

# TIMELINE

1400 1500 1600

## SCIENCE

**1454** Gutenberg prints Bible from movable type



**1492** First voyage of Columbus to America



**1543** Copernicus, *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (heliocentric model)

**1543** Vesalius: pioneering research into human anatomy

**1552** Michael Servetus: early research in Europe into pulmonary circulation

## ARTS



Mona Lisa, 1503

**1495** Da Vinci, *The Last Supper*

**1503** Da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*

**1504** Michelangelo, *David*

**1514** Machiavelli, *The Prince*

**1516** Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*

**1528** Castiglione, *The Courtier*

**1539** English Bible adopted



David, 1504

**1590** Spenser, *The Fairie Queene*, Books 1-3

**1594** Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

## EUROPE

**1453** End of Hundred Years War

**1464** Piero de' Medici succeeds Cosimo

**1467** Charles the Bold of Burgundy succeeds Philip II (the Good)

**1477** Death of Charles the Bold, End of the Ducey of Burgundy

**1485-1603** Tudor Dynasty in England

**1517** Martin Luther, *95 theses*

**1519-56** Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor

**1527** Sack of Rome

**1532** Henry VIII breaks with Pope

**1545-1563** Council of Trent

**Henry VIII, 1532**

**Elizabeth I, 1558**

**Mary Stuart, 1587**

**1552** Second book of common prayer

**1553-58** Mary I, restores Latin rite and link to Rome

**1558-1603** Elizabeth I, restores Church of England

**1572** Massacre of Protestants in Paris

**1587** Mary Stuart executed



# Renaissance & Baroque Outreach Program

5530 Penn Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
412-361-2048  
www.rbsp.org

**MISSION:** Renaissance and Baroque of Pittsburgh has been the city's leading presenter of early music performances since 1969. Its mission is to further the education of the community by fostering the understanding and appreciation of the music, arts and culture of the Renaissance and Baroque, and to present historically informed performances of music from the Medieval through the Early Classical periods.

**PROGRAM:** The musicians performing on the concert series extend their time in Pittsburgh to teach, demonstrate, lecture, and perform in schools, universities, medical facilities, and concert halls. Activities are tailored to fit a school's current curriculum.

Study Guide created by Mia Bonnewell

# A Study Guide to Renaissance Music

French, "rebirth." 1450-1600

# Renaissance & Baroque

BRINGING EARLY MUSIC TO PITTSBURGH



Florence, Italy

## RENAISSANCE MUSIC IN A NUTSHELL

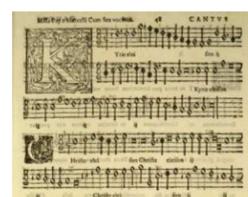
Modern society continues to venerate works of the Renaissance masters including Michelangelo, Raphael, Shakespeare, and Leonardo da Vinci—masters of art, literature, science, and philosophy. This period of history was a "rebirth" of humanism, a movement that revived ancient learning particularly grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. People were asked to judge their lives, artworks, customs, and social and political structures by the standards of antiquity. They focused on the fulfillment of life in the present moment, and as a result they were optimistic champions of reform.

As can be imagined, the humanistic outlook had a profound impact on music. Musicians wanted to reclaim the power of the classical style in music. They thought the purpose of music was to move the listener and made changes to their compositions accordingly. One example is the importance placed on the words and music fitting together, or music following the rhythm of natural speech. While vocal music was still predominant, 16<sup>th</sup> century composers wrote pieces specifically for instruments (the surviving manuscripts are mostly for keyboard) that were modeled after the vocal style and often written for a *consort* of similar instruments. (i.e. a group of viols, a group of recorders).

Another significant development in this time period was the shift of arts patronage from the church to the courts. In Italy princes, oligarchies, and churches sponsored musicians, creating a flurry of musical activity and demand for music. With the invention of the printing press, the first liturgical books were printed in 1473 and the first collection of polyphonic music was printed in 1501, making music more readily available.

Finally, countries began to form their own musical identities. The rise of national styles led to the ability to distinguish between Italian, German, and French music. (This was not the case in the Middle Ages, since most Church music was the same style.) With the Protestant Reformation sacred music also changed—Calvinists sang psalms, Anglicans sang anthems, and Catholics revamped their polyphony in the Counter Reformation. The result was development of the chorale and hymn tunes.

**COMPOSERS OF NOTE:** John Dowland (English, 1563-1626), known for his lute songs, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (Italian, circa 1525-1594), known for his polyphonic choral works.



**Thomas Tallis**

Thomas Tallis composed music during what has become known as the “Golden Age” of English sacred music. He is known for his vocal works which include mass settings, motets, and settings of some vernacular poems.



His career spanned four monarchs: from the split from Rome under Henry VIII, the Protestant rule under Edward VI, the reinstatement of Catholicism under Queen Mary, and the switch back to the Anglican Church under Queen Elizabeth.

The glorious blending of vocal lines in Tallis' work seemingly transcended differences in church matters and expressed the turmoil of the time. Tallis adapted English (Protestant) and Latin (mostly Catholic) texts as necessary, and, thanks to his talent, enjoyed royal favor in every reign while remaining a faithful Catholic.

**BUZZ WORDS**

**MASS SETTINGS**

Choral settings of the various parts of the Catholic mass. Intended for church use and some concert performances: *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei.*

**MOTET**

A sacred vocal composition that is polyphonic (see below) and sung in Latin without accompaniment. These pieces are often based on a cantus firmus (a fixed line or melody in the piece) and sung by trained singers.

**MADRIGAL**

A secular vocal composition with four or five parts, sung with one singer to a part. These pieces were sung at court festivities, social gatherings, and meetings of learned societies. Composers were freer to experiment in this form since there were fewer rules about how to write these pieces.

**POLYPHONY**

(From Greek, poly- more than one, many; -phony, sound) Music with more than one melody sounding at the same time. Each melody has equal emphasis and does not have to start and stop at the same time. (i.e. a round of “Row, row, row your boat.”)



**SPOTLIGHT ON MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**



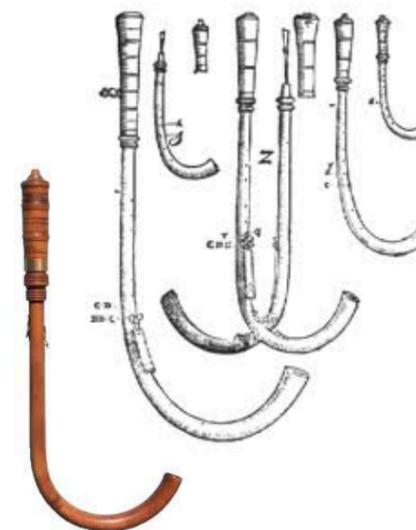
**LUTE:** The most popular household solo instrument. Pear shaped, except for a Spanish version that is shaped like a guitar.

**Lute tablature:** Notation for lute showing where the fingers were supposed to be on the strings, instead of the pitch to be played.



**SHAWMS:** Double reed forerunners of the oboe.

**KRUMMHORNS (CRUMHORN):** A ‘bent horn’ that belongs to the woodwind family. This double reed instrument produces a strong buzzing sound.



**SACKBUT:** Ancestor of the modern trombone.

**HARPSICHORD:** Keyboard instrument that produces sound by plucking a string when a key is pressed. Often ornately decorated.



FREY MANAGEMENT