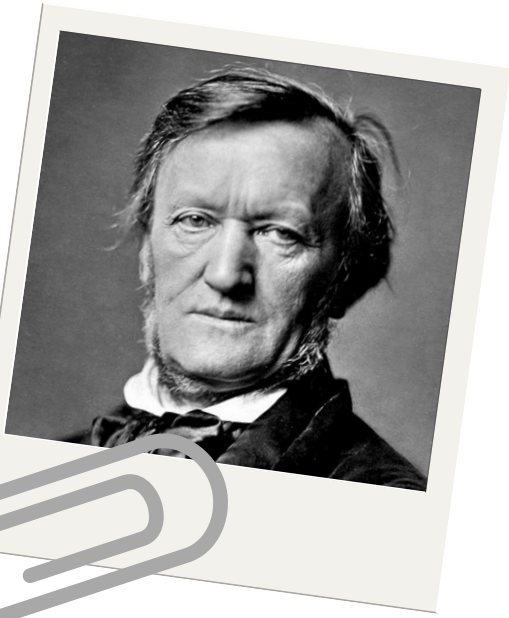


Richard Wagner

(RICH-erd VAHG-ner)

1813 – 1883



- Born in Leipzig, Germany.
- He began piano lessons at 7 and soon developed the ability to play by ear and improvise.
- At 15, he wrote piano transcriptions of Beethoven's "9th Symphony" and orchestral overtures.
- He studied at the University of Leipzig, and took composition and conducting lessons with the cantor of St. Thomas.
- Wagner's early operas were unsuccessful and led to money issues. He escaped creditors and continued to compose. Wagner moved to Dresden when fellow composer Meyerbeer promoted an opera of his and it was successful! Despite this, he still had financial problems.
- He worked on the four "Ring Cycle" operas but paused to work on a new opera idea. Wagner made friends with Bavarian King Ludwig II who paid his debts and financed the production of "Tristan and Isolde". The king even paid for Wagner and family to live in a villa in Switzerland and for the construction of a new specially designed opera house in Bayreuth.
- Wagner composed 23 vocal works, 16 piano pieces, 32 orchestral works, 29 operas, 8 choral works, a piece for chamber ensemble and other miscellaneous pieces.



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