

The Works of Johann Strauss II

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Seed
Learning





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Text Audio

Who was Johann Strauss II?

Johann Baptist Strauss II was an Austrian composer born in Vienna in 1825. He was named after his father Johann Strauss I, who was also a composer. Both father and son were popular for their waltzes, a highly popular ballroom dance.

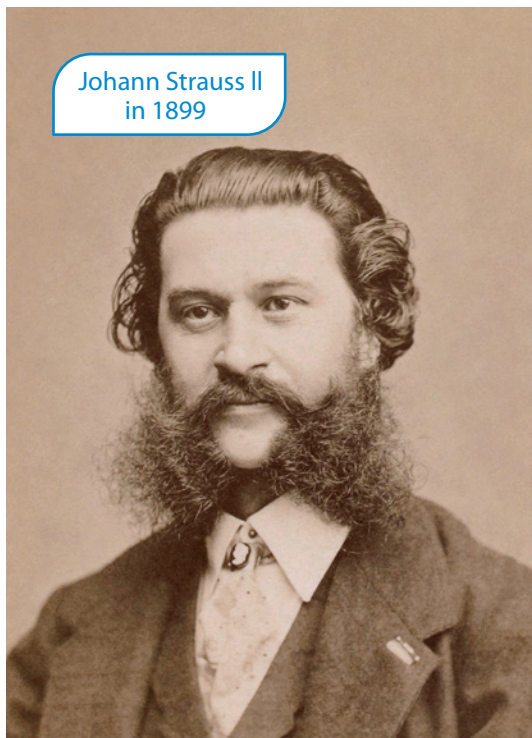
⚡ Johann Strauss I, the father, in 1835



People having fun ballroom dancing



Johann Strauss II in 1899





This is a good place for a secret lesson!

Johann's father was very strict. Even though he was a musician himself, he did not want his son to learn music. However, it seems that music was in his son's blood. As a child, Strauss II took violin lessons in secret. When Strauss was seventeen, his father left the family for another woman. However, this sad event gave Strauss the freedom to start working openly as a composer.



➤ Johann's father even hit him to try to make him stop learning music.



Even after he left his family, Johann Strauss I still had power over his son's career. He was a big name in music, and people in Vienna were afraid to offer work to his son because they did not want to make the young man's father angry. This situation made it difficult for the younger Strauss to find success in Vienna as a young man. Eventually, he was able to make a name for himself by performing music outside of Vienna.

Strauss had to perform music in other cities. ➡

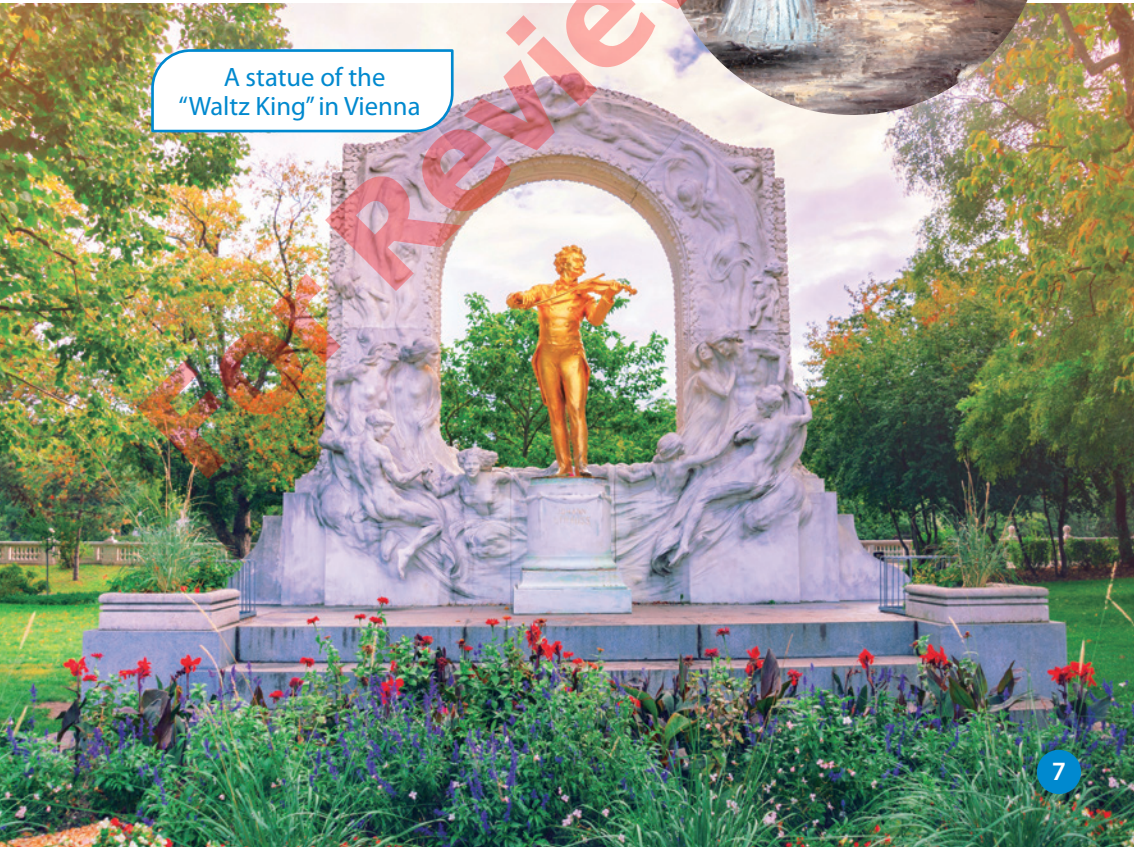


It appears that the older Strauss did everything he could to stop his son's career. Even though his father tried to stop his career, Strauss II became more famous than his father. He earned the title "Waltz King" because of the many waltzes he wrote. He was also famous for his operettas.

This painting shows a couple dancing a waltz.



A statue of the "Waltz King" in Vienna



In 1849, Johann's father died. He took over his father's orchestra and went on tour to Russia and England. In 1870, he decided to focus on writing music and gave the orchestra to his brothers. Music was a real family business for the Strausses!

Johann's two
brothers



A man conducts
an orchestra.



Strauss started to write music for a ballet, but he never finished it.

Eventually, Strauss II became far more famous than his father. He was respected by other composers such as Wagner and was good friends with Johannes Brahms. During his career, he wrote more than 150 waltzes, eighteen operettas, and was composing a ballet when he died in 1899.

Brahms was a composer who lived from 1833 to 1897.

