

A close-up photograph of a hand with fingers extended, pointing towards a sheet of musical notation. The notation is on a white page with black ink, showing staves and notes. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hand and the music.

VARIOUS

***FAMOUS
COMPOSERS
AND THEIR
WORKS***

A close-up photograph of a hand with fingers pointing to musical notation on a sheet of paper. The paper is slightly blurred, showing several staves with notes and clefs. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the skin of the hand.

VARIOUS

***FAMOUS
COMPOSERS
AND THEIR***



WORKS

Various

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ORLANDO LASSO

Reproduction of an engraving by C. Debluis, after an old German print in the "Cabinet des estampes" in Paris. It bears the inscription, "Orlandus Lassus, musicus excellens."





ORLANDO DI LASSO

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ORLAND DELATTRE is generally known by the Italian form of his name, Orlando di Lasso. He was the last great light of the famous school of Netherlands masters who were the real founders of modern musical art. The history of Lasso's career is tolerably well known to us, owing to the existence of Vinchant's "Annals of Hainault" and a sketch by Van Quickelberg published in 1565 in a biographical dictionary called "Heroum Prosopographia." Although the former author was born in 1580, and Lasso died in 1594 or 1595, he places the date of the composer's birth ten years earlier than Van Quickelberg. Fétis gives plausible reasons for accepting Vinchant's date, yet it is probable that Van Quickelberg got his data directly from the composer, of whom he was an intimate friend.

At any rate, he was born in Mons in 1520 or 1530 and at the age of seven began his education. Like all musically gifted persons, he displayed his inclination toward the tone art at an early age, and in his ninth year he began the study of music. At that period music meant counterpoint and church singing. Hence Lasso, being endowed with a fine voice, began his career as a boy chorister in the church of St. Nicolas in his native town. There he became celebrated

for the beauty of his voice and was twice stolen but recovered by his parents. The third time the little song-bird was carried off, he consented to remain with Ferdinand Gonzague, viceroy of Sicily and at that time commander of the army of Charles V. When the war was over the lad went with Ferdinand to Sicily and afterward to Milan. Van Quickelberg says that after six years his voice broke and at the age of eighteen he was sent by his patron under charge of Constantin Castriotto to Naples with letters of recommendation to the Marquis of Terza. He became a member of that nobleman's household and remained with him three years. At the end of that time he went to Rome, where he stayed six months as the guest of the archbishop of Florence. He was then appointed chapel-master of the famous church of St. John Lateran. While serving there he was informed of the sickness of his parents, and, probably being somewhat conscience stricken, set out for Mons, where he arrived after his father and mother were dead.

He returned to Rome and soon afterward paid a visit to France and England in company with a noble amateur of music called Julius Caesar Brancaccio. From France he went to Antwerp, where he stayed until he went to Munich in 1557 to enter the service of Albert of Bavaria. The doubt as to the date of his birth makes the length of his residence in Rome uncertain. He was there either two years or twelve, according as he was born in 1520 or 1530. The invitation to Munich seems to show that Lasso had acquired a European reputation as a composer. Such a reputation would naturally have been acquired during a long period of service in the Lateran church. If, however, Lasso did remain in Rome twelve years and produce works which gave him European celebrity, they are lost. Nevertheless even Van Quickelberg's testimony goes to show that Lasso's fame as a composer

and as a man had preceded him to Munich. The Duke Albert directed him to engage a number of singers for the ducal choir and take them with him to Munich. Albert V. was a lover of art, and he is credited with being highly pleased at the engagement of Lasso. Quickelberg says that report in the Bavarian capital "was busy as to the character and disposition of the man. He was credited with being a great artist and a high-minded gentleman, and the Munich folk were not to be disappointed. The brilliant wit of the master, his amiability of temper, the cheerfulness of his disposition, and the universality of his knowledge, combined to make him a favorite with all. With the duke and the duchess he was especially intimate, and owing to their favor was admitted to the highest social gatherings. His introduction to the court nobility resulted in his marriage in 1558 with Regina Welkinger, a maid of honor attendant on the duchess." [Naumann, History of Music, p. 376.]



ALBRECHT V.

Reproduced from an ancient prayer book.

It may be as well to add here that Lasso and his wife had six children, four sons and two daughters. Ferdinand and Rudolph, the eldest sons, became composers of some note. It was in 1562 that Lasso was made chapel-master to the Duke of Bavaria, thus attaining what was then esteemed as the highest prize in the musical world. He now had under his direction a fine body of singers and instrumentalists, for which a modern composer would have written not only masses, but cantatas and oratorios. We must bear in mind, however, that in Lasso's day church composers preferred the *a capella* style, and the art of orchestral

accompaniment, as we understand it now, was unknown. When instruments were used in conjunction with voices they simply doubled the voice parts. Hence Lasso's great compositions are all written for an unaccompanied choir. It appears that Lasso served for five years as chamber musician before being made chapel-master, because Ludwig Daser was not quite old enough to be retired from the higher post and because the Duke wished Lasso to learn the language before assuming the responsibility of the mastership. In 1562, as stated, Daser was retired, and, as Van Quickelberg tells us, "the Duke, seeing that Master Orlando had by this time learnt the language and gained the good will of all by the propriety and gentleness of his behavior, and that his compositions (in number infinite) were universally liked, without loss of time elected him master of the chapel, to the evident pleasure of all."

From this time forward for several years Lasso was engaged in composing his most noted church works, among them being the famous "Penitential Psalms," which are still held in the highest esteem among lovers of pure old church music. He wrote also some of his finest Magnificats, as well as many pieces of secular music. His fame spread through Europe, and though Palestrina was his contemporary, it was Lasso who was spoken of as the "Prince of Musicians." He was also much praised as a conductor, and contemporary writers bear testimony to the fine precision and spirit with which the ducal choir sang under his direction. In 1570 the Emperor Maximilian honored the composer by making him a knight. The following year Pope Gregory XIII. conferred upon him the order of the Golden Spurs. The ceremony was performed with much pomp in the papal chapel at Munich by the chevaliers Cajetan and Mezzacosta. In the same year the composer made a visit to Paris, where he was received

with every mark of distinction by Charles IX. This visit and the favor of the monarch have given rise to one of those pretty stories with which the history of music is dotted, but which unfortunately will not bear scrutiny. The story is that Charles IX., tormented by remorse for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, asked Lasso to write his Penitential Psalms as an expression of the kingly repentance. But dates, which are stubborn things, refuse to be reconciled with this story. These psalms were undoubtedly written at the request of Duke Albert. The first volume of them in manuscript is preserved in the Royal State Library at Munich, and it bears the date 1565. The massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in 1572. The value which Duke Albert set upon these compositions is shown by the manner in which he treated them. They were bound in the most costly manner, in morocco, with silver ornaments which alone cost seven hundred and sixty-four florins. The court painter, Hans Mielich, painted for them portraits of the Duke, Orlando, and of the persons who made the books. J. Sterndale Bennett, in his excellent article on Lasso in Grove's "Dictionary of Music," makes the suggestion that the production of these noble psalms so early in the composer's life at Munich points to the probability that his Roman sojourn was twelve years instead of two, and that he was, therefore, born in 1520 instead of 1530. The inference is hardly avoidable.

To return to the Paris visit, it may be deemed probable that one result of it was the erection of a new Academy of Music, authorized by the king in 1570. The only composition known to have been produced by Lasso in Paris was sent to Duke Albert as "some proof of my gratitude." In 1574 Lasso set out for Paris once more, but when he had gone as far as Frankfort he learned that King Charles IX. was dead; so he returned to Munich, where he resumed the work of

composition with undiminished activity. Lasso never left Munich again and a detailed record of his life subsequent to 1575 would consist chiefly of a chronological catalogue of the works which he published. It may be said that he did not produce any large compositions in the years 1578-80. The Duke, who had confirmed him for life in his appointment on his return from Munich, had become ill, and in October, 1579, this generous and high-minded patron of the arts breathed his last.

This was a sad blow to Lasso, whose affection for his princely friend was surely sincere. It was fortunate for the composer's material welfare that Duke Albert's successor was a hearty admirer of his works. The substantial nature of his regard was shown in 1587, when, Lasso having begun to show signs of failing health, the new potentate gave him a country house at Geising on the Ammer. There the composer sought seclusion for a time from the bustle of court life. On April 15, he dedicated twenty-three new madrigals to Dr. Mermann, the court physician, and J. Sterndale Bennett sees in this an evidence of restored health and renewed activity. Near the end of the year, however, he asked to be relieved of some of his numerous duties. The Duke gave him permission to retire from his post and pass a part of each year at Geising with his family, but his salary was to be reduced to two hundred florins per annum. His son Ferdinand, however, was to be appointed a member of the choir at two hundred florins, and Rudolph was to be made organist at the same salary. For some reason Lasso was not satisfied with this arrangement, and so he resumed his labors.



STATUE OF LASSO IN MUNICH
Erected by Ludwig II.

It would be gratifying to be able to picture this great master approaching his end along the green pathway of a serene old age. Unfortunately this cannot be done. His declining years were marked by gloom and morbidity. He talked constantly of death, and became so peevish as to write to Duke William complaining that he had not done all for the composer that Duke Albert had promised. The devoted wife, Regina, united her efforts with those of Princess Maximiliana to remove the evil effects of this letter. The composer sank gradually and died at Munich on June 14, 1594. He was buried in the cemetery of the Franciscans, and his widow erected a fine monument to his memory in their church. According to Fétis this stone was two feet four

inches high and four feet eight inches long. It had ornamental bas-reliefs representing the holy sepulchre, Lassus and his family at prayer, and the coat-of-arms conferred upon them by the Emperor Maximilian. The inscription on the base was as follows:

"Hic ille est Lassus, lassum qui recreat orbem,
Discordemque sua copulat harmonia."

Here lies he weary who a weary world refreshed,
And discord with his harmony enmeshed.

The reader will note the play on the word *lassus*, weary. The monument was removed when the Franciscan churchyard was dismantled in 1800, and in 1830 the stone disappeared from view. The world of art has to thank the "mad king" Ludwig, of Bavaria (to whom it owes debts of gratitude in connection with Wagner's career), for the erection of a life-size statue in bronze of Orlando Lasso. It stood originally next to the statue of Gluck near the Theatiner Church, but was afterward removed to the public promenade. There is another statue of Lasso at Mons, where he was born.



From portrait in the "Penitential Psalms," set by Lasso, in the Royal State Library at Munich.

Lasso was one of the most prolific composers that ever lived. He is said to have written no less than two thousand five hundred original works. A great number of these have been preserved, but the reader who is not able to decipher antique scores will undoubtedly be most interested in those which have been republished in modern form. These are as follows: his famous seven Penitential Psalms, edited by S. W. Dehn and published in Berlin in 1835; a "Regina coeli," "Salve Regina," "Angelus ad pastores," and "Miserere," Rochlitz's "Sammlung vorzüglicher Gesangstücke," Vol. I., published by Schott in 1838; a setting of the twenty-third Psalm as a motet for five voices, a "Quo properas" for ten voices, and a Magnificat for five, published at Berlin by

Schlesinger; "Confirma hoc deus" for six voices, Berlin, Guttentag; six German chansons (four voices) and one dialogue (eight voices) in Dehn's "Sammlung alter Musik," Berlin, Crantz; twelve motets (four to eight voices) in Commer's collection published by Schott of Mainz; twenty motets in Proske's "Musica Divina"; the mass "Qual donna attende" (five voices) in Proske's selection of masses published at Ratisbon, 1856; the mass "Or sus à coup" (four voices), edited by Ferrenberg and published by Heberle at Cologne in 1847. Many more of his works have been edited and are ready for publication, but remain in MS. The above list is taken from Scribner's "Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians," and appears to be correct, as far as it goes. Naumann's "History of Music" contains a very beautiful "Adoramus te Christe," a chorale for four male voices. Lest the reader should fall into the error of supposing that the great bulk of Lasso's works were ecclesiastical, it should be mentioned that he wrote many German songs, fifty-nine canzonets, three hundred and seventy-one French songs, thirty-four Latin songs, and two hundred and thirty-three madrigals. Of these last, at least one—"Matrona, mia cara"—holds its own among the glees of to-day; and its quaint refrain of "Dong, dong, dong, derry, derry, dong, dong," haunts every ear that once has heard it.

To rightly appreciate the value of Lasso's music one must bear in mind the history of the great Netherlands school as a whole. Lasso was the perfect blossom of a plant of long growth. His earliest predecessors had been occupied in manufacturing musical materials, systematizing the old chaotic practice of the mere improvisers and establishing fundamental forms on which the superstructure of modern music was to be reared. In their efforts at perfecting these forms they had fallen into extravagances, often losing sight

of the nature and purpose of music, of which at the best they had a very imperfect comprehension. Occasionally, at least once in each period of the existence of the school, a composer arose who urged forward the march of development. A host of imitators would follow, and in imitating the new forms and touches of a creative mind these men could fall back into mere formal ingenuity again, and stay there till another original thinker arose. The progress of musical art, therefore, might be likened to the rising of the ocean tide on the beach, moving forward in a series of waves, each followed by receding water.



ORLANDO DI LASSO.

From a very early period in the rise of the Netherlands school a movement toward beauty and simplicity of form and expression can be traced. This movement came to its destination in Lasso. He did not, it is true, abandon the contrapuntal forms of his predecessors; but he wholly subordinated them to his purpose, and his purpose was plainly the expression of those feelings which belong to man's religious nature. He succeeded in keeping this purpose uppermost, no matter in what style he chose to write. Sometimes he composed simple chorales in which the voices moved simultaneously, and again he wrote hymns in four parts, adding a popular melody as a discant. He moved from either of these styles to the most complicated polyphonic manner of the Des Prés period without sacrifice of dignity, musical beauty or religious fervor. He wrote works for two and three choirs, and he wrote others for only two voices. In the Penitential Psalms he clearly demonstrated that a mass of voices and parts was not necessary to an attainment of impressive effect, for he showed that he could be most powerfully expressive and influential while employing the simplest of means. Some of his writing is extremely old-fashioned even for his time. It might have been handed down from the days of Ockeghem. Again he plunges boldly into the labyrinth of chromatics and makes one think he hears the voice of Cyprian de Rore. In short, we must concede that Lasso displayed in his constructive skill the versatility of a complete master, while through all his work there runs the never-failing current of personal influence that flows only from the masterful individuality of a real genius.

Interesting comparisons have been drawn between the style of Lasso and that of Palestrina. The fact is that in formal arrangement Palestrina's masses bear a close

assemblance to the most modern of Lasso's works. It is only when the Flemish master is writing in the style of his predecessors that his construction ceases to bear resemblance to that of the Italian. Both excelled in one style—that in which the profundity of contrapuntal skill results in an appearance of simplicity and in a real conveyance of emotion. The difference between the men lies in the character of their musical thought, and that difference has been most excellently expressed by Ambros, who says: "The one (Palestrina) brings the angelic host to earth; the other raises man to eternal regions, both meeting in the realm of the ideal." Fétis, in his prize essay of 1828, says: "Too many writers in their eulogies of Lasso have called him the Prince of musicians of his age. Whatever be the respect which I have for that great man, I declare that I am not able to acquiesce in this exaggerated admiration. It is sufficient for the glory of Lasso that he equalled the reputation of a musician like Palestrina; it would be unjust to accord him the superiority. In examining the works of these two celebrated artists, one remarks the different qualities which they possess and which gives to them an individual physiognomy. The music of the former is graceful and elegant (for the time in which it was composed); but that of Palestrina has more force and seriousness. That of Lasso is more singable and shows greater imagination, but that of his rival is much more learned. In the motets and madrigals of Palestrina are effects of mass which are admirable; but the French songs of Lasso are full of most interesting details. In fine they deserve to be compared with one another; that is a eulogy of both."

Fétis's assertion that the music of Palestrina is the more learned is a trifle vague. The fact is that the learning of Palestrina's music is greater than that of Lasso's only

because the former more successfully conceals itself. Nothing could be more lovely in its simplicity than Lasso's "Adoramus te" given by Naumann, but its simplicity is that of the chorale style. The "Regina Coeli" given by Rochlitz is a fine specimen of double counterpoint. The "Salve Regina," given by the same author, is in free chorale style and is written for solo quartet and chorus. The "Angelus ad pastores," while not strict in its counterpoint, is full of learned work, yet withal is not involved in style. The "Principal Parts of the 51st Psalm," also printed in Rochlitz's work, looks very much like a modern anthem, especially the "Gloria patri." The madrigals of Lasso are charming in their native humor and in the piquancy of their part writing.

The influence of Lasso upon later composers cannot well be separated from the general influence of his time, for the contrapuntal church style was the prevailing manner of composition throughout Europe. The Belgian, Italian, and German music of the time is all built on the model established by the Netherlands masters. But Lasso must be credited with having done almost as much as Palestrina toward showing how ecclesiastical music could be written in an artistic but wholly intelligible manner. The German writers who imitated him (Ludwig Senfl, Paul Gerhardt and others) in their Protestant chorals and motets led the way directly to the motets, cantatas and passion music of the Bach period, and Lasso through his influence on them contributed toward the development of the genius of the immortal Sebastian.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely reading "H. J. Henderson".





THE NETHERLAND MASTERS

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HE improvisatore nursed the infancy of both poetry and music. The latter did not grow to the stature of an art until the rude improvisations of its early guardians gave way to the systematic compositions of the Netherland masters. Systematic composition, however, presupposes the existence of three fundamental elements, none of which had assumed tangible form in the earliest days recorded in musical history. These elements are harmony, notation and measure. Huckbald, a Benedictine Monk of St. Armand in Flanders, is credited with being the first to formulate rules for harmony about 895 AD. His ideas were crude and their results disagreeable to the modern ear. He used chiefly parallel fourths and fifths, but he employed another freer style in which a melody moved flexibly above a fixed bass—the earliest form of pedal point. Harmony was not invented by Huckbald, but he must be honored as the writer of the first treatise on the subject. The field once opened up was industriously cultivated, and by the time the era of the Netherland school began, had been productive of a rich harvest. Notation was also a plant of slow growth, but the employment of four lines in a staff, together with the

spaces, was introduced by Guido of Arezzo, who died in 1050. The formulation of rules for measure was the work of Franco of Cologne, who flourished 1200 AD. He adopted four characters to represent sounds of different lengths. These notes were the *longa*, ; the *brevis*, ; the *duplex longa*,  and the *semi brevis*, . He also distinguished common from triple time, calling the latter "perfect." Fétis quotes from the introduction to Franco's "Ars Cantus Mensurabilis" the following words: "We propose, therefore, to set forth in this volume this same measured music. We shall not refuse to make known the good ideas of others, nor to expose their mistakes; and if we have invented anything good, we shall support it with good arguments." Fétis, however, makes this significant remark: "Néanmoins le profond savoir qu'on remarque dans l'ouvrage de Francon, et l'obscurité dans laquelle sont ensevelis et les noms et les œuvres de ceux, auxquels il attribue la première invention de la musique mesurée, le feront à jamais regarder comme le premier auteur de cette importante découverte." [Fétis, Mémoire sur cette Question: "Quels ont été les mérites des Néerlandais dans la musique," etc.—Question mise au concours pour l'année 1828 par la quatrième classe de l'Institut des Sciences, de Littérature et des Beaux Arts du Royaume des Pays-Bas.]

With harmony and measure governed by rules and the written page at hand as a conserving power, systematic composition became a possibility. The study of this art was the work of monks, who were the repositories of polite learning in the middle ages, and they naturally sought for their thematic material in the plain chant of the church. Their treatment of this chant was a natural outgrowth of the impromptu production of music which had preceded

systematic composition and which clung to existence with great pertinacity. Guido of Arezzo had taught choristers the art of singing with such success that they began the long-honored custom of adding ornaments to their melodies. They carried this practice to such an extent that it became necessary for one singer to intone the melody while another sang the ornamental part. This adding of ornamental parts was called the art of discant; and when the monks took up scientific composition they simply added discants to the liturgical chants of the church. This was the beginning of counterpoint, the art of writing two or more melodies which shall proceed simultaneously without breaking the rules of harmony. The name "counterpoint" was early applied to it by Johannes de Muris, doctor of theology at the University of Paris in the beginning of the fourteenth century. This indicates that by his time the scientific setting of note against note had fully superseded discant, the fanciful elaboration of the singers.

It was in the hands of the great masters of the Netherland school that this counterpoint, the first species of scientific composition, was developed to its highest perfection. In the main the differences between their counterpoint and ours are due to the cramped harmony of their time, which was fettered by the employment of the Gregorian scales. The superiority of Bach's counterpoint over theirs from a technical point of view is the result of his mastery of chromatics and his perfection of the system of equal temperament. With the aesthetic superiority of his work we need not concern ourselves, for we must bear in mind the fact that most of the Netherland masters were absorbed in developing the technical construction of music, and had little to do with the exploration of its emotional possibility.

Systems are not completed in a day. Those writers on musical history who pass immediately from the labors of Franco to the Netherland masters ignore the long series of tentative works of the French composers who flourished between 1100 and 1370 AD, and of the English composers who flourished between the same years. It is a well established fact that in England there were many writers who showed skill in the early contrapuntal forms. Johannes Tinctoris, a Netherlander, writing in 1460 AD, went so far as to say that the source of counterpoint was among the English, of whom Dunstable was in his opinion the greatest light. Walter Odington, an Englishman, wrote a learned treatise on counterpoint in 1217, and some authorities accept him as the composer of the notable canonic composition, "Sumer is icumen in." It is pretty clearly established, however, that Odington was a disciple of the French school, while Dunstable, being a contemporary of Binchois, was of later birth than the early French composers. The writer of this paper is of the opinion that the line of contrapuntal development appears to join Flanders with France rather than with England, and he, therefore, prefers to consider chiefly the French school.

The Frenchman, Jean Perotin, then, about 1130 AD, employed imitation, and one of his immediate successors, Jean de Garlande, says in his treatise on music that double counterpoint was known before his time. He says it is the repetition of the same phrase by different voices at different times. It is impracticable in this article to review in detail the achievements of the French school, but a summary of its work is necessary to a comprehension of the Netherland school. The Frenchmen possessed three kinds of harmonic combinations: the Déchant (discant) or double, the triple and the quadruple, or in other words, contrapuntal

compositions in two, three and four parts. Discants were of two kinds. In the first the cantus firmus, or fixed chant of the liturgy, was sung by one voice (called tenor—Latin, *teneo*, I hold—because it held the tune) while the other added a discant above it. In the second the discant was freely composed, and a lower part, or bass added.

Three-part compositions were of four kinds: fauxbourdon, motet, rondeau and conduit, the last three being written also in four parts. Fauxbourdon was simply a three-voiced chant, the parts having similar motion, the upper and lower being parallel sixths and the middle in fourths with the discant. In the motet each voice had a text of its own. The rondo was secular and was developed from the folk-music of the day. The conduit was uncertain in form, secular in character, and, like the rondo, was written for either voices or instruments. The early French masters made extensive use of the parallel movement of voices, yet had plainly no conception of harmony founded on chords. They show a much clearer purpose in their contrapuntal writings wherein the imitations are plainly devised according to rules. But the entire musical product of France between 1100 and 1250 was the cold, mathematical work of academicians, who nevertheless served the cause of the tone art by laying down indispensable laws. The last great master of this school, William of Machaut, who wrote the celebrated Coronation Mass for the crowning of Charles V., flourished between 1284 and 1369. Naturally enough the teachings of the French spread into the provinces of Belgium, and there grew up a school from which the Netherland masters rose. The most prominent early Belgian composer was Dufay (1350–1432). This writer introduced secular melodies into his masses, forbade the use of consecutive fifths, and freely used interrupted canonic part writing, in which the imitation