

A NOTE FROM *Johnstone-Music*

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## SPECIAL FEATURE on GUGLIELMO QUARENGHI

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Birth: 26th October 1822 - Casalmaggiore *{birth is often mistakenly given as 22nd Oct 1826}*

Death: 3rd February 1882 - Milan

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Guglielmo Quarenghi was an important cellist of his age in Italy and also an esteemed composer. At age 13 he studied with Vincenzo Merighi at the Milan Conservatory during three years. We know that he was a virtuoso performer, pedagogue, and composer active in Milan, Italy, but despite his successful career, Quarenghi's accomplishments as a cellist are unfortunately practically unknown today, and to a lesser extent also his contributions to the cello repertoire. Quarenghi's merits may not be readily apparent because there is scant biographical information available. For example, after finishing at the Milan conservatory in 1842, little is known of him until in 1850 he came to public attention by being appointed the Principal Cello of the La Scala Opera Orchestra. The following year he became a cello professor at his old conservatoire, so we can assume that his career was increasingly important in the second half of the 1840s.

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During 1860-61 Quarenghi was a founder member (along with Rossi and Mazzucato) in the formation of the Società di S Cecilia, Milan.

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Most of his music featured the cello. These included '6 Caprices' which were written in 1862, but do not appear to be published until nearly 70 years later. In these the status of his work as a valuable asset to cello playing is clearly evident. He also wrote several original pieces and transcriptions for cello and piano, and some chamber music.

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His 'Metodo di Violoncello' has an interesting preface, comparing the earliest bowed instruments and their evolution with folk instruments from many countries. It was written in Milan in 1875 and published in 1877.

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However, he did write one full opera, 'Il di di San Michele', which was produced in Milan in 1863. That same year he also published a mass and other church music. He succeeded Boucheron as maestro di cappella of Milan Cathedral in 1879, but ill-health forced him to resign in 1881. He died the following year.

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Download for free his 'Cello Method' and 3 other original works in the IMSLP:

[https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Quarenghi, Guglielmo](https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Quarenghi,_Guglielmo)

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See a more complete list of his works here:

[https://imslp.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_works\\_by\\_Guglielmo\\_Quarenghi](https://imslp.org/wiki/List_of_works_by_Guglielmo_Quarenghi)

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'documenting the cello'

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Please do see other original works for many different instruments and groupings, and also special transcriptions for cellists, and cellists with other instruments on the *Johnstone-Music* web page

Also both general musical and cello based articles, directories of famous historical cellists, and many other items of interest

**DOWNLOADS** - Many downloads on *Johnstone-Music* are now available, for those that are interested, at a *symbolic* payment, which is to help cover the costs of this web site. Some scores/parts are presented in musical edition programmes but generally they are found here in a most “clear” hand-written manuscript copy (the majority to almost a professional copyist standard) and transferred to a PDF file.

As far as *Johnstone-Music* is concerned you are welcome to publicly perform or record any work or piece found in the web; however you DO need to make mention of the name of the composer and the arranger on any printed information (hand programmes, disc covers etc.).

**FREE PUBLICITY** - If you care to inform us of any public performance (no matter how formal or informal the event is), recording or other uses of the original music or arrangements of David Johnstone or of other musical colleagues included in this web, we are happy to give your event free publicity on the *Johnstone-Music* web.

To take advantage of this, try to write to us three weeks or more in advance with any information. Last-minute entries are certainly better than not writing at all - however, understandably, once we have past the calendar month of the event it is not usually possible to add old items to the calendar. It is very interesting for the promoters of *Johnstone-Music* to have knowledge of your activity - and so in return for your information you will be entitled to a free gift of a work/s for every diary addition you tell us about. To find out more about this, please visit the “*Cello Club*” section in the web!