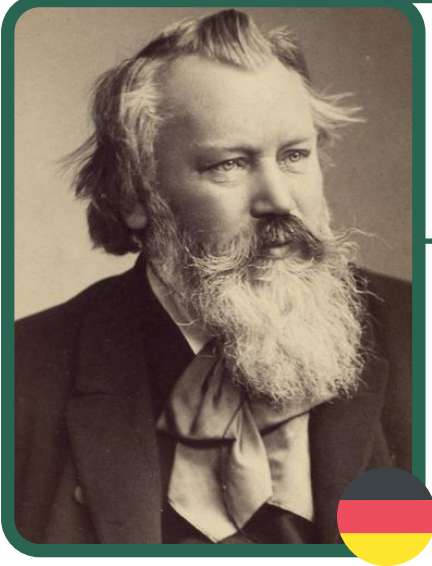




COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

**JOHANNES BRAHMS**

BORN: May 7, 1833

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: April 3, 1897

HOMETOWN: Hamburg, Germany

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany. His father was a musician and his mother was a seamstress. His father began teaching piano to Brahms when he was 5 years old, hoping that he would become good enough to help support the family.

"Hannes," as his family called him, startled his father before his first lesson by naming each note without looking at the keyboard. He also amazed his father by inventing his own system of musical notation, not knowing that one had already been invented! His father insisted that he play in some taverns and inns as soon as he was able, but this ended when he was 10 years old and gave his first public concert. Brahms started studying with a well-known teacher and was a dedicated student who progressed rapidly.

Brahms was a very shy man throughout his life, and it was difficult for him to make friends. He felt most comfortable around other musicians, because he had a lot in common with them.

Brahms spent a number of years conducting, playing, and composing; he wrote music for orchestra, chamber ensembles, piano, organ, voice, and chorus. He continuously grew his profile throughout Europe, eventually becoming one of the most famous figures in music. He worked slowly and carefully on his compositions until he felt that they were the best that they could be. He spent his final years in Vienna. He was known as one of the greatest composers of the Romantic period.