

George Frideric Handel

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Born Georg Friedrich Händel

23 February 1685 (O.S.)

Halle, Duchy of Magdeburg, Holy Roman Empire

Died 14 April 1759 (aged 74)

London, England

George Frideric (or Frederick) Handel (/ˈhændəl/; born Georg Friedrich Händel, German pronunciation: [ˈhɛndəl]; February 1685 (O.S.) [(N.S.) 5 March] – 14 April 1759) was a German-born, British Baroque composer who spent the bulk of his career in London, becoming well known for his operas, oratorios, anthems and organ concertos. Born in a family indifferent to music, Handel received critical training in Halle, Hamburg and Italy before settling in London (1712), and became a naturalized British subject in 1727. He was strongly influenced both by the great composers of the Italian Baroque and the middle-German polyphonic choral tradition.

Within fifteen years, Handel had started three commercial opera companies to supply the English nobility with Italian opera. Musicologist Winton Dean writes that his operas show that "Handel was not only a great composer; he was a dramatic genius of the first order." As *Alexander's Feast* (1736) was well received, Handel made a transition to English choral works. After his success with *Messiah* (1742) he never performed an Italian opera again. Almost blind, and having lived in England for nearly fifty years, he died in 1759, a respected and rich man. His funeral was given full state honours, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Born the same year as Johann Sebastian Bach and Domenico Scarlatti, Handel is regarded as one of the greatest composers of the Baroque era, with works such as *Water Music*, *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and *Messiah* remaining steadfastly popular. One of his four Coronation Anthems, *Zadok the Priest* (1727), composed for the coronation of George II of Great Britain, has been performed at every subsequent British coronation, traditionally during the sovereign's anointing. Handel composed more than forty operas in over thirty years, and since the late 1960s, with the revival of baroque music and historically informed musical performance, interest in Handel's operas has grown.

Early years

Handel was born in 1685 in Halle, Duchy of Magdeburg, to Georg Händel and Dorothea Taust.[7] His father, 63 when George Frideric was born, was an eminent barber-surgeon who served the court of Saxe-Weissenfels and the Margraviate of Brandenburg. According to Handel's first biographer, John Mainwaring, he "had discovered such a strong propensity to Music, that his father who always intended him for the study of the Civil Law, had reason to be alarmed. He strictly forbade him to meddle with any musical instrument but Handel found means to get a little clavichord privately convey'd to a room at the top of the house. To this room he constantly stole when the family was asleep". At an early age Handel became a skilful performer on the harpsichord and pipe organ.

Handel and his father travelled to Weissenfels to visit either Handel's half-brother, Carl, or nephew, Georg Christian, who was serving as valet to Duke Johann Adolf I. On this trip, young Handel was lifted onto an organ's stool, where he surprised everyone with his playing. This performance helped Handel and the duke to convince his father to allow him to take lessons in musical composition and keyboard technique from Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, the organist of Halle's Marienkirche. Zachow composed music for the Lutheran services at the church, and from him Handel learned about harmony and counterpoint, copying and analysing scores, and gained instruction on the oboe, violin, harpsichord and organ. In 1698 Handel played for Frederick I of Prussia and met Giovanni Bononcini in Berlin.

From Halle to Italy

In 1702, following his father's wishes, Handel started studying law under Christian Thomasius at the University of Halle. He earned an appointment for one year as the organist in the former cathedral, by then an evangelical reformed church. Handel seems to have been unsatisfied, and in 1703 he accepted a position as violinist and harpsichordist in the orchestra of the Hamburg Oper am Gänsemarkt. There he met the composers Johann Mattheson, Christoph Graupner and Reinhard Keiser. His first two operas, *Almira* and *Nero*, were produced in 1705. He produced two other operas, *Daphne* and *Florindo*, in 1708. It is unclear whether Handel directed these performances.

According to Mainwaring, in 1706 Handel traveled to Italy at the invitation of Ferdinando de' Medici. Other sources say Handel was invited by Gian Gastone de' Medici, whom Handel had met in 1703–1704 in Hamburg. De' Medici, who had a keen interest in opera, was trying to make Florence Italy's musical capital by attracting the leading talents of his day. In Italy Handel met librettist Antonio Salvi, with whom he later collaborated. Handel left for Rome and, since opera was (temporarily) banned in the Papal States, composed sacred music for the Roman clergy. His famous *Dixit Dominus* (1707) is from this era. He also composed cantatas in pastoral style for musical gatherings in the palaces of cardinals Pietro Ottoboni, Benedetto Pamphili and Carlo Colonna. Two oratorios, *La resurrezione* and *Il trionfo del tempo*, were produced in a private setting for Ruspoli and Ottoboni in 1709 and 1710, respectively. *Rodrigo*, his first all-Italian opera, was produced in the Cocomero theatre in Florence in 1707. *Agrippina* was first produced in 1709 at Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo, owned by the Grimani. The opera, with a libretto by Cardinal Vincenzo Grimani, ran for 27 nights

successively. The audience, thunderstruck with the grandeur and sublimity of his style, applauded for *Il caro Sassone* ("the dear Saxon"—referring to Handel's German origins).

Move to London

In 1710, Handel became Kapellmeister to German prince George, the Elector of Hanover, who in 1714 would become King George I of Great Britain and Ireland. He visited Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici and her husband in Düsseldorf on his way to London in 1710. With his opera *Rinaldo*, based on *La Gerusalemme Liberata* by the Italian poet Torquato Tasso, Handel enjoyed great success, although it was composed quickly, with many borrowings from his older Italian works. This work contains one of Handel's favourite arias, *Cara sposa, amante cara*, and the famous *Lascia ch'io pianga*.

In 1712, Handel decided to settle permanently in England. He received a yearly income of £200 from Queen Anne after composing for her the *Utrecht Te Deum and Jubilate*, first performed in 1713.

One of his most important patrons was The 3rd Earl of Burlington and 4th Earl of Cork, a young and incredibly wealthy member of an Anglo-Irish aristocratic family. For the young Lord Burlington, Handel wrote *Amadigi di Gaula*, a magical opera, about a damsel in distress, based on the tragedy by Antoine Houdar de la Motte.

The conception of an opera as a coherent structure was slow to capture Handel's imagination and he composed no operas for five years. In July 1717 Handel's *Water Music* was performed more than three times on the Thames for the King and his guests. It is said the compositions spurred reconciliation between the King and Handel.

Cannons (1717–18)

In 1717 Handel became house composer at Cannons in Middlesex, where he laid the cornerstone for his future choral compositions in the twelve Chandos Anthems. Romain Rolland stated that these anthems were as important for his oratorios as the cantatas were for his operas. Another work, which he wrote for The 1st Duke of Chandos, the owner of Cannons, was *Acis and Galatea*: during Handel's lifetime it was his most performed work. Winton Dean wrote, "the music catches breath and disturbs the memory".

In 1719 the Duke of Chandos became one of the composer's important patrons and main subscribers to his new opera company, the Royal Academy of Music, but his patronage declined after Chandos lost money in the South Sea bubble, which burst in 1720 in one of history's greatest financial cataclysms. Handel himself invested in South Sea stock in 1716, when prices were low and sold before 1720.

Royal Academy of Music (1719–34)

In May 1719, The 1st Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Chamberlain, ordered Handel to look for new singers. Handel travelled to Dresden to attend the newly built opera. He saw Teofane by Antonio Lotti, and engaged members of the cast for the Royal Academy of Music, founded by a group of aristocrats to assure themselves a constant supply of baroque opera or opera seria. Handel may have invited John Smith, his fellow student in Halle, and his son Johann Christoph Schmidt, to become his secretary and amanuensis. By 1723 he had moved into a Georgian house at 25 Brook Street, which he rented for the rest of his life. This house, where he rehearsed, copied music and sold tickets, is now the Handel House Museum. During twelve months between 1724 and 1725, Handel wrote three outstanding and successful operas, *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda*. Handel's operas are filled with da capo arias, such as *Svegliatevi nel core*. After composing *Silite venti*, he concentrated on opera and stopped writing cantatas. *Scipio*, from which the regimental slow march of the British Grenadier Guards is derived, was performed as a stopgap, waiting for the arrival of Faustina Bordoni.

In 1727 Handel was commissioned to write four anthems for the Coronation ceremony of King George II. One of these, *Zadok the Priest*, has been played at every British coronation ceremony since. In 1728 John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* premiered at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre and ran for 62 consecutive performances, the longest run in theatre history up to that time. After nine years the Royal Academy of Music ceased to function but Handel soon started a new company.

The Queen's Theatre at the Haymarket (now Her Majesty's Theatre), established in 1705 by architect and playwright John Vanbrugh, quickly became an opera house. Between 1711 and 1739, more than 25 of Handel's operas premièred there. In 1729 Handel became joint manager of the theatre with John James Heidegger.

Handel travelled to Italy to engage new singers and also composed seven more operas, among them the comic masterpiece *Partenope* and the "magic" opera *Orlando*. After two commercially successful English oratorios *Esther* and *Deborah*, he was able to invest again in the South Sea Company. Handel reworked his *Acis and Galatea* which then became his most successful work ever. Handel failed to compete with the Opera of the Nobility, who engaged musicians such as Johann Adolph Hasse, Nicolo Porpora and the famous castrato Farinelli. The strong support by Frederick, Prince of Wales caused conflicts in the royal family. In March 1734 Handel composed a wedding anthem *This is the day which the Lord hath made*, and a serenata *Parnasso in Festa* for Anne of Hanover.

Despite the problems the Opera of the Nobility was causing him at the time, Handel's neighbour in Brook Street, Mary Delany, reported on a party she invited Handel to at her house on 12 April 1734 where he was in good spirits:

I had Lady Rich and her daughter, Lady Cath. Hanmer and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Percival, Sir John Stanley and my brother, Mrs. Donellan, Strada [star soprano of Handel's operas] and Mr. Coot. Lord Shaftesbury begged of Mr. Percival to bring him, and being a profess'd friend of Mr. Handel (who was here also) was admitted; I never was so well entertained at an opera! Mr. Handel was in the best humour in the world, and played lessons and accompanied Strada

and all the ladies that sang from seven o'clock till eleven. I gave them tea and coffee, and about half an hour after nine had a salver brought in of chocolate, mulled white wine and biscuits. Everybody was easy and seemed pleased.

Opera at Covent Garden (1734–41)

In 1733 the Earl of Essex received a letter with the following sentence: "Handel became so arbitrary a prince, that the Town murmurs". The board of chief investors expected Handel to retire when his contract ended, but Handel immediately looked for another theatre. In cooperation with John Rich he started his third company at Covent Garden Theatre. Rich was renowned for his spectacular productions. He suggested Handel use his small chorus and introduce the dancing of Marie Sallé, for whom Handel composed *Terpsichore*. In 1735 he introduced organ concertos between the acts. For the first time Handel allowed Gioacchino Conti, who had no time to learn his part, to substitute arias. Financially, *Ariodante* was a failure, although he introduced ballet suites at the end of each act. *Alcina*, his last opera with a magic content, and *Alexander's Feast or the Power of Music* based on John Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* starred Anna Maria Strada del Pò and John Beard.

In April 1737, at age 52, Handel apparently suffered a stroke which disabled the use of four fingers on his right hand, preventing him from performing. In summer the disorder seemed at times to affect his understanding. Nobody expected that Handel would ever be able to perform again. But whether the affliction was rheumatism, a stroke or a nervous breakdown, he recovered remarkably quickly. To aid his recovery, Handel had travelled to Aachen, a spa in Germany. During six weeks he took long hot baths, and ended up playing the organ for a surprised audience.

Deidamia, his last opera, was performed three times in 1741. Handel gave up the opera business, while he enjoyed more success with his English oratorios.

Oratorio

Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno, an allegory, Handel's first oratorio was composed in Italy in 1707, followed by La resurrezione in 1708 which uses material from the Bible. The circumstances of Esther and its first performance, possibly in 1718, are obscure. Another 12 years had passed when an act of piracy caused him to take up Esther once again. Three earlier performances aroused such interest that they naturally prompted the idea of introducing it to a larger public. Next came Deborah, strongly coloured by the Coronation Anthems[54] and Athaliah, his first English Oratorio. In these three oratorios Handel laid the foundation for the traditional use of the chorus which marks his later oratorios. Handel became sure of himself, broader in his presentation, and more diverse in his composition.

It is evident how much he learned from Arcangelo Corelli about writing for instruments, and from Alessandro Scarlatti about writing for the solo voice; but there is no single composer who taught him how to write for chorus. Handel tended more and more to replace Italian soloists by English ones. The most significant reason for this change was the dwindling financial returns from his operas. Thus a tradition was created for oratorios which was to govern their future performance. The performances were given without costumes and action; the singers appeared in their own clothes.

In 1736 Handel produced Alexander's Feast. John Beard appeared for the first time as one of Handel's principal singers and became Handel's permanent tenor soloist for the rest of Handel's life. The piece was a great success and it encouraged Handel to make the transition from writing Italian operas to English choral works. In Saul, Handel was collaborating with Charles Jennens and experimenting with three trombones, a carillon and extra-large military

kettledrums (from the Tower of London), to be sure "...it will be most excessive noisy". Saul and Israel in Egypt both from 1739 head the list of great, mature oratorios, in which the da capo aria became the exception and not the rule. Israel in Egypt consists of little else but choruses, borrowing from the Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline. In his next works Handel changed his course. In these works he laid greater stress on the effects of orchestra and soloists; the chorus retired into the background. L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato has a rather diverting character; the work is light and fresh.

During the summer of 1741, The 3rd Duke of Devonshire invited Handel to Dublin, capital of the Kingdom of Ireland, to give concerts for the benefit of local hospitals. His Messiah was first performed at the New Music Hall in Fishamble Street on 13 April 1742, with 26 boys and five men from the combined choirs of St Patrick's and Christ Church cathedrals participating. Handel secured a balance between soloists and chorus which he never surpassed.

In 1747 Handel wrote his oratorio Alexander Balus. This work was produced at Covent Garden Theatre, on March 23, 1748, and to the aria Hark! hark! He strikes the golden lyre, Handel wrote the accompaniment for mandolin, harp, violin, viola, and violoncello.

The use of English soloists reached its height at the first performance of Samson. The work is highly theatrical. The role of the chorus became increasingly important in his later oratorios. Jephtha was first performed on 26 February 1752; even though it was his last oratorio, it was no less a masterpiece than his earlier works.

Later years

In 1749 Handel composed Music for the Royal Fireworks; 12,000 people attended the first performance. In 1750 he arranged a performance of Messiah to benefit the Foundling Hospital. The performance was considered a great success and was followed by annual concerts that continued throughout his life. In recognition of his patronage, Handel was made a governor of the Hospital the day after his initial concert. He bequeathed a copy of Messiah to the institution upon his death. His involvement with the Foundling Hospital is today commemorated with a permanent exhibition in London's Foundling Museum, which also holds the Gerald Coke Handel Collection. In addition to the Foundling Hospital, Handel also gave to a charity that assisted impoverished musicians and their families.

In August 1750, on a journey back from Germany to London, Handel was seriously injured in a carriage accident between The Hague and Haarlem in the Netherlands. In 1751 one eye started to fail. The cause was a cataract which was operated on by the great charlatan Chevalier Taylor. This did not improve his eyesight, but possibly made it worse. He died eight years later in 1759 at home in Brook Street, at age 74. The last performance he attended was of Messiah. Handel was buried in Westminster Abbey. More than three thousand mourners attended his funeral, which was given full state honours.

Handel never married, and kept his personal life private. His initial will bequeathed the bulk of his estate to his niece Johanna, however four codicils distributed much of his estate to other relations, servants, friends and charities.

Handel owned an art collection that was auctioned posthumously in 1760. The auction catalogue listed approximately seventy paintings and ten prints (other paintings were bequeathed).

Works

Handel's compositions include 42 operas, 29 oratorios, more than 120 cantatas, trios and duets, numerous arias, chamber music, a large number of ecumenical pieces, odes and serenatas, and 16 organ concerti. His most famous work, the oratorio *Messiah* with its "Hallelujah" chorus, is among the most popular works in choral music and has become the centrepiece of the Christmas season. Among the works with opus numbers published and popularised in his lifetime are the *Organ Concertos* Op. 4 and Op. 7, together with the *Opus 3* and *Opus 6* concerti grossi; the latter incorporate an earlier organ concerto *The Cuckoo* and the *Nightingale* in which birdsong is imitated in the upper registers of the organ. Also notable are his sixteen keyboard suites, especially *The Harmonious Blacksmith*.

Handel introduced previously uncommon musical instruments in his works: the *viola d'amore* and *violetta marina* (*Orlando*), the lute (*Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*), three trombones (*Saul*), clarinets or small high cornetts (*Tamerlano*), theorbo, French horn (*Water Music*), lyrichord, double bassoon, *viola da gamba*, bell chimes, positive organ, and harp (*Giulio Cesare*, *Alexander's Feast*).

Catalogues

Between 1787 and 1797 Samuel Arnold compiled a 180-volume collection of Handel's works—however it was far from complete. Also incomplete was the collection produced between 1843 and 1858 by the English Handel Society (founded by Sir George Macfarren).

The 105-volume Händel-Gesellschaft ("Handel Society") edition was published between 1858 and 1902—mainly due to the efforts of Friedrich Chrysander. For modern performance, the realisation of the basso continuo reflects 19th century practice. Vocal scores drawn from the edition were published by Novello in London, but some scores, such as the vocal score to Samson are incomplete.

The continuing Hallische Händel-Ausgabe edition was first inaugurated in 1955 in the Halle region in Saxony-Anhalt, Eastern Germany. It did not start as a critical edition, but after heavy criticism of the first volumes, which were performing editions without a critical apparatus (for example, the opera *Serse* was published with the title character recast as a tenor reflecting pre-war German practice), it repositioned itself as a critical edition. Influenced in part by cold-war realities, editorial work was inconsistent: misprints are found in abundance and editors failed to consult important sources. In 1985 a committee was formed to establish better standards for the edition. The unification of Germany in 1990 removed communication problems, and the volumes issued have since shown a significant improvement in standards.

Between 1978 and 1986 the German academic Bernd Baselt catalogued Handel's works in his *Händel-Werke-Verzeichnis* publication. The catalogue has achieved wide acceptance and is used as the modern numbering system, with each of Handel's works designated an "HWV" number, for example *Messiah* is catalogued as "HWV 56".

Legacy

Handel's works were collected and preserved by two men: Sir Samuel Hellier, a country squire whose musical acquisitions form the nucleus of the Shaw-Hellier Collection, and the abolitionist Granville Sharp. The catalogue accompanying the National Portrait Gallery exhibition marking the tercentenary of the composer's birth calls them two men of the late eighteenth century "who have left us solid evidence of the means by which they indulged their enthusiasm".

After his death, Handel's Italian operas fell into obscurity, except for selections such as the aria from *Serse*, "Ombra mai fù". The oratorios continued to be performed but not long after Handel's death they were thought to need some modernisation, and Mozart orchestrated a German version of *Messiah* and other works. Throughout the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, particularly in the Anglophone countries, his reputation rested primarily on his English oratorios, which were customarily performed by enormous choruses of amateur singers on solemn occasions. The centenary of his death, in 1859, was celebrated by a performance of *Messiah* at The Crystal Palace, involving 2,765 singers and 460 instrumentalists, who played for an audience of about 10,000 people.

Since the early music revival many of the forty-two operas he wrote have been performed in opera houses and concert halls. *Giulio Cesare* (1724), *Tamerlano* (1724) and *Rodelinda* (1725) each on a libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym, stand out and are considered as masterpieces, each in a different style.

Recent decades have revived his secular cantatas and what one might call 'secular oratorios' or 'concert operas'. Of the former, *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1739) (set to texts by John Dryden) and *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* (1713) are noteworthy. For his secular oratorios, Handel turned to classical mythology for subjects, producing such works as *Acis and Galatea* (1719), *Hercules* (1745) and *Semele* (1744). These works have a close kinship with the sacred oratorios, particularly in the vocal writing for the English-language texts. They also share the lyrical and dramatic qualities of Handel's Italian operas. As such, they are sometimes performed onstage by small chamber ensembles. With the rediscovery of his theatrical works, Handel, in addition to his renown as instrumentalist, orchestral writer, and melodist, is now perceived as being one of opera's great musical dramatists.

The original form of his name, Georg Friedrich Händel, is generally used in Germany and elsewhere, but he is known as "Haendel" in France. A different composer, Jacob Handl or Händl (1550 – 1591) is usually known by the Latin form *Jacobus Gallus* that appears in his publications.

Reception

Handel has generally been accorded high esteem by fellow composers, both in his own time and since. Bach attempted, unsuccessfully, to meet with Handel while he was visiting Halle. Mozart is reputed to have said of him, "Handel understands affect better than any of us. When he chooses, he strikes like a thunder bolt." To Beethoven he was "the master of us all... the greatest composer that ever lived. I would uncover my head and kneel before his tomb." Beethoven emphasized above all the simplicity and popular appeal of Handel's music when he said, "Go to him to learn how to achieve great effects, by such simple means."

Borrowings

Since 1831, when William Crotch raised the issue in his Substance of Several Lectures on Music, scholars have extensively studied Handel's "borrowing" of music from other composers. Summarizing the field in 2005, Richard Taruskin wrote that Handel "seems to have been the champion of all parodists, adapting both his own works and those of other composers in unparalleled numbers and with unparalleled exactitude." Among the composers whose music has been shown to have been re-used by Handel are Alessandro Stradella, Gottlieb Muffat, Alessandro Scarlatti, Domenico Scarlatti, Giacomo Carissimi, Georg Philipp Telemann, Carl Heinrich Graun, Leonardo Vinci, Jacobus Gallus, Francesco Antonio Urio, Reinhard Keiser, Francesco Gasparini, Giovanni Bononcini, Agostino Steffani, Francesco Gasparini, Franz Johann Habermann, and numerous others.

In an essay published in 1985, John H. Roberts demonstrated that Handel's borrowings were unusually frequent even for his own era, enough to have been criticized by contemporaries (notably Johann Mattheson); Roberts suggested several reasons for Handel's practice, including Handel's attempts to make certain works sound more up-to-date and more radically, his "basic lack of facility in inventing original ideas" – though Roberts took care to argue that this does not "diminish Handel's stature", which should be "judged not by his methods, still less by his motives in employing them, but solely by the effects he achieves."

Homages

After Handel's death, many composers wrote works based on or inspired by his music. The first movement from Louis Spohr's Symphony No. 6, Op. 116, "The Age of Bach and Handel", resembles two melodies from Handel's Messiah. In 1797 Ludwig van Beethoven published the 12 Variations in G major on 'See the conqu'ring hero comes' from Judas Maccabaeus by Handel, for cello and piano. In 1822 Beethoven composed The Consecration of the House overture, which also bears the influence of Handel. Guitar virtuoso Mauro Giuliani composed his Variations on a Theme by Handel, Op. 107 for guitar, based on Handel's Suite No. 5 in E major, HWV 430, for harpsichord. In 1861, using a theme from the second of Handel's harpsichord suites, Johannes Brahms wrote the Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24, one of his most successful works (praised by Richard Wagner). Several works by the French composer Félix-Alexandre Guilmant use Handel's themes, for example his March on a Theme by Handel uses a theme from Messiah. French composer and flautist Philippe Gaubert wrote his Petite marche for flute and piano based on the fourth movement of Handel's Trio Sonata, Op. 5, No. 2, HWV 397. Argentine composer Luis Gianneo composed his Variations on a Theme by Handel for piano. In 1911, Australian-born composer and pianist Percy Grainger based one of his most famous works on the final movement of Handel's Suite No. 5 in E major (just like Giuliani). He first wrote some variations on the theme, which he titled Variations on Handel's 'The Harmonious Blacksmith'. Then he used the first sixteen bars of his set of variations to create Handel in the Strand, one of his most beloved pieces, of which he made several versions (for example, the piano solo version from 1930). Arnold Schoenberg's Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra in B-flat major (1933) was composed after Handel's Concerto Grosso, Op. 6/7.

Veneration

Handel is honoured with a feast day on 28 July in the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church, with Johann Sebastian Bach and Henry Purcell. In the Lutheran Calendar of Saints Handel and J.S. Bach share that date with Heinrich Schütz, and Handel and Bach are commemorated in the calendar of saints prepared by The Order of Saint Luke for the use of the United Methodist Church.

Film

In 1942, Handel was the subject of the British biopic *The Great Mr. Handel* directed by Norman Walker and starring Wilfrid Lawson. It was made at Denham Studios by the Rank Organisation, and shot in technicolor.