

Composer Biographies for Music in The Yamaha Advantage™

Jean-Baptiste Arban (1825–89)

Jean-Baptiste Arban was born in Lyons, France, February 28, 1825. He entered the conservatory in Paris at an early age and began studying the trumpet. He became a professor of cornet at the conservatory in 1869, and began writing the exercises and musical studies, which later became his famous method. He was the most brilliant cornet player of his time, and he became very well known for his musicianship and for his excellence as a teacher, all of which have been perpetuated through his book. Arban died in Paris on April 9, 1889, and is remembered today as the first great brass pedagogue, and as one of the greatest brass teachers who ever lived.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany on March 21, 1685. He lived all of his life in Germany, dying in Leipzig on July 28, 1750. He was very famous as an organist, but more famous as a composer. He wrote orchestral music, chamber music, choral music and, of course, keyboard music. Bach was the most important composer of the early 1700s being given credit for the development of the style of contrapuntal writing. (Counterpoint refers to the style of music where two or more melodies are played simultaneously. Their interweaving creates a contrapuntal texture.) Some of Bach's most famous works include the *St. Matthew* and *St. John Passion*, the *B Minor Mass*, and for keyboard, the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, the *Two- and Three-Part Inventions*, and many works for young performers.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany on December 16, 1770 and died in Vienna, Austria on March 26, 1827. Beethoven composed orchestral music, chamber music, chorus, opera, and keyboard music. He is one of the most important composers of all time. He was very prolific, adding a great deal of music to the repertoire that is still performed today. Towards the end of his career, he started losing his hearing and became deaf in 1820, but continued to compose right up until the time of his death. The opening of his Fifth Symphony is probably the most familiar four notes ever written in musical history.

Joseph Brackett (1797–1882)

Very little is known about the life of Joseph Brackett. He was the leader of the Shaker Church in Sabbathday Lake, Maine. The Shakers are a group of people that live simple and religious lives. Joseph Brackett is best remembered as the composer of the famous song, *Simple Gifts* which has been used as the basis from everything from ballets by Aaron Copland to car commercials. It is considered one of the most popular American songs.

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany on May 7, 1833 and died in Vienna, Austria on April 3, 1897. He wrote music for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral and many songs. Brahms was a close associate of Robert and Clara Schumann, and although he was a Romantic composer, his compositions showed his deep love for and understanding of the classical style.

Larry Clark (b.1963)

Larry Clark was born in Clearwater, Florida on September 20, 1963. He has written music for band and orchestra. His music is some of the most performed pieces for school bands and orchestras. He is the co-author of *The Yamaha Advantage*™.

Herbert L. Clarke (1867–1945)

Herbert L. Clarke was born in Woburn, Massachusetts on September 12, 1867 and died in 1945. He is easily the best known cornetist of all time. He was cornet soloist for many of the great bands of the day including the Sousa Band. He is the author of the famous *Clarke Technical Studies* that are used as the definitive brass method for teaching technique.

Muzio Clementi (1752 – 1832)

Muzio Clementi was born in Rome, Italy on January 23, 1752. He died on March 10, 1832 in Evesham, England. He was considered an English composer since he lived there most of his life. In addition to being a composer, he was also a keyboard performer, teacher, music publisher and piano manufacturer. He wrote mostly keyboard pieces. His sonatas and sonatinas are standard literature for developing pianists even today.

Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904)

Antonin Dvořák was born in Muhlhausen, Bohemia on September 8, 1841 and died in Prague, Czechoslovakia on May 1, 1904. He wrote music for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral, opera and songs. He was a teacher at the Prague Conservatory and Director of the National Conservatory in New York. One of his best-known works is the *New World Symphony*.

Sandy Feldstein (b.1940)

Sandy Feldstein was born in Brooklyn, New York on September 7, 1940. He has been a leading force in the school music publishing business and has published more than 600 works that are used by young musicians all over the world. He is the co-author of *The Yamaha Advantage*™.

Stephen Collins Foster (1826–64)

Stephen Collins Foster was born in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania on January 4, 1826 and died in New York City on January 13, 1864. He is one of America's most famous songwriters, having created many of the popular songs of the 1800s, which are still sung today. Some of his best-known songs include *Swanee River*, *Oh, Susannah*, and *Old Folks At Home*.

Edvard Hagerup Grieg (1843–1907)

Edvard Hagerup Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway on June 15, 1843 and died in the same town on September 4, 1907. Many of the melodies in the compositions he wrote are reminiscent of the songs and dances of the country in which he lived. He wrote music for orchestra, chamber, choral, songs, theater and keyboard. His piano concerto is one of the most famous ever written. His orchestral piece *Peer Gynt Suite* is one of the most performed and recognized orchestral compositions of the late 1800s.

Edmund L. Gruber (1879–1941)

Edmund Gruber was not a composer by profession. He was an officer in the U.S. Army 5th Field Artillery Regiment. He was asked to write a motivational song because of his musical background to boost the morale of the troops. He wrote the *Caissons* song, also known as the *Field Artillery Song* in 1907. It has become the official anthem of the U.S. Army.

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

George Frideric Handel was born in Halle, Germany on February 23, 1685 and died in London, England April 14, 1759. He wrote music for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral, opera, and songs. Handel was one of the most prolific composers of the Baroque era. His orchestral piece, *Water Music*, has been transcribed for bands and is played throughout the world. His oratorios include the *Messiah*, which is probably the most performed major work for chorus of all time.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn was born in Rohrau, Austria on March 31, 1732. He died in Vienna, Austria on May 31, 1809. He wrote music for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral opera and songs. Haydn is most famous for his symphonies of which he wrote over 100.

Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

Gustav Holst was born in Cheltenham, England on September 21, 1874 and died in London on May 25, 1934. He was a noted English composer and teacher. His most famous pieces include *The Planets* for orchestra and his suites for band.

Hyacinthe-Eléanore Klosé (1808–80)

Hyacinthe-Eléanore Klosé was born in Isle of Corfu, October 11, 1808 and died in Paris, France on August 29, 1880. He was a French clarinetist and band director who was a longtime friend of the instrument maker, L. Buffet. These men collaborated to incorporate the Boehm ring system on the clarinet, which was patented in 1844. Klosé's reputation as a successful and much loved teacher is well documented, and the *Celebrated Method for Clarinet* is still used extensively as are his other solos and studies.

Georg Kopprasch (ca. 1800–33)

Georg Kopprasch was born some time around 1800 and died sometime after 1833. Kopprasch was a famous horn player in Berlin, Germany. He is most remembered for his famous etudes for horn. These etudes have become standard teaching material for all instrumentalists.

Franz Lehár (1870–1948)

Franz Lehár was born in Kormorn, Hungary on April 30, 1870. He died in Bad Ischl, Austria on October 24, 1948. Lehár wrote for orchestra and keyboard. He wrote music for operettas, theater, and popular songs for films as well as concert band marches. He is probably the best known for his operetta, *The Merry Widow*, which contains the "Merry Widow Waltz".

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria on January 27, 1756. He died in Vienna, Austria on December 5, 1791. Mozart was a child prodigy who studied with his father, Leopold Mozart (1719–1787) who was also a famous composer. In Mozart's short life of only 35 years, he composed over 600 works including music for orchestra, chamber, choral, opera, songs and keyboard. Much of his music, including the operas, symphonies, string quartets, and keyboard music, is widely performed throughout the world to this day.

Jacques Offenbach (1819–80)

Jacques Offenbach was born in Cologne, Germany on June 20, 1819 and died in Paris, France on October 5, 1880. He wrote operas and operettas. He is best known for his opera, *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706)

Johann Pachelbel was born in Nuremberg, Germany on September 1, 1653 and died in the same city on March 3, 1706. He wrote for organ and harpsichord and was the organist at various churches including the famous one in Eisenach. His *Canon* is one of his most popular pieces.

James Pierpont (1822–1893)

James Pierpont was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1822 and died in Winter Haven, Florida in 1893. He was well known in the 19th century for composing many popular songs. He is most remembered as the composer of *Jingle Bells*, which did not gain its wide popularity as a Christmas song until the 20th century. Pierpont was the uncle of the millionaire and philanthropist, John Pierpont Morgan.

Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

Gioachino Rossini was born in Piazzaro, Italy on February 29, 1792 and died in Paris, France on November 13, 1868. He wrote works for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral, opera and songs. He is best known for his opera, *William Tell*.

Franz Peter Schubert (1797–1828)

Franz Schubert was born in Lichtenthal, Austria on January 13, 1797. He died in Vienna, Austria on November 19, 1828. Schubert composed music for orchestra, chamber, choral, opera, songs, theater and keyboard. Although much of Schubert's compositional work is highly respected and still performed, he is best known for his songs and song cycles. He wrote over 600 songs, some of the most famous being *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Erlkönig*. Of his orchestral works, *The Unfinished Symphony* is one of most well known.

Robert Schumann (1810–56)

Robert Schumann was born in Zwickau, Saxony, June 8, 1810. He died in Endenich, Germany on July 29, 1856. Schumann wrote music for orchestra, chamber, choral, songs, theater and keyboard. He also wrote books about music. As a professional pianist and teacher at the Leipzig Conservatory, he created pieces for piano that are still an important part of today's piano pedagogy. His *Album for the Young* is played by piano students throughout the world. In an effort to strengthen his right hand, he developed a mechanical machine, which, in fact, caused injury and forced an end to his performance career.

John Philip Sousa (1854–1932)

John Philip Sousa was born in Washington D.C., on November 6, 1854 and died in Reading, Pennsylvania on March 6, 1932. He wrote music for the opera and concert band. He is best known as a bandleader and composer of marches including *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *El Capitan*, *Washington Post*, and *High School Cadets*.

Johann Strauss, Jr. (1825–99)

Johann Strauss, Jr. was born in Vienna, Austria October 25, 1825 and died in the same city on June 3, 1899. He composed music for orchestra and operettas. He is best known for his waltzes, including *The Blue Danube* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods*.

Thomas Tallis (1505–85)

Thomas Tallis was born in 1505 and died in Greenwich, England November 23, 1585. Tallis wrote works for keyboard and chorus. He was the organist in the Chapel Royale in England and is most famous for his *Canon* melody that has been used for numerous hymn settings found in every church hymnal.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–93)

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk, Russia May 7, 1840 and died in St. Petersburg, Russia on November 6, 1893. A student of Anton Rubenstein, Tchaikovsky wrote in all media, including orchestra, chamber music, ballet, keyboard, choral, opera and songs. He is best known for his ballets, *The Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, as well as his orchestral works including *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

Giuseppe Verdi was born in Roncole, Italy, October 10, 1813 and died in Milan, Italy on January 27, 1901. He wrote chamber music, choral music, operas, and songs. He was best known for his operas including *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice, Italy, March 4, 1678 and died in Vienna, Austria on July 28, 1741. He composed music for orchestra, chamber, choral, opera and songs. He was a teacher in Venice and is best known for his concerto grosso, *The Four Seasons*.

Ernest F. Wagner (ca. 1870–1954)

Ernest F. Wagner was born around 1870 and died in 1954. He is remembered as a flutist in the famous John Philip Sousa Band from 1915–17. He is also the author/composer of the famous flute method *Foundations to Flute Playing* that is a standard piece of pedagogical flute literature.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

Carl Maria von Weber was born in Eutin, Germany November 18, 1786 and died in London, England on June 5, 1826. A student of Michael Haydn, he wrote music for orchestra, chamber, keyboard, choral, opera, and songs as well as music for the theater. His best known works include the operas *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*.

James Whittaker (1751– 87)

Father James Whittaker was one of the original Shakers to immigrate to the “New World” in 1774. He was born in England in 1751 and died in the United States in 1787. The Shakers are a group of people that live simple and religious lives. Father Whittaker was the leader of their church from 1784 until his death. He was the composer of many Shaker songs that describe the Shaker lifestyle and beliefs.