

The Music of Mozart



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in 1756 and lived until he was 35, when he died in 1791. He was a composer of classical music, which was predominantly composed in the second half of the 18th century.

Mozart was brought up in Salzburg, Austria, and wrote music for the archbishop of Salzburg. After a while, Mozart's disagreements with the archbishop became too strong and Mozart moved to Vienna and started work as a freelance composer. In Vienna he was able to concentrate on composing the music that he (and Vienna) loved, that he hadn't been able to compose in Salzburg, such as operas and concertos.

But before he started working for the archbishop or travelled to Vienna, Mozart had already travelled Europe. Mozart, along with his sister and father, had travelled to various places around Europe, including Vienna, Paris, London, Munich, Brussels, Coblenz and Hague before Mozart had even reached the age of seven. He performed on the keyboard and violin, with his sister, often being paid large sums of money for his concerts. He performed in front of many important people, including the French Ambassador of the time, Count Harrach, King George III and Queen Charlotte.

His most famous operas were 'Marriage of Figaro' and 'The Magic Flute', and he composed many concertos, including 27 for piano, and many others for violin and clarinet. He also composed other concertos for flute, horn and oboe among other instruments.

He composed the types of music that many other classical composers worked on at the time, such as Serenades, Symphonies, String Quartets & Church (religious/worship) Music.

Mozart's music was in much the same style as that of any other classical composer of that period; elegant, graceful and refined. However, another word very often used to describe Mozart's music is perfect. Mozart was a perfectionist, and his music was unlike that of any other composer in the fact that it was literally faultless, an accomplishment that not even the equally famous and talented musicians of his time could boast.

One of his most famous pieces of music of all time was 'Eine Kleine NachtMusik' (or 'A little Night Music').

Eine Kleine NachtMusik was written for a string quintet (Two violins, one viola, one violoncello and one double bass, with the cello and bass playing the same line, as was extremely common until the end of the classical period). However, it has grown to be so famous that it is very often played by a full string orchestra. The first movement of this piece was written in sonata form, meaning it has three main sections (Exposition, Development and Recapitulation).

This piece uses many of the harmonic expressions that were common in the classical period, including Imitation, playing in octaves, syncopation, suspensions, pedals, and numerous different themes in one movement.

It is possibly so famous because of the 'catchy' first few bars, played to the notes of an arpeggio, and many people know the tune even if they don't know the name, composer, or period of time it was written in.

This piece of music was written in 1787 when he was 31, four years before he died, and is considered one of the best pieces Mozart has ever written.