

# Joseph Bologne,

Chevalier de Saint-Georges

1745 – 1799



- Bologne was born in the French colony, Guadeloupe. His father was a wealthy plantation owner, and his mother was a slave.
- At 8, he moved to Paris with his father to begin formal schooling.
- At 17, he impressively defeated a master fencer in a duel and was given the title “Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges.” He was known as the best fencer in France.
- Bologne also had an extraordinary talent for the violin and composition.
- He was nominated to be the conductor at the Paris Opera House, but several opera singers refused to work for a black man.
- Bologne was well loved and respected. He performed his music regularly in the court of Queen Marie Antionette.
- Fun fact! A street in Paris is named after him: Rue du Chevalier de Saint-George.
- Over his lifetime, Bologne composed 3 sets of string quartets, 2 symphonies, 8 symphonie-concertantes, 6 operas, 3 violin sonatas, 17 concertos, a sonata for harp & flute, 6 violin duos, and numerous songs.



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