

Jacques Offenbach

(zhahk AW-fuh n-bahk)

1819 – 1880



- Offenbach was born in Cologne to a musical family.
- His father taught him music lessons and he soon loved the cello and composing.
- He studied at the Paris Conservatory at age 14 with his older brother, but left after a year because he was bored.
- From age 15–35 he earned a living as a cellist and a conductor. He composed on the side, but it was not his career focus.
- He went on a performance tour of England where he was well liked and met prominent composers like Mendelssohn.
- He moved back to Paris and shifted from being a cellist who also composed to being a composer who played the cello.
- He conducted at the Opéra-Comique and soon became the music director at Comédie Française. After a few years he left both jobs to start his own theatre company.
- Due to theatre size and licensing restrictions they performed short works with fewer performers. Offenbach took advantage of this and had several operettas performed. His most popular works were then performed in Vienna, London and Cologne.
- While Offenbach was best known for his 98 operettas, he also composed 3 vocal songs, 7 cello pieces, 3 piano works, 12 incidental music pieces, 3 arrangements of other composers compositions, 2 operas and a ballet.



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