**THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD**

**1400-1600**

**WORDS TO KNOW**

renaissance

* literally means “re-birth”

motet

* a sacred, polyphonic vocal composition, usually unaccompanied

madrigal

* a secular, polyphonic song based on poems, often about love

homophony

* a musical texture in which one voice has the melody, while the other parts serve as accompaniment

consort

* a group of instruments playing together

counterpoint

* a polyphonic composition in which two or more melodies repeat each other at different points in the music

**FUN FACTS**

* Football was a popular sport during the Renaissance, but there were no referees, and most people played in the streets. The game became so violent that Henry the VIII had it banned.
* The Gutenberg Press was invented during the Renaissance Period. This meant that music compositions no longer had to be copied by hand, and the publication of printed music was born.
* The Sackbut (an early form of the trombone) and the Crumhorn (a double-reed instrument) were created during the Renaissance.
* Women wore a makeup paste made from lead powder mixed with vinegar.
* The *Mona Lisa*, arguably the most famous painting of all time, was created by Leonardo daVinci during the Renaissance Period.

**COMPOSERS**

**JOHANNES OCKEGHEM**

1420-1497

* He was a singer at Notre-Dame in Antwerp
* His later masses used contrapuntal techniques
* He wrote masses, motets, chansons, and one credo
* He was a master of counterpoint during his time

**JOSQUIN DESPREZ**

1440-1521

* Considered the greatest composer of the High Renaissance
* Not much is known about his personal life
* He was a master of polyphony
* He wrote mostly sacred music, but also wrote some secular music, such as chansons (French song)

**THOMAS TALLIS**

1505-1585

* He is known for his contrapuntal techniques
* He was one of the great composers of early English music
* He wrote *Spem in Alium*, which required at least 40 voices
* He and William Byrd were the only composers granted the right by Queen Elizabeth I to publish music in England

**GIOVANNI PALESTRINA**

1525-1594

* He was the master of music at the Vatican Basilica
* He was one of the greatest composers of Catholic liturgical music of his time
* He was an organist and choirboy
* His most famous work is *Missa Papae Marcelli*

**ORLANDO DE LASSUS**

1532 (possibly 1530) 14 June 1594)

* He was a master of motets
* He wrote over 2,000 works
* He wrote music using a variety of techniques from France, Germany, and Italy
* He was a great composer of sacred music

**WILLIAM BYRD**

1540-1623

* He and Thomas Tallis were the only composers granted the right by Queen Elizabeth I to print and publish music in England
* He was the greatest English composer of his time
* He wrote sacred and secular music, including consort music

**MADDALENA CASULANA**

1544-1590

* She received her music education in Florence, Italy
* She was a singer, composer, and lutist
* She composed madrigals and was the first woman to have her music printed and published in western music history
* She wrote meaningful lyrics and tuneful melodies
* She was a highly respected composer during her time

**GIOVANNI GABRIELI**

1553-1612

* He composed mass movements, motets, instrumental music, madrigals, and organ works.
* He was one of the first composers to write style markings in the music
* His instrumental compositions using four parts helped to develop what we now label as the modern orchestra

**CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI**

1567-1643

* He bridged the gap from the Renaissance Period to the Baroque Period
* He was one of the great contributors to opera and was one of the first to compose them
* He was the music director at St. Mark’s Cathedra in Venice
* He also worked as a string musician

**CATERINA ASSANDRA**

1590-1618

* She studied counterpoint under Benedetto Re, a leading teacher of the Pavia Cathedral
* She was a composer, organist, and nun
* She composed motets and organ pieces
* Some think that Monteverdi may have been inspired to write his own Duo Seraphim based on Assandra’s innovative work