Instrumentalists began to improvise

# Vocal Music

- Chant is still used in church and by monks
- Mass was created (sung part of the Eucharist)
- Motets – sacred pieces
- Madrigals – Italian secular pieces

# Arts Nova (New Art)

- Creativity
- Improvisation
- Composers emphasized human emotions
- Music became more lively and up beat
- Polyphony was even further developed



# Renaissance Court Dances



## **Ballet first developed in Europe in the Renaissance period.**

- In Italy and France, dancing masters taught royalty and choreographed entertainments for the courts
- Italian intermezzi (late 1400s) were interludes between acts of plays (operas) that combined dance, music, and drama
- In the 1500 & 1600s, dancing masters began recording their choreography.

**Catherine de Medici** was a great patron of the arts, and commissioned many dance Works, including *Ballet Comique de la Reine*, a six-hour dance/drama involving both the Greek gods and the Queen of France!



# Renaissance Dance

Renaissance court spectacles were often ornate

They emphasized geometrical patterns

They used steps that were taken from the popular ballroom dances of the day, including the pavane galliard, volta, and others

Women and men did these dances together in the ballroom, but onstage, the women's parts were danced by men

Steps became increasingly complex, and dancing masters asked their pupils to practice them holding onto the backs of chairs for balance; this is how the ballet *barre* developed



THE PAVANE AT THE COURT OF HENRI III, CIRCA 1500

Dancing became stylish at all Renaissance courts in Europe, including those of Queen Elizabeth I and Henry VIII

**Thoinot Arbeau**, a French canon in the Roman Catholic church, wrote one of the first dance books, *Orchesography*, in 1589. It was a collection of the standard social dances of the time, and included correct social behavior and positions of the feet.

Clothing was bulky and tight in the torso, restricting movement mostly to the feet.



# *Renaissance Court Dances*

## *Exit Slip*

Today, you have learned how to dance like it was 1575. The dances of this time developed because of certain aspects of Renaissance society. On your own paper, you need to describe the Renaissance court dances while explaining why certain portions of the dance listed below developed:

The kiss with the bow

The emphasis of foot movement

The lack of physical contact between dancers

Write your answer on your own paper. Your answer must be half a page long and must be written in complete sentences. Anything less will receive no credit.