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From today's featured article



Claudio Monteverdi

(15 May 1567 – 29 November 1643) was an Italian composer, string player and *maestro di cappella*. A composer of both secular and sacred music, and a pioneer in the development of opera, he is considered a transitional figure

between the Renaissance and the Baroque periods of music history. He was a court musician in Mantua (c. 1590 – 1613), and then *maestro di cappella* at St Mark's Basilica in the Republic of Venice. His surviving music includes nine books of madrigals, in the tradition of earlier Renaissance polyphony – but also experimenting with the basso continuo technique, distinctive of the Baroque – as well as large-scale sacred works, including the *Vespro della Beata Vergine* (*Vespers for the Blessed Virgin*), and three complete operas. His music enjoyed a rediscovery from the 1880s onwards, and he is now seen as a significant influence in European musical history. Seven of his operas have been lost, but his *L'Orfeo* (1607) is the earliest opera that is still widely performed. **(Full article...)**

Recently featured: [Spalding War Memorial](#) • ["These Are the Voyages..."](#) • [Superliner \(railcar\)](#)

Did you know ...

- ... that an original illustration from the manga series *Ai to Makoto*, believed lost in 1974, was discovered after being listed in an online auction by the Japanese retailer **Mandarake** (store pictured) in 2018?
- ... that **the granting of a franchise to the Ogden Gas Company** was referred to as "the most disgraceful act" in the history of the [Chicago City Council](#)?
- ... that **Hans Herbert Jöris** conducted the world premiere of Giselher Klebe's one-act opera *Das Rendezvous*, composed for the 125th anniversary of the [Staatsoper Hannover](#)?



Mandarake store in Fukuoka, Japan

In the news

COVID-19 pandemic

[Disease](#) • [Virus](#) • [Testing](#) • [Timeline](#) • [By location](#) • [Impact](#) • [Notable deaths](#) • [Portal](#)

- The Iranian Navy frigate *Jamaran* (pictured) accidentally strikes the support vessel *Konarak* with a missile, killing nineteen sailors.
- **A gas leak** in Andhra Pradesh, India, kills thirteen people and injures over a thousand others.
- Astronomers announce the discovery of the first [black hole](#) located in **a star system visible to the naked eye**.



Iranian frigate *Jamaran*

Recent deaths: [Gabriel Bacquier](#) • [Renato Corti](#) • [Jerry Stiller](#) • [John Teerlinck](#) • [Betty Wright](#) • [Kristina Lugn](#)

On this day

May 15: Feast day of **Saint Carthage** (Irish Catholicism); **Nakba Day** in Palestinian communities; **Sanja Matsuri** begins in Tokyo (2020)

- 1525 – Insurgent peasants led by preacher [Thomas Müntzer](#) were defeated at the **Battle of Frankenhausen**, ending the German Peasants' War.
- 1836 – English astronomer **Francis Baily** observed [Baily's beads](#) (example pictured), a phenomenon during a solar eclipse in which the rugged topography of the [lunar limb](#) allows sunlight to shine through.
- 1945 – The [British Army](#) directed fleeing [Croatian soldiers](#) to surrender to the



Baily's beads observed during a solar eclipse in 1999

- ... that Jean Arp designed the wavy form of the ***Berger des Nuages*** sculpture to simulate nature and express opposition to the machines that caused wars?
- ... that investigative journalist **Jessica Lussenhop** has written articles on corruption in the standardized-testing industry, and the murders and disappearances of Indigenous women?
- ... that the first **earth-return telegraph** was set up along the Nuremberg–Fürth railway line in 1838?
- ... that **MLS Cup 1997** finalists Colorado Rapids had finished the regular season with a losing record?
- ... that musical theatre actress **Kitty Loftus** was praised as "a tricky sprite and a fantastic elf"?

Yugoslav Partisans, beginning the **Bleiburg repatriations**.

- 1970 – Police **opened fire** during a confrontation with a group of Jackson State College students, killing two students and injuring twelve others.
- 2010 – Upon her return to Sydney three days before her 17th birthday, **Jessica Watson** became the youngest person to sail non-stop and unassisted around the world.

Williamina Fleming (b. 1857) · **Ida Freund** (d. 1914) · **Esther Fischer-Homberger** (b. 1940)

More anniversaries: May 14 · **May 15** · May 16

From today's featured list

The **Kerala State Film Award for Best Director** is an honour presented annually at the Kerala State Film Awards of India since 1969. It is given to a film director who has exhibited outstanding direction while working in the Malayalam film industry. Until 1997, the awards were managed directly by the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Government of Kerala. Since 1998, the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, an autonomous non-profit organisation functioning under the Department of Cultural Affairs, has been exercising control over the awards. The first Kerala State Film Awards ceremony was held in 1970, with cinematographer-director A. Vincent receiving the Best Director award for his work in *Nadhi* (1969). Filmmaker G. Aravindan is the most frequent winner in this category, with seven awards, followed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan (*pictured*), with six awards, Shyamaprasad (five awards) and K. S. Sethumadhavan (four awards). (**Full list...**)



Adoor Gopalakrishnan

Recently featured: Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Norfolk · Lesley Manyathela Golden Boot · Hot Country Singles number ones of 1985

Today's featured picture

Bonaparte Crossing the Alps is an oil-on-canvas painting by French artist Paul Delaroche, completed in 1850. The work depicts Napoleon Bonaparte leading his army through the Alps on a mule, a journey they made during the War of the Second Coalition in the spring of 1800. Napoleon is portrayed as downcast, gaunt and chilled, his expressionless face evidencing his weariness resulting from the long, arduous trek. This representation is in marked contrast to Jacques-Louis David's idealistic depiction of the same historical event in *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, where the protagonist wears a pristine uniform, rides a fiery steed and is depicted a hero. This painting is now in the collection of the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, England.

Painting credit: Paul Delaroche



Recently featured: [Willem van de Velde the Younger](#) • [Kilmainham Gaol](#) • [Jules Massenet](#)

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Wikipedia languages

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