

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

About the Composer

Born January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria
Died December 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria

Family & Career

Mozart's parents were Leopold Mozart, a composer and music teacher, and Anna Maria Mozart. He was the youngest of seven children, but only Wolfgang and his sister, Maria Anna, lived past infancy. Mozart was a musical prodigy. When he was five years old, he was already composing and performing for kings and queens. From the time he was six until he was seventeen, his father took him and his sister on trips across Europe to perform. Mozart married the singer Constanze Weber in 1782. They had six children, but only two lived past infancy.



Statue of young Mozart in London

Mozart was as famous in his own lifetime as he is today. He composed all the time – while eating, while visiting with friends, while playing pool – and finished compositions very quickly. But he was very frustrating to work with. He usually put things off until the last minute and did not manage his money well. He died when he was only 35 years old. After his death, the composer Joseph Haydn said that the world “would not see such talent again in 100 years.”

Music

Despite his short life, Mozart wrote over six-hundred pieces of music, including twenty operas and forty-one symphonies. It would take more than eight days to listen to all of Mozart's music.

Symphony No. 1

What kind of piece is this?

A *symphony* is a long piece of music that typically contains four *movements*. These *movements*, or sections, each have their own characteristics. Some may be upbeat and lively, while others may be slower and more lyrical.

When was it written?

Mozart composed this symphony in 1764, when he was only eight years old. He wrote this piece while he was in London, on his family's 3-year grand tour of Europe. It was first performed on February 21, 1765.

What is it about?

Unlike most symphonies, which contain four movements, Mozart's First Symphony has only three. It is written for a small orchestra of 2 oboes, 2 horns, harpsichord, and strings. Mozart created a

four-note motive in the second movement of the Symphony that also appears in many of his other works. The piece shows the musical influence of Mozart's father, as well as the sons of Bach, especially Johann Christian Bach, whom Mozart met while he was in London.

Clarinet Concerto

What kind of piece is this?

A *concerto* is a piece of music written for a solo instrument with an orchestra. In this case, the clarinetist is the soloist. He stands at the front of the stage and plays the most important part. In a concerto, the soloist and orchestra can interact in different ways: the soloist could play alone, the

orchestra could play alone, the orchestra could play something to support the soloist, or the soloist could join in like a member of the orchestra. Concertos usually have three *movements*, or sections.

When was it written?

Mozart wrote the concerto in October of 1791, and it was first performed at the Prague Theater on October 16, just two months before he died. It was one of Mozart's last fully-completed works.

What is it about?

Mozart wrote the concerto for Anton Stadler, the most gifted clarinetist in Vienna at the time. The piece is written for solo clarinet and a small chamber orchestra of 2 flutes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, and strings. The piece was likely originally written for the Basset Horn, an instrument in the clarinet family, although different than the modern clarinet that the piece is performed on today. The Basset Horn sounds lower than the traditional clarinet.



A Basset Horn, as it looked during Mozart's time.

Symphony No. 41, “Jupiter”

When was it written?

Mozart completed Symphony No. 41 on August 10, 1788. It was the last of a set of three symphonies he composed in a short time that year (*Symphonies No. 39, 40, and 41*). It is unknown if the symphony was ever performed during Mozart's lifetime, however it is now thought to be one of the greatest symphonies written in all of classical music.

What is it about?

The finale of the Mozart's *Symphony No. 41* is a re-working of a different symphony written by Carl Ditter called “The Fall of Phaëton.” The nickname “Jupiter” came from the translation of “Phaëton” from the Ancient Greeks, which is referring to the same planet that the Ancient Romans called “Jupiter.”

Fun Facts

Mozart loved animals. He sent his family dog, a terrier named Bimperl, notes from all over Europe when he was on tour. In London, he once broke off a concert to run after a cat that had wandered in. His other pets were a grasshopper, a canary, and a starling.

Even as a child, Mozart was always falling in love with pretty ladies. He once had a crush on Marie Antoinette, the future Queen of France. Much to her amusement, he told her with complete confidence that one day he would marry her.

Listen for...

Consider that Mozart wrote this concerto two months before he died. What changes in moods do you hear in the music? How do you think it represents what Mozart was feeling at the end of his life?

Listen for...

First movement: The short opening motive comes back multiple times throughout the first movement (usually in the strings). Can you identify each time it is played? Try and count how many times you hear it!

Finale: At the end of the third movement, Mozart combines five different melodies and overlaps them for an overwhelming finale. It is the most well-known part of this symphony. Can you pick out all five melodies?



In Mozart's hometown of Salzburg, Germany, you can buy any Mozart souvenir you can imagine: from chocolate "Mozart balls" to Mozart rubber duckies, like these.

Big Bend

by Katie Fellman

About the Music

Big Bend is a modern day composer's own take on the music of Mozart. In this piece, Fellman uses similar music composition styles and instrumentation (which instruments are playing in the orchestra) as Mozart did in his own music.

This piece was commissioned by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra. A *commission* is when a person or group of people pay a composer to write a new piece of music. Often, that music is written for a specific event or to honor a person or place. Today's performance of *Reflections on Mozart* is the *world premier*, which means this is the first time this piece has ever been performed!

About the Composer

Katie Fellman | Born in 1987 in Dallas, Texas.

Career

Fellman started composing music when she was seventeen years old. She graduated from the Interlochen Arts Academy High School in Michigan, and then went on to receive her Bachelor of Music degree in composition from University of Southern California. She also received a graduate certificate from USC after studying in the Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television program. In 2016, she received her Masters of Music degree from the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She is now working towards her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Music

Fellman's music is inspired by nature, humanity, Judaism, architecture, and overlapping textures. She connects storytelling with musical imagery to provide the listener with an emotionally-fulfilling experience.



Fun Facts

Fellman's first experience writing music was when a peer asked her to write the score to his film. She completed it in 24 hours!

Listen for...

How does Katie Fellman's music of today reflect Mozart's music from over two hundred years ago? What sounds similar? What is different?



Program Notes for Kids

Mozart Birthday Bash
Saturday, January 27, 2018
8:00 p.m.
Michigan Theater

**Fellman
Mozart**

Big Bend
Clarinnet Concerto

Intermission

**Mozart
Mozart**

Symphony No. 1
Symphony No. 41, "Jupiter"