

George Frederic Handel is a German composer was born in 1685 in the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February in Halle, Germany. His father George Handel is a well known and respected barber surgeon who was 63 when his second wife Dorothea Taust gave birth to the young George Handel. Young Handel was keen in music at his young age. But unlike his exact contemporary J.S. Bach who comes from a musical family. He is discouraged and banned from any musical instruments by his father in music for he thinks that studying law would be more propitious and stable than music.

Although Handel was kept away from music, he did not give up on music by practicing secretly on the attic of his house with his clavichord and the help of one of his aunt. His hard work soon paid off as the duke heard him playing at the ducal court of nearby saxe-weissenfels. Because of this, his father is soon being advised to let Handel to have proper keyboard lessons with a proper keyboardist. From his teacher – F.W. Zachow, he learnt the basic techniques in composition and lots more such as harmonies.

Handel studied law in the University of Halle in 1697 after his father's death in 1697 but abandoned the subject one year later as he is already an accomplished musician by the time he entered the university. As soon as he gave up law, he moved from Halle to Hamburg where there is a public opera house. There Handel joined the orchestra as a second violin and met a great composer – Johann Mattheson. Although there were some incidents that occurred between them, they still remained friends. In 1704, he composed his own first opera, Almira and performed it in Hamburg in 1705.

In the autumn of 1706, Handel arrived at Florence, Italy, and soon traveled to Rome. He made some important friends there and composed his first oratorio where it is performed in 1707. Back in Italy Handel composed many small secular cantatas, operas and oratorios, and ended his stay in Italy with the success of his fifth opera, Agrippina in 1709 in Venice. Handel arrived at Hanover, Germany for a job as a court composer and conductor at the beginning of 1710 but soon gave up the job and left Hanover at the end of the year for London. Handel once again gained another success with his Italian opera "Rinaldo" in 1711.

Permission for a second trip to London was granted after returning to Hanover. It was supposed to be short, however, Handel never returned for there were

more opportunities in England. The opera is mainly based on classical subjects and with spoken recitatives when Handel first arrived in London. There was also gender confusion as the mezzo sopranos played the boy's part.

Handel spends his time in London on composing and performing in the evenings. His compositions include two Italian operas "Il pastor fido" in 1712 and "Teseo" in 1713, some church works and a birthday ode for Queen Anne performed on her last birthday in 1713. King George I inherited Queen Anne in August, 1714 when she died. The accession of King George I of England is important to Handel because he is one of the most important supporters for Handel and his works.

The Royal Academy of Music was founded in 1719 as there was no permanent opera center in London. In 1727, Handel became a British citizen. He did not always write operas in London. By 1728, the popularity of Italian operas started to fall with the collapse of The Royal academy of music. Therefore, Handel started to write oratorios instead of Italian operas as it is more popular than operas. The Messiah was first performed in Dublin, 1742. Handel composed Music for the Royal Fireworks in 1749; 12,000 people came to listen but it was a disaster as three people died, including one of the trumpeters.

Handel was severely injured on a journey back from Germany back to London in August, 1750 in a carriage accident. His eyesight also started to weaken in 1751. On February, 1752, Jephtha was first performed. This was Handel's last oratorio, but it was still as good as any other oratorios he had composed. Handel died in London in 1759 and was buried in Westminster Abbey with more than 3000 mourners attending his funeral. The Messiah was the last performance he had attended to. Although Handel is a very sociable man, but he had never been married and kept his personal life very private. He left a large amount of wealth after his death which mostly went to a niece of Handel's in Germany with his many other friends including his favourite charities