

Biography of the Composer George Frederick Handel

- 1685: born in Halle on the Saale on 23 February. Learned to play the clavichord in secret, because his father, a doctor, thought a career as a musician would be poorly paid, insecure and low in status.
- 1693: the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, pleased with Handel, sent him to study with the organist F. W. Zachow.
- 1702: studied Law at the University of Halle and worked as an advocate.
- 1703: second violinist in the Hamburg opera orchestra; then appointed *Maestro al Cembalo* soloist.
- 1705: first major triumphs as an opera composer.
- 1706: studied and wrote music in Florence, Rome and Venice.
- 1710: left Italy as one of the most celebrated musicians in Europe. Director of music at the Electoral Chapel in Halle; then moved to London.
- 1712: settled permanently in London.
- 1719: Artistic Director at the Royal Academy of Music (until 1726), with the task of introducing Italian opera to England. Set up highly successful operas; the most celebrated of his works.
- 1727: granted British citizenship.
- 1741: turned away from the opera to concentrate on religious oratorios.
- 1753: wrote *Messiah*.
- 1759: died in London. Buried in the grandeur of Westminster Abbey.



History of the work: Water Music

There are three suites with 22 movements altogether (HWV 348–350). The suites were written at various different times. The exact dates of composition cannot be established beyond doubt, as almost all the original manuscript scores (most were written out by Handel himself) have been lost. This also makes it impossible to determine the structure or the order of pieces in the suites.

King George I took three royal barge trips on the Thames for which Handel composed the accompaniment of the *Water Music*:

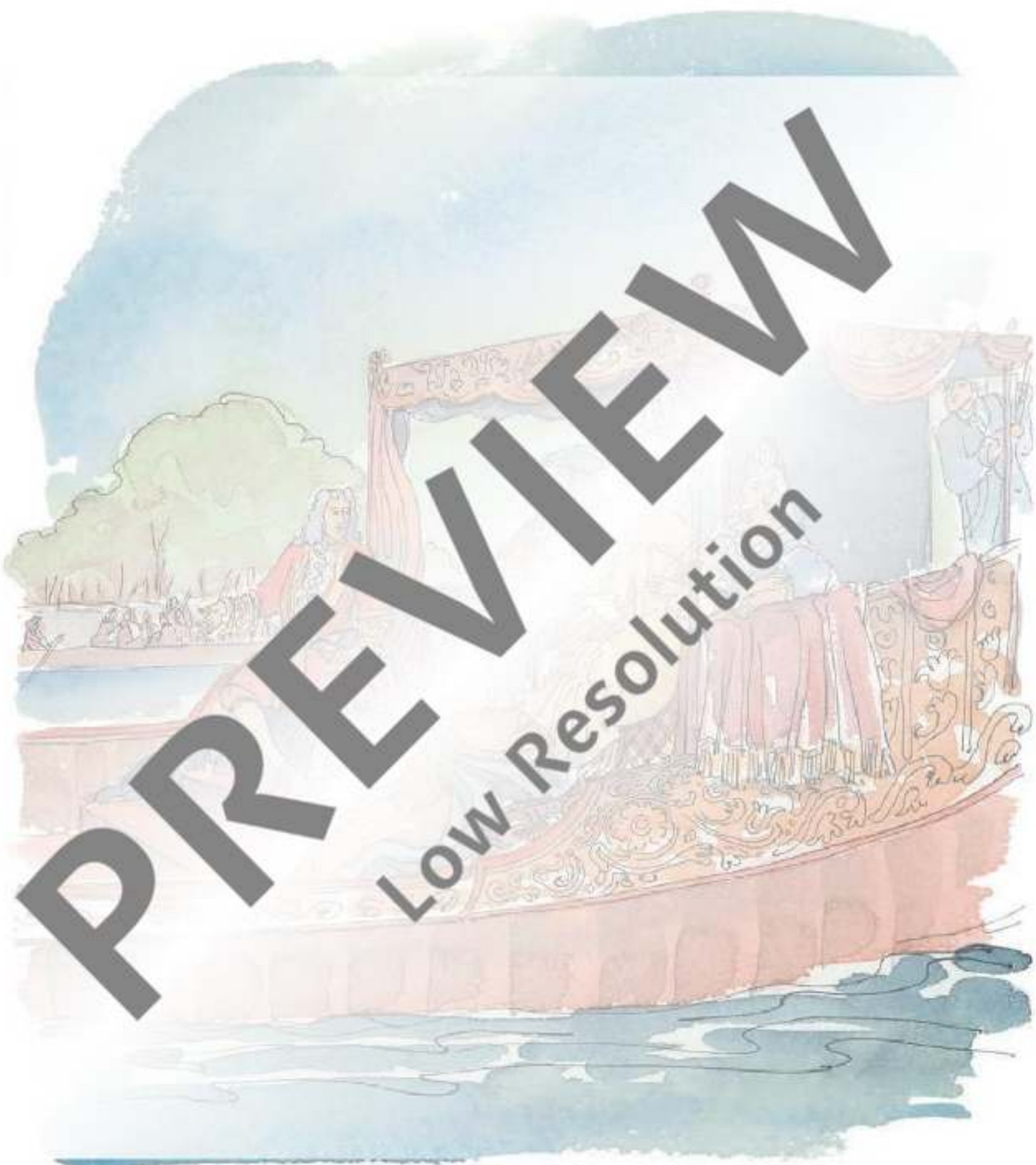
The first barge trip was on 22 August 1715 from Whitehall to Lambeth. On this trip Handel is said to have been reconciled with the King, his former enemy in Hanover. The rift between them had been caused by Handel's desire to leave Hanover for London. The second barge trip was on 17 June 1717 from Whitehall to Lambeth and back. On this second trip the King liked the music so much that he had it played twice. The third barge trip was on 26 April 1736, for the coronation of the young Prince Frederick and Princess Augusta of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

The instrumentation varies in the three suites:
Suite No. 1 in F major: 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, strings, harpsichord
Suite No. 2 in D major: trumpet, oboe, bassoon, strings, harpsichord
Suite No. 3 in G major: flute, piccolo, harpsichord

PREVIEW

Low Resolution





Handel and King George I of England on the Thames during a performance of Handel's *Water Music*.

Adagio e staccato

from Suite No. 1 in F major BWV 348, 2nd movement

♩ = 66

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Adagio e staccato' with a metronome marking of ♩ = 66. The first measure starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notation includes a five-finger fingering (5) for the first note in the right hand.

Musical notation for measures 6-10. The notation includes a 'smile' marking under the first measure of this system.

Musical notation for measures 11-14. The notation includes a four-finger fingering (4) for the first note in the right hand.

Musical notation for measures 15-18. The notation includes a five-finger fingering (5) for the first note in the right hand and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking.

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19

Musical notation for measures 19-22. The right hand features a melodic line with fingerings 3, 2, 1, 5, 1, 5, 1, 5. The left hand provides a simple accompaniment with fingerings 2, 4, 1, 5, 1, 3, 1.

23

Musical notation for measures 23-26. Measure 23 has a fingering of 1. Measure 24 includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur over measures 24-26. The left hand has a simple accompaniment with fingerings 1, 2, 1, 2, 1.

27

Musical notation for measures 27-30. The right hand has a melodic line with fingerings 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1. The left hand has a simple accompaniment with fingerings 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1.

Musical notation for measures 31-33. Measure 31 includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. Measure 32 includes a trill (*tr.*) and a ritardando (*rit.*) marking. Measure 33 includes a fingering of 5. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur over measures 31-33. The left hand has a simple accompaniment with fingerings 1, 1, 1, 2, 4, 5.