

*Grace
Dee May*
MUSEUM &
LIBRARY

ILLUMINATIONS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2025

Masonic Music



More than Mozart

Grace Dee May Museum & Library • 665 W Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90007 • www.gracedeemay.org

ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

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In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the **Grace** of God. Audrey's nickname was **Dee** and she had been born in the month of **May**. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the **Grace Dee May**.



***"The music is not in the notes,
but in the silence between them."***

– Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Composer & Freemason

Die Zauberflöte – and more!

When asked to identify music associated with Freemasonry, the most common answer is Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Mozart's masterpiece is technically not an opera but identified as a "singspiel" which is a German musical drama that combines both spoken words with arias and vocal ensembles that enhance a plot often focused on battles between forces of good and evil including overtones of magic and mysticism.

The Magic Flute premiered in Vienna on September 30, 1791, and has been thrilling music lovers around the world for 234 years. The fantastic libretto weaves a tale of a powerful and evil queen who forces a prince to find and return her kidnapped daughter. Taking up the challenge, the prince encounters magical birds, colorful bird-catchers, a magical flute, and a wise priest who reveals moral values of the Enlightenment. While not specifically referencing the Masonic pillars of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth – Mozart drew the ire of some of his contemporary Masonic brothers who feared he might be revealing Masonic secrets.

You don't have to be an aficionado of the opera to recognize the music from *The Magic Flute*. Mozart's "Queen of the Night" aria has been used to sell everything from Volvo automobiles to Amazon Alexa units.

In this issue of *Illuminations*, we are singing the praises of Freemasons whose musical talents have spanned every form of musical entertainment from opera to hip hop. As you read about the amazing composers, musicians, conductors, and vocalists, you will learn not only about music written specifically as ritual for the lodge room but also music created to inspire patriotism, to entertain on the stage and screen and music that will get couples up on their feet to dance to everything from the Big Band songs of the 1940s, to rocking out in contemporary concerts and clubs.

Take note of your Masonic heritage,
Sean Foran, Curator and Board President

Share your love of Masons & Music
with unique specialty gifts available
exclusively online at
the Grace Dee May Museum website:
www.gracedeemay.org



Classical & Opera



Luigi Cherubini

(1760 - 1842)

Harpsichordist, musical director, teacher, composer and Freemason. Known for both his comic and serious operas, Brother Cherubini was a member of the Lodge Saint Jean de Jerusalem of the Grand Orient de France in Paris.



Jean Sibelius

(1885 - 1957)

Highly regarded Finnish Composer, and Freemason. His best known compositions include *Finlandia*, *the Karelia Suite*, *Valse triste*, and his Masonic Music. Sibelius was one of the founding members of Suomi Masonic Lodge No. 1 in Helsinki, Finland and later became the Grand Organist of the Grand Lodge of Finland. He composed the ritual music used in Finland (Op. 113) in 1927 and added two new pieces composed in 1946. The new revision of the ritual music of 1948 is one of his last works.



Giacomo Puccini

(1858 - 1924)

Italian composer of operas, including *Madame Butterfly*, *La Boheme*, *Tosca*, and *Turandot*. Puccini is believed to be 33° Freemason and there are many Masonic references in his works.



Franz Joseph Haydn

(1732 - 1809)

Musician, teacher, composer, practical jokester, and Freemason. Considered to be "The Father of the Symphony". His Symphony No. 96 was especially notable as during the premiere a huge chandelier fell from the ceiling. Earning the symphony its nickname, the 'Miracle' Symphony, because no-one was injured. Brother Haydn joined the same Masonic lodge as Mozart, "Zur wahren Eintracht" (True Concord) in Vienna, Austria.



Johann Christian Bach

(1735 - 1782)

The youngest son of Johann Sebastian Bach. A versatile and well-regarded composer, J.C. Bach's was famous for his "operatic and gallant" style. Bach's interests became increasingly spiritual and he was initiated into Freemasonry in 1778 in the Lodge of Nine Muses, No. 235.



Patriotic Music & Marches

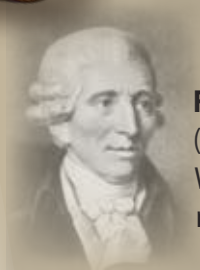


Nothing inspires feelings of Patriotism more than hearing your own country's National Anthem.



Claude Joseph Rouget De L'Isle
(1760- 1836)
French Lieutenant, Singer, Composer,

and Freemason. For amusement he wrote a marching song, which later became known as 'La Marseillaise' and became the French national anthem.



Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732 - 1809)
Wrote the Austrian national anthem.



Thomas Arne
(1710-1778)
was an English Mason who composed the song 'Rule Britannia', which became the patriotic British anthem.



John Stafford Smith
(1750-1836)
English composer, musicologist, church organist, and Freemason.
His song for an Irish Masonic orphans home later became the music for the 'Star-Spangled Banner' the U.S. national anthem (with lyrics by Francis Scott Key). Smith was a member of Royal Somerset House & Inverness Lodge No. 4 of London. Key is associated with Concordia Lodge No. 13 in Maryland.

John Philip Sousa
(1854-1932),
"the March King"
was leader of the U.S. Marine Corps Band until forming his own band. He wrote marches, such as 'Semper Fidelis' and 'Stars and Stripes Forever'. He had more influence on march music than any other composer. Sousa was a member of Hiram Lodge No.10 in Washington D.C. He served Freemasonry for 50 years as a member of the Knights Templar and Shriners.



"Pleyel's Hymn"

Music composed by Ignaz Pleyel
Lyrics written by David Vinton

Ignaz Joseph Pleyel
(1757 - 1831)

Austrian musician, composer, music publisher, piano builder, and Freemason. Pleyel was a Fellowcraft in Zum Goldenen Rad Lodge, Eberau, Hungary.

David Vinton
(1774 - 1833)

Silversmith, merchant, writer, lyricist, itinerant Masonic lecturer, and Freemason. Vinton was a member of Mount Vernon Lodge No. 4, Providence, Rhode Island.

Blues & Jazz & Big Band



Similar to military Masons, musicians must travel from town to town earning a living. It's difficult to track down the name and number of Masonic musicians "mother" lodge. Performing Masons attend meetings and build strong relationships while on the road by visiting local Masonic Lodges or sometimes just getting together backstage between shows to have short meetings.



William Christopher "W.C." Handy
(1873–1958)
Composer, music publisher,

bandleader, and Freemason. Handy earned the title "Father of the Blues". Handy was a member of Hiram Lodge No. 4 PHA, New York



Riley B. King "B.B. King"
(1925 - 2015)
Blues singer, guitarist, songwriter, record producer, and Prince Hall Mason



Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington
(1899 - 1974)
Composer, pianist, big band leader and Prince Hall Mason.

Ellington was a member of Social Lodge No. 1, Washington, D.C.



Nathaniel Adams Coles "Nat King Cole"
(1919 – 1965)
American singer, actor, jazz pianist, and Prince Hall Mason.

Cole was a member of Thomas Waller Lodge No. 49, Los Angeles



Paul Samuel Whiteman
(1890-1967)
Jazz bandleader, composer, violinist, and Freemason.

He was known as the "King of Jazz." Whiteman was a member of St. Cecile Lodge No. 568, "The Lodge of the Arts", Grand Lodge of New York

John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie
(1917 - 1993)
Jazz trumpeter, bandleader, composer, educator, singer, and Freemason



Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong
(1901 – 1971)

New Orleans-born trumpeter, singer, bandleader, and Mason. Armstrong was as a member of Montgomery PHA Lodge No.18, New York



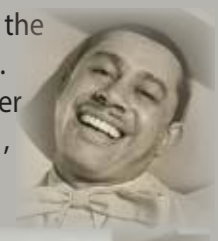
Alton Glen "Glenn" Miller
(1904 - 1944)

American big band conductor, arranger, composer, trombonist, recording artist, and Freemason

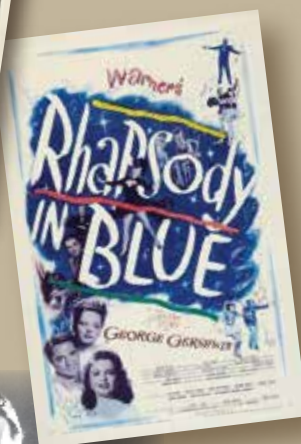


Cabell "Cab" Calloway III

(1907 - 1994) Jazz singer, songwriter, bandleader, actor, and Prince Hall Mason. He mixed jazz and vaudeville in his performances at the Cotton Club in Harlem. Calloway was a member of Pioneer Lodge No. 1, St. Paul, Minnesota



Stage & Screen



Irving Berlin
(1888 – 1989)
Russian-born
American composer,
songwriter and
Freemason.

A writer of popular music such as 'Alexander's ragtime band' and 'White Christmas'. He was a well-known philanthropist and, often gave his royalties from songs to help needy youth in depressed areas. Berlin joined Munn Lodge No.190 in New York City and had an impressive Masonic career in both the Scottish Rite and Shriners

George Michael Cohan
(1878 – 1942)

"The man who owned Broadway." American entertainer, playwright, composer, lyricist, actor, singer, dancer, theatrical producer, and Freemason. Cohan was a member of Pacific Lodge No. 223, New York



George Gershwin

(1898 - 1937)
American composer, pianist, and Freemason. Known for blending classical music, jazz, blues, and popular song. His work included concertos, operas, and popular songs. He is considered one of America's greatest composers. Born into a lower-middle-class immigrant family, Gershwin taught himself piano by watching a player piano.

Asa Yoelson

"Al Jolson"

(1886 – 1950)
Lithuanian-born American singer, comedian, actor, vaudevillian, and Freemason. Self-proclaimed "World's Greatest Entertainer." Jolson was a member of St. Cecile Lodge No. 568, New York



Gilbert and Sullivan

Collaborated on fourteen comic operettas between 1871 and 1896, including *The H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Mikado*. Gilbert created the absurd, topsy-turvy librettos and Sullivan composed the memorable melodies that are still hummed and whistled to this day

Sir William Schwenck Gilbert

(1836 – 1911)
Lawyer, librettist, and Freemason.

Gilbert was a member of St. Machar Lodge No. 54, Aberdeen, Scotland.



Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan

(1842 – 1900)
Wrote both comic and serious operas as well as oratorios. Sullivan was a member of Harmony Lodge No. 255, Richmond, England and served as Grand Organist for the Grand Lodge of England.



Rock & Country



Thomas Matthew DeLonge Jr.

(born 1975)

American musician, and UFO enthusiast.

Guitarist and vocalist for the pop-punk band Blink-182. He is a member of Widow's Sons Lodge No. 17 PHA in Kansas City, MO



Woodward Maurice

"Tex" Ritter

(1905 – 1974)

American country and western singer, actor, and Freemason.

Ritter was a member of Metropolitan Lodge No. 646, CA



James Charles Rodgers

(1897 – 1933)

Singer, songwriter, and Freemason.

"The Father of Country Music", known for his distinctive yodeling. Rodgers was called "The Singing Brakeman."

He has a member of Blue Bonnet Lodge No. 1219, San Antonio, TX



Burl Icle Ivanhoe Ives

(1909 - 1995)

American folk singer, guitarist, actor, and Freemason. Ives was

a member of Magnolia Lodge No. 242, and Santa Barbara Scottish Rite, Santa Barbara, CA



Brad Paisley

(born 1972)

Country western singer, songwriter, guitarist and Freemason.



Member of Hiram Masonic Lodge No. 7, Franklin, TN, Scottish Rite, and Al Menah Shriners

Philip David Charles "Phil" Collins

(born 1951)

British singer, drummer, songwriter,

record producer, actor, and Freemason. He is best known as the drummer and lead singer in the rock band Genesis. Collins is a member of Soho Lodge No. 3, London, UK



John Alec Entwistle

(1944 – 2002)

English musician, bass guitarist for the rock band

The Who. He was the band's only member with formal musical training. "It wasn't until the day of his funeral that I discovered that he'd spent most of his life as a Freemason", said Pete Townshend.



Mel George Gaynor

(born 1959)

British drummer, singer, recording artist, and Freemason. Gaynor is a member of the rock band Simple Minds.



Derek Forbes

(born 1956)

Scottish musician.

Was a member of the Scottish band Simple Minds.

Mel Gaynor and Derek Forbes are both members of Shalom Lodge No.1600, Glasgow, Scotland.



Richard Christopher Wakeman

(born 1949) English keyboardist and composer best known as a member of the progressive rock band Yes between 1971 and 2004, and for his busy solo career.

Rick Wakeman is a Past Master of Chelsea Lodge No.3098, London UK



Coda: on a closing note....

Visit the Grace Dee May Museum
"Masonic Music" Display
on the Exhibition Floor of Grand Lodge 2025

Masons of California Grand Lodge 2025
Oct 24, 2025 - Oct 26, 2025

California Masonic Memorial Temple
1111 California St. San Francisco, CA 94108

*We look forward to welcoming you
and be sure to pick up your free Masonic souvenirs.*



Our Vision:

The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

Our Mission:

The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

Grace Dee May Inc.
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is a qualified tax exempt
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Sean Foran, BOARD PRESIDENT AND CURATOR
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