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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.

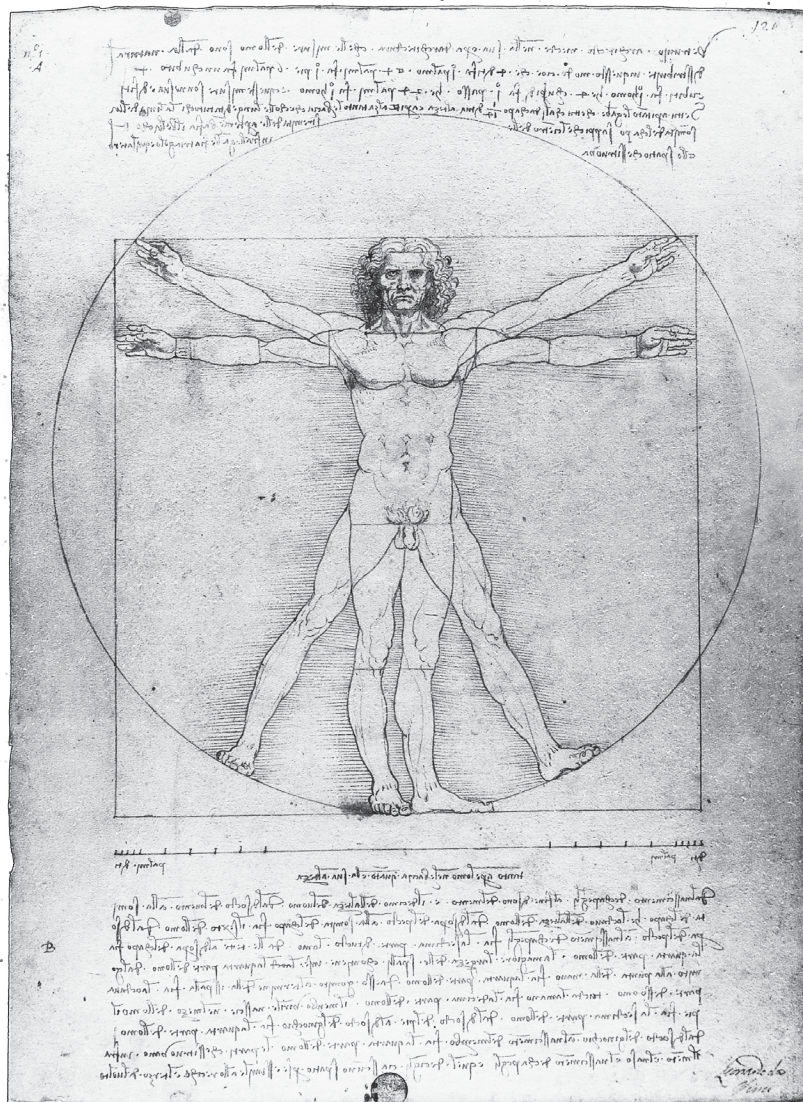
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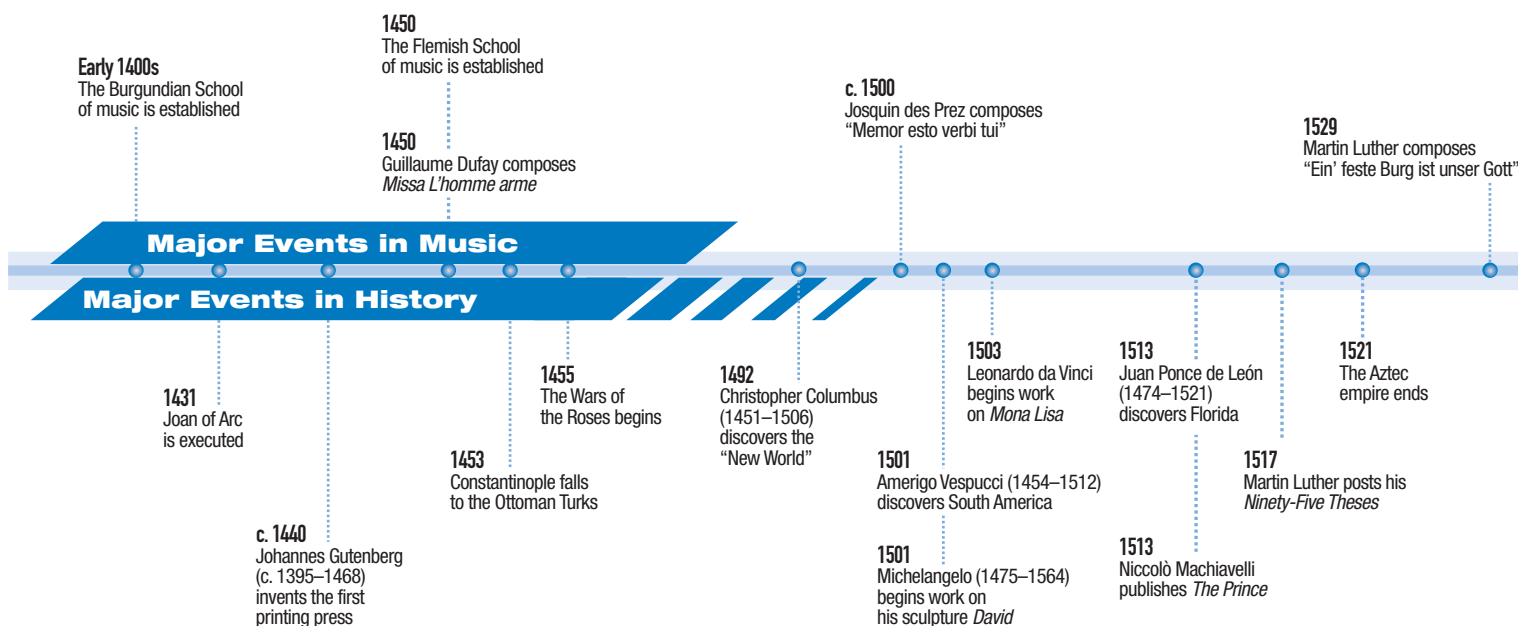
THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD (1400–1600)

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

