Franz Liszt

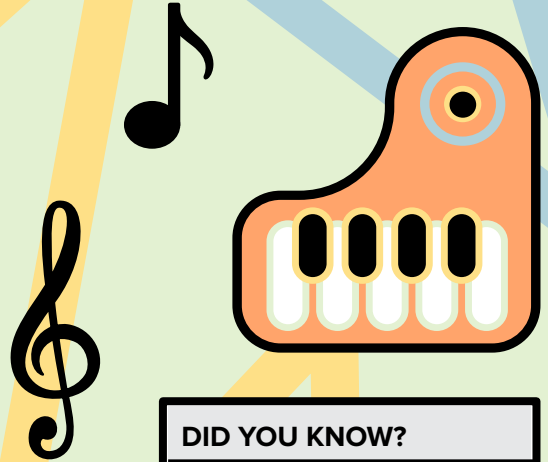> "Music is the heart of life. Without it, there is no possible good and with it everything is beautiful."

The piano virtuoso and composer, Franz Liszt, was born in Hungary in 1811. His father was a teaching musician who played many instruments and taught Liszt to play from a young age. By the time Liszt was 9 years old, he had already appeared in concerts, where his talent was spotted by wealthy sponsors who offered to finance his musical education in Vienna.

As a young composer, Liszt wrote complex music that was extremely challenging to play. As a result he later simplified his musical compositions to make it easier for other musicians to play his music.

Throughout his musical career, Liszt gave away much of his proceeds to charity and humanitarian causes. By 1857 he had become so successful that he decided that most of his performing fees, from that point onwards, would go to charity.

In his lifetime, Liszt contributed immensely towards piano techniques, orchestration and transcriptions and was said to be the greatest pianist of all time. Some of his most notable works include the invention of symphonic poems, piano concerti, and a great variety of solo piano pieces.

DID YOU KNOW?

Liszt wrote his first and only opera, *Don Sanche,* at the age of 12.

FUN FACT

Liszt's performances resulted in intense fan frenzy known as Lisztomania. Admirers would fight over his handkerchiefs and gloves and some would even make bracelets out of his broken piano strings!

MUSICAL TERM

Symphonic Poem: a piece of orchestral music that illustrates or suggests the subject of a poem, story, or any other form of non-musical work.

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