

Ludovico degli Arrighi - Born: Cornedo Vicentino Died: Rome, 1527

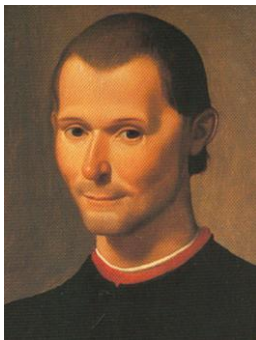
The Mandrake Root title is produced in a combination of two forms of Operina produced by font design studio P22. Operina is based on a 16th-century lettering model of the scribe Ludovico degli Arrighi (Vicentino Ludovico degli Arrighi) used in his 1522 instructional lettering book, "La Operina da Imparare di scrivere littera Cancellarescha." This book contains what is considered to be the earliest printed examples of Chancery Cursive.

Malachi Bogdanov – Director & Writer



Based in Sardinia, Italy, Malachi is both a theatre director and writer. He trained in America and in Paris with Le Coq. He directed and adapted 'Homer's The Odyssey – From Ithaca With Love' in June 2006, performed live in Birmingham and produced by Simon Woods. He directed an award winning production of 'Richard III' for the English Shakespeare Company, which set the play in a children's play room complete with bouncy castle. In 2004 the BBC broadcast a documentary about his hit Edinburgh Festival production of 'Bill Shakespeare's Italian Job', a retelling of the Michael Caine film through the words and characters of Shakespeare, using three full size Mini Coopers. In 2005 and 2006 he wrote and directed English and Italian versions of 'Kill Bill Shakespeare', 'The Merchant of Venice' and 'Edward II' for the Neuss Shakespeare Festival in Germany. Macbeth, 'Kill Bill Shakespeare'.

Niccolò Machiavelli - 3rd May 1469 – 21st June 1527



Now most famous for his political handbook The Prince, which was not published until after his death. La Mandragola was enormous hit for Niccolò Machiavelli in the 16th century. Having fallen from favour with the ruling elite following his defence of the Florentine republic against the Medici's, Machiavelli's political career was at an end and he turned to writing comedies to make a living. The Prince is still considered to be a relevant book on political and business life and is taught in Business Schools across the world. Due to the publication of The Prince, Machiavelli was denounced by the Vatican and subsequently become one of the most notorious names in medieval history.

Nicolas Jenson - Born: Bar-sur-Aube, Champagne, 1420 Died: Rome, 1480



The body copy used in the artwork and movie is an Adobe version of a Jenson font. Master of the French royal mint at Tours, in October 1458 Nicolas Jenson was dispatched by King Charles VII to Mainz, Germany, to learn the new art of printing. By the time of Charles' death in 1461, Jenson had still not returned. He left Mainz the following year, when the city was sacked, quite possibly with Sweynheim and Pannartz. These three were the first to introduce the invention of printing to Italy. It is suggested that Jenson did not wish to return to a France under the new king, Louis XI.

Jenson arrived in Venice around 1467, printing and publishing there from 1470 to 1480. His types, based on the upright calligraphic styles of the time, are regarded as among the very best of the Renaissance, indeed of all time.

Vivaldi Born? – Died 1741 in Vienna



The date or place of Antonio Vivaldi's birth are unknown, but if he was not born in Venice it is likely that it was within the territory of the Venetian Republic at a date between 1669 and 1678.

Antonio was taught violin by his father, Giovanni Battista an excellent violinist belonging to musical establishment attached to St Mark's, Cappella di San Marco. He was ordained into the church in 1703 but had to give up officiating at mass almost immediately due to illness, probably asthma, which required him to be accompanied by people to help him for most of his life did not stop his prodigious musical output.

Vivaldi was first appointed choir master and then professor of violin and composition at the Ospedale della Pietà in 1703, a school providing education to young illegitimate girls. The Venetian Ospedale were famed for the quality of their music and formed numerous orchestra's.

His fame as a violinist spread rapidly throughout Italy and Europe. He was nick named the Red Priest, according to the Venetian playwright Goldoni, because of the colour of his hair. Between 1717 and 1740 he spent much of his time either travelling or working on his composition and his work at the Ospedale was either stopped or reduced in this period. In Rome he was received by Pope Innocent III who wanted to hear him play and praised him highly.

His music was particularly loved in Germany and Austria J.S. Bach transcribed a number of his concertos for the organ and harpsichord. In 1740 possibly due to a lack of comprehension of his music by a section of the Venetian public he left for ever and died in Vienna in 1741 on 28th July. Despite earning a fortune from his playing and composition due to the expense caused by his ill health and his generosity he died in poverty.

Simon M Woods - Producer



An experienced entrepreneur, producer and manager. Until recently he was CEO of Birmingham School of Acting, an organisation he transformed over a 10 year period. Previously he discovered, marketed and managed the pop group UB40, starting their record company DEP International. He has also worked in retail sales, arts marketing, produced 26 awarding winning short films and has a Masters Degree from the University of Warwick Business School.

He joined Birmingham School of Acting in 1995 and helped become one of the leading drama schools in the UK, providing degree and post-graduate training for actors. Simon discovered the pop group UB40 after seeing them play their first gig. They had major international success with their first single, followed by an album which was No1 across Europe, the America's and the Far East, he then set up their own independent record label leaving the group after 3 ½ years having sold more than 7 million records.

Developing the BRUMMIEWOOD film brand for Birmingham School of Acting in 2004 producing 26 short films working in partnership with BAFTA winning Dreamfinder productions.. BRUMMIEWOOD films have been selected for 'A' list film festivals around the world and have been nominated and won awards from the Royal Television Society and Broadcast magazine. In 2006 Simon produced site specific theatre production of 'Homer's The Odyssey – From Ithaca With Love' for the New Generation Arts festival with sponsorship from seven national companies. Performed live in Millennium Point it was a sexy and innovative retelling of Homer's 700BC story as a modern day spy thriller featuring a sports car, speed boat, escalator fight sequence and original music specifically commissioned for the production.