

# Wolfgang Amadé Mozart (1756–1791)

---

## A Variety of Forms and Styles - Mozart's Serenades for Orchestra

Mozart wrote a large amount of what can best be described as “entertainment” music: music that was not intended to be listened to seriously in a concert room, theatre or church, but as an agreeable background to eating, drinking and conversation on celebratory or other social occasions, often in the open air. Most of it dates from the earlier part of his career, while he was based in his native city of Salzburg and in the service of its Archbishop, rather than during his years as a freelance musician in Vienna (from 1781 until his death in 1791), and it falls into three main categories: music for orchestra, music for chamber groups of about half-a-dozen players and music for wind ensemble. (Mozart's huge quantity of dance music is a rather different matter, since it was meant to be danced to, not merely heard.)

It is with the first of these groups that this album is concerned. The bulk of it is contained in a series of nine large-scale serenades, divertimentos or cassations (the terms seem to have been freely interchangeable) composed between 1769 and 1779 and all but two of them in the traditionally festive key of D major. Most of them seem to have been designed to accompany celebrations marking the end of the academic year in Salzburg's University, and were known as *Finalmusik*. Mozart's sister Nannerl recorded an account of one in her diary for August 1775: “The *Finalmusik* took place on the ninth. It left our house at half-past eight, played in the Mirabell [the Archbishop's town residence] until a quarter to ten, and thence to the Colegio [University], where it continued until after eleven.” The serenades are substantial pieces, in as many as six to eight movements and usually with an introductory (and sometimes concluding) march. The individual movements are in a variety of different forms and styles, with a sonata-form *Allegro* to open and another quick movement, in sonata or rondo form, to finish, and usually two minuets with trios, interspersed with other movements in slow or fast tempo; they make concertante, soloistic use of various instruments, notably the violin, which on most occasions would have been played by Mozart himself. Some of them were later shortened and adapted as symphonies during Mozart's years in Vienna, and all display the impeccable craftsmanship that is the hall mark of Mozart's music.

### Galimathias musicum, K. 32

*Molto allegro – Andante – Allegro – Pastorella – Allegro – Allegretto – Allegro – Molto adagio – Allegro – Largo – Allegro – Andante – Allegro – Menuet – Adagio – Presto Fuga*

The “orthodox” cassations, serenades and divertimentos were preceded by a curious pot-pourri of heterogeneous pieces entitled “Galimathias musicum”, which Mozart composed in Amsterdam and The Hague in the early months of 1766, on the way back from his first extended “prodigy” tour, which took him as far away from Salzburg as Paris and London. Wolfgang (then aged 10), his sister, Nannerl, and their father, Leopold, reached Amsterdam late in January, stayed there about a month, and then travelled to The Hague to attend the celebrations for the installation of Prince William of Orange as hereditary stadhouder of The Netherlands, which lasted from 7 to 12 March, the actual installation taking place on the eighth. It was for this occasion that Wolfgang's piece was composed. Leopold Mozart described it, in the list of his son's earliest compositions that he drew up in 1768, as “A Quodlibet, under the title ‘Galimathias musicum’, for two violins, two oboes, two horns, obbligato

harpsichord, two bassoons, viola and bass. All the instruments have their solos, and at the end there is a fugue with all the instruments on a Dutch song called ‘Prince William’. Composed for his Serene Highness, the Prince of Orange”.

The “Galimathias musicum” survives in four manuscript sources: two sketches in score, partly autograph and partly in Leopold’s hand (one now in Paris, the other now in The Hague); and two sets of parts, not autograph (one in Donaueschingen, the other in Paris). The inference from these two sets of parts is that Leopold Mozart had the work performed twice on the family’s return to Salzburg: in Paris in June 1766 and in Donaueschingen in October. The “Galimathias musicum” comprises 17 movements, scored for various permutations of the instrumental forces specified by Leopold: the majority (Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 17) for the full ensemble; three (Nos. 4, 8 and 16) for strings and oboes (No. 8 also has a chorus to the words “Eitelkeit! Eitelkeit! Ewig’s verderben! Wenn all’s versoffen ist, gibts nichts zu erben” (which could be translated, loosely, as “Vanity brings everlasting ruin; nothing will be gained by drunkenness”), presumably to be sung by the instrumentalists themselves; four (Nos. 2, 6, 10 and 15) for strings, the latter two without violas; and one (No. 13) for solo harpsichord. The longest, by far (138 bars), is the concluding fugue, but many extend no further than a dozen or so bars. As Leopold Mozart’s title *Quodlibet* implies, and as the lack of a firm key-structure emphasises, the work is a medley, incorporating various popular tunes. The theme of the fugue (No. 17) is, as Leopold pointed out, based on the Dutch song “Willem van Nassau” (which Wolfgang also used in his piano Variations K. 25 of February 1766). Nos. 4, 6 and 9 (and possibly other movements) are based on folk songs, and No. 4 is also related to Leopold Mozart’s divertimento “Die Bauernhochzeit”. No. 14 is an orchestration of a minuet in Leopold’s “Nannerl-Notenbuch”, begun in 1759, which, he said, “Wolfgang learned at the age of four”.

## Cassation in G major, K. 63

1. *Marcia*
2. *Allegro*
3. *Andante*
4. *Menuetto*
5. *Adagio*
6. *Menuetto*
7. *Finale (Allegro assai)*

The first three of the nine large-scale orchestral serenades that Mozart composed for Salzburg between 1769 and 1779 (K. 63 in G, K. 99 (K. 63a) in B flat and K. 100 (K. 62a)) all date from 1769, when he was 13, and none of them bears a title in his own hand. He did, however, in a letter he wrote to Nannerl from Bologna on 4 August 1770, refer to all three (giving the incipits of their introductory marches) as *Cassationen*: a term whose precise meaning in a musical context has never been satisfactorily explained, although various ingenious suggestions have been put forward. Their exact chronology has not been established, but it is known that *Finalmusik*en by Mozart were performed on 6 and 8 August 1769, for the finalists in Logic and Physic, respectively, and it seems likely that the two works played were K. 63 and K. 99, both modestly scored (strings, and pairs of oboes and horns) and in seven movements, including a march. The grander K. 100 was probably written for another festive occasion, perhaps for the Archbishop, later in the summer.

The Cassation in G, K. 63 begins with a *Marche* (the French spelling here and in the fourth and fifth movements is Leopold’s) full of busy triplets, and with the second half beginning in the relative minor. This is followed by a dashing *Allegro* with brilliant and often antiphonal violin parts, and some wide leaps of over an octave; by a gentle *Andante* (in C) for strings only, with muted violins and pizzicato lower strings (including divided violas); and by a forthright minuet with canonic effects,

enclosing a hushed, secretive trio for strings alone, in G minor. The second slow movement, a tender *Adagio* in D and for strings again, with muted violins and violas (again divided), is the first of many in Mozart's Salzburg serenades in which the principal first violin emerges from the orchestra as a soloist. Next comes another minuet, in a jaunty dotted rhythm, framing a staccato trio in C for strings, with divided violas, and, to end with, a rondo in 6/8 "hunting" rhythm, with a *minore* episode.

### **Cassation in B flat major, K. 99 (K. 63a)**

1. *Marche*
2. *Allegro molto*
3. *Andante*
4. *Menuet*
5. *Andante*
6. *Menuet*
7. *Allegro – Andante – Allegro – Andante – Marche*

The *Marche* which begins the Cassation in B flat, K. 99 is gentler and more intimate than its counterpart in K. 63, but the *Allegro molto* that follows is no less vivacious, the brilliant string writing making ample amends for whatever the music may lack in thematic interest. The *Andante* (in E flat), again for strings only and with muted violins (and violas) and pizzicato basses, is, however, a gem of singing melody. The first minuet, like its counterpart in K. 63, strides purposefully and with canonic touches that persist into the tender, lyrical trio (in F and for strings only). Perhaps the most remarkable movement is the second *Andante*: set in G minor and scored for strings and oboes, it has an almost Bachian nobility and poignancy. The Ländler-like second minuet encloses a slightly old-fashioned trio (in E flat and for strings alone), and the finale is a rondo, in which a dancing *Allegro* in 2/4 alternates with a sinuous *Andante* in a lilting 6/8 siciliano metre, and leads into a repeat of the introductory *Marche*.

### **Cassation in D major, K. 100 (K. 62a) and March in D major, K. 62**

#### **March in D major**

#### **Cassation in D major**

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante*
3. *Menuetto*
4. *Allegro*
5. *Menuetto*
6. *Andante*
7. *Menuetto*
8. *Allegro*

The Cassation (or Serenade) in D, K. 100, scored for strings and pairs of oboes/flutes, horns and trumpets, begins with a march (K. 62), long presumed lost, that Mozart later used in Act I of his opera "Mitridate, rè di Ponto", K. 87 (47a), produced in Milan on 26 December 1770. In its operatic context it contains parts for cellos and timpani, neither of which appear in the serenade itself: cellos because they have to be played sitting down and summer (therefore outdoor) serenades were played standing (the bass-line would be taken by double-basses, with bassoons doubling in the cello register); timpani because they could not be played on the march (small double-basses could, however, strapped uncomfortably to the players). The first of the eight movements that follow the *Marche* (headed, in the autograph score, but not in Mozart's hand, "Serenata") is an *Allegro* of considerable sweep and

panache. The three central movements, an *Andante*, a minuet (for strings, in G, with a trio in D) and a striding *Allegro*, feature a solo oboe and horn prominently; the horn part may well have been the first that Mozart wrote for Joseph Ignaz Leutgeb, for whom he was later to compose several concertos. The fifth movement is another minuet, with a gentle trio (in G) for strings; it is followed by a tender *Andante* (in A), for muted violins, divided violas, pizzicato basses, and flutes replacing the oboes (the Salzburg players would have “doubled” on both instruments). Next another festive minuet full of rushing scales, but with a subdued, withdrawn trio in D minor for strings alone; and, to end with, a rondo whose exuberance is, as in the first movement, tempered by side-slips into minor keys.

## **Divertimento in D major, K. 131**

1. *Allegro*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Menuetto*
4. *Allegretto*
5. *Menuetto*
6. *Adagio – Allegro molto*

The autograph score of the six-movement Divertimento in D, K. 131 is dated June (May having been crossed out) 1772. We do not know for what occasion it was composed or when it was first performed, but it could have been intended for some festivities connected with the election of Hieronymus Colloredo as Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg (in succession to Sigismund Schrattenbach, who had died on 16 December 1771). Colloredo was enthroned on 14 March 1772, and one of the works performed during the ensuing celebrations (probably in May) was Mozart’s serenata, “Il sogno di Scipione”, K. 126. Another may have been this divertimento, a virtuoso work clearly designed to make an impression. It is scored with quite exceptional richness: strings (with divided violas, and with cellos, not listed in the scores of the three early cassations, for reasons stated above); solo flute, oboe and bassoon; and the rare luxury of four horns. The four latter instruments, besides filling in the texture in the first movement, feature as a solo quartet in the first and third trios, and the coda of the first minuet, in the second minuet, and in the finale. Moreover, the horn parts extend far beyond the natural harmonics of the valveless horn of Mozart’s day, and must have needed highly skilled musicians to play them: perhaps Leutgeb again, with a trio of travelling Bohemian virtuosos?

In the grand, expansive opening *Allegro* the three woodwind instruments (particularly the flute) occasionally act as concertante soloists; the *Adagio* (in A), by contrast, is scored for the strings alone and is a meltingly lovely operatic aria in instrumental guise. The third movement is especially elaborate. The minuet is for strings; the first trio (beginning in D, like the minuet itself) is for the four horns; the second trio (in G) is, for once, a real trio, for flute, oboe and bassoon; the third trio (in D minor) brings the seven wind instruments together; and in the coda the whole ensemble joins in. The fifth movement is an attractive *Allegretto* (in G) in rondo form and piquantly laid out for strings, with the flute acting as soloist, with modest support from the oboe. The second minuet is shared by the horns and the rest of the orchestra; both trios are lightly scored, the first (in G) for flute, violins, cellos and basses, the second (in A) for violas, cellos and basses, with the oboe joining in; the short coda is, as before, for the whole ensemble. The ebullient finale has many of the characteristics of the first movement, except that the horns play a much more active part. The main *Allegro molto* is prefaced by a remarkable slow introduction for the seven wind instruments and concluded by a rousing coda in 6/8 and in quicker tempo.

## **Serenade in D major, K. 185 (K. 167a) and March in D major, K. 189 (K. 167b)**

### **March in D major**

#### **Serenade (Final-Musik) in D major**

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Andante*
3. *Allegro*
4. *Menuetto*
5. *Andante grazioso*
6. *Menuetto*
7. *Adagio – Allegro assai*

The Serenade in D, K. 185 dates from the summer of 1773. Between 14 July and 26 September that year Mozart and his father were in Vienna, probably in search of employment. Presumably shortly before leaving Salzburg Wolfgang received a commission to compose a *Finalmusik* for the end of the University year in August, for on 21 July Leopold, in a letter to his wife, wrote: “I must close, for I have still time to write to young Herr von Andretter and send him the beginning of the *Finalmusik*.” A second instalment must have followed a few days later, for by 12 August news had already reached the Mozarts in Vienna that the piece had been performed. “Young Herr von Andretter” was Judas Thaddäus Andretter (or Antretter), a member of a Salzburg family with whom the Mozarts were on friendly terms; he graduated in Logic in August 1773, and evidently undertook to supervise the practical arrangements for the performance in Mozart’s absence.

The seven-movement Serenata (as Leopold entitled it in Wolfgang’s autograph) is scored for strings and pairs of oboes/flutes, horns and trumpets, and is prefaced by a *marche*, K. 189 (K. 167b) in which the oboes are replaced by flutes. The first movement is an elaborate sonata-form *Allegro assai* with an insistent see-saw motif. Next come two concerto movements for violin: a shapely *Andante* and an *Allegro* in rondo form, with showy episodes for the soloist (both in F and without trumpets). These are followed by a stately minuet with flutes instead of oboes and with a trio (in G) delicately laid out for flute, two violas and bass; an attractive *Andante grazioso* (in A), with flutes and without trumpets; and a second minuet, with two trios: the first (in D minor) for solo violin accompanied only by the orchestral violins and violas, and the second extrovert, almost military, in character. The finale, prefaced by an impressive slow introduction, is a festive *Allegro assai* in a swinging 6/8 metre.

## **Serenade in D major, K. 203 (K. 189b) and March in D major, K. 237 (K. 189c)**

### **March in D major**

#### **Serenade in D major**

1. *Andante maestoso – Allegro assai*
2. (*Andante*)
3. *Menuetto*
4. (*Allegro*)
5. *Menuetto*
6. (*Andante*)
7. *Menuetto*
8. *Prestissimo*

The Serenade in D, K. 203, together with its associated March, K. 237, dates from the summer of 1774, and was almost certainly designed as a *Finalmusik* and not, as Mozart's first biographer Franz Xaver Niemetschek (1766-1849) asserted, in celebration of Archbishop Colloredo's name-day (which did not fall until 30 September). It is the first of four orchestral serenades (the others are K. 204, 250 and 320) which also exist in later versions for concert use as symphonies in three, four or five movements; these all seem to have been made by Mozart, or at the very least with his approval and authority. The Serenade is scored for the same forces as K. 185, with bassoons implied; the latter instruments are actually specified in the introductory march, to which they impart a distinctive colour, as do the horns and the trumpets, respectively, when they imitate posthorns at the end of each half. A short but spacious slow introduction prefaces the first movement, a festive *Allegro assai* of symphonic scale and stature. This is followed by three concerto movements for solo violin: a languorous *Andante* in B flat with charming, though discreet, comments from the oboes; a tender little minuet in F for strings alone, enclosing a dashing trio (in B flat) for the soloist; and another lively *Allegro* in B flat. Next a sturdy minuet, with flutes instead of oboes, enclosing a trio (in A) for strings, flute and bassoon; a most eloquent *Andante* (in G) with muted violins, a persistent murmuring accompaniment, and an important part for the first oboe; a martial minuet, with a poignant trio in D minor, for oboe and strings; and, to end with, a sonata-form *Prestissimo* finale of irrepressible high spirits.

## **Serenade in D major, K. 204 (K. 213a) and March in D major, K. 215 (K. 213b)**

### **March in D major**

#### **Serenade in D major**

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Andante moderato*
3. *Allegro*
4. *Menuetto*
5. (*Andante*)
6. *Menuetto*
7. *Andantino (grazioso)*

The Serenade in D, K. 204, together with its associated March, K. 215, was completed in August 1775, and, like its similarly scored counterpart, K. 203 of a year earlier, was almost certainly designed as *Finalmusik*. The march has an engaging rhythmic spring, and appropriately sets the scene for the opening of the Serenade itself, an *Allegro assai* of, as in K. 203, symphonic proportions. The next three movements again feature a solo violin: in an expressive *Andante moderato* and a brilliant *Allegro*, both in A and scored for strings, flutes and horns, and in the trio (again in A, but accompanied by strings only) of the courtly first minuet. The second slow movement, a shapely *Andante* in G, uses five wind instruments (solo flute, oboe and bassoon, and the two horns) in a concertante manner, and is followed by the more elaborate second minuet (with flutes instead of oboes, which frames a trio (in G) for flute and strings. The finale is a sort of "double" rondo, in which a rather hesitant *Andantino grazioso* is interrupted four times by a dashing  $3/8$  *Allegro*; the best music goes to the first oboe.

### **"Serenata notturna" in D major, K. 239**

1. *Marcia (Maestoso)*
2. *Menuetto*
3. *Rondeau (Allegretto – Adagio – Allegro)*

Two of Mozart's Salzburg serenades, the "Serenata notturna", K. 239 and the "Notturmo", K. 286 are both more emphatically *night* pieces than the others and unorthodox in structure (with only one minuet each), to say nothing of instrumentation; and both seem to have been written for winter (and therefore indoor) occasions: probably for New Year's Day, in 1776 and 1777, respectively. Both exploit antiphonal effects: in K. 239 between an orchestra of strings, without double-basses, and timpani; and a solo string quartet in which the place of the cello is taken by a double-bass. The first movement is a piquantly scored march (notice the combination of muffled drum beats and pizzicato strings in the second half), the second an elegant minuet in which the players join forces, only for the solo quartet to break away again in the trio (in G). The colourful concluding rondeau prefaces its rather "rustic" main episode with a mock-serious, recitative-like *Adagio*: probably a specialised joke that the Salzburgers would have understood.

## **Serenade in D major, K. 250 (K. 248b) "Haffner" and March in D major, K. 249**

### **March in D major**

#### **Serenade in D major**

1. *Allegro maestoso – Allegro molto*
2. *Andante*
3. *Menuetto*
4. *Rondo (Allegro)*
5. *Menuetto galante*
6. *Andante*
7. *Menuetto*
8. *Adagio – Allegro assai*

Unlike most, if not all, of Mozart's other Salzburg orchestral serenades, K. 250 in D, composed in June or July 1776, was not designed for end-of-term University junketings but for a more private, if equally festive, occasion: the wedding, on 22 July, of Elisabeth, the daughter of Sigmund Haffner, a wealthy merchant and banker, and Burgomaster of Salzburg, to Franz Xaver Späth – and nobody could ask for a more handsome wedding present. It was for another Haffner celebration, the ennoblement of Sigmund Haffner the younger on 29 July 1782, that Mozart wrote the six-movement serenade in the same key that we only know in its later, four-movement adaptation as the "Haffner" Symphony (No. 35, K. 385). The scoring of K. 250 is the same as that of K. 185, 203 and 204; the five-movement "symphony" extracted from it (which also contains an improved and more effectively scored version of the trio of the "Menuetto galante", including parts for oboes and bassoons) has an autograph timpani part for four of its movements – which is missing from the serenade version, although the presence of drums is clearly implied.

It is Mozart's biggest orchestral serenade, with introductions in slower tempo to both its outer movements and with no fewer than three minuets; it is also prefaced by an appropriately jubilant March (K. 249). The serenade itself opens with an imposing introductory *Allegro maestoso*, which prefaces (and foreshadows) a festive *Allegro molto* with a notably adventurous development section. The next three movements (without trumpets and with flutes replacing the oboes) again feature a solo violin: a shapely *Andante* in G; the trio (in G and with only flutes, bassoons and horns) of the first minuet, which is in the surprising key (for a serenade) of G minor, and full of the tension and chromaticism that so often characterises Mozart's highly individual use of this particular key; and an ebullient rondeau which has, understandably, made its mark as an independent recital piece. Oboes and trumpets return to the orchestra for the fifth movement, a *Menuetto galante*, whose formal

elegance is aptly summed up by its title; but another surprise awaits us in its restless D minor trio, which, like the first minuet, has important parts for divided violas. Next comes a captivating, rondo-like *Andante* in A, beautifully scored for strings, oboes and horns and based on a theme of such simple, natural outline that one suspects it must have been a popular song of the time. The third minuet is an imposing affair, full of D major pomp (but with flutes instead of oboes); it has two trios, a gentle one in G, with solos for first flute and first bassoon, and a mock-ceremonial one in D, with martial trumpet-calls. A slow introduction (*Adagio*), again of unexpected gravity, serves as an introduction to the concluding *Allegro assai*, which, impelled by its spirited 3/8 “hunting” rhythm, brings the serenade to a rousing conclusion.

### **Notturmo in D major, K. 286 (K. 269a)**

1. *Andante*
2. *Allegretto grazioso*
3. *Menuetto*

The second of Mozart’s two emphatically nocturnal winter serenades written in and for Salzburg, the “Notturmo” in D, K. 286, dates from December 1776 or January 1777, a year later than its companion, the “Serenata notturna”, K. 239. Like the “Serenata notturna”, the “Notturmo” makes a feature of antiphonal effects: here between four small orchestras each consisting of four-part strings and two horns. One can imagine the effect it would produce when performed in some grand Rococo hall, one of the orchestras positioned at the top of a marble staircase, perhaps, and the others in adjacent rooms. There are three movements: a spacious *Andante*, an elegant *Allegretto grazioso* in rondo form, and a stately minuet. In all three (except the G major trio of the minuet, which is scored for strings only – one of the four orchestras or all together) echo effects play a crucial part in the scheme, the first orchestra’s music being repeated by the other three, but in echoes of decreasing length; this telescoping of phrase lengths as the echoes overlap produces some amusing touches, notably in the horn-calls in the minuet. It is believed that the “Notturmo” as we know it is incomplete, and that it originally had, or was intended to have, a fourth movement, probably a rondo finale.

### **Serenade in D major, K. 320 “Posthorn” and Two Marches in D major, K. 335 (K. 320a)**

#### **March in D major No. 1**

#### **Serenade in D major**

1. *Adagio maestoso – Allegro con spirit*
2. *Minuetto*
3. *Concertante (Andante grazioso)*
4. *Rondeau (Allegro ma non troppo)*
5. *Andantino*
6. *Minuetto*
7. *Finale (Presto)*

#### **March in D major No. 2**

The last of Mozart’s serenades for full orchestra, K. 320, was finished on 3 August 1779 (six months after his return from Mannheim and Paris, and a year before “Idomeneo”) and was almost certainly intended as *Finalmusik*. Instead of featuring a solo violin, it includes two movements (the third and fourth) with concertante parts for pairs of flutes, oboes and bassoons, which Mozart performed separately at an “academy” (subscription concert) at the Burgtheater in Vienna on 23

March 1783. The serenade owes its nickname to the inclusion of a part for *corno di posta* in the second trio of the second minuet; more probably a timely reminder to the students that term was over and that they would soon be off home than a hint, as used to be thought, to Colloredo that Mozart wanted to get away from provincial Salzburg.

The orchestra includes strings, flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets and drums, but the flutes are heard only in the third and fourth movements (although there is a flute solo in the trio of the first minuet and the first trio of the second minuet calls for a *flautino* or piccolo), and the trumpets and drums are silent in the third, fourth and fifth movements and in all the trios; and of course there is the posthorn. (K. 320 is the only one of the big orchestral serenades to contain an autograph timpani part, although the presence of drums is usually implied in connection with trumpets, and it is not difficult to supply plausible reconstructions for movements in which their presence seems to be needed.) In the case of K. 320 Mozart also provided the luxury of *two* Marches, K. 335 (K. 320a), both scored for strings, horns and trumpets, but the first of them (for the performers' entrance) with oboes and the second (for their departure) with flutes. Both offer, in addition to martial rhythms, piquant touches of orchestration, such as the use of *battendo col legno* (hitting the strings with the back of the bow) in No. 1, and some delicious writing for the flutes in No. 2.

The first movement is an *Allegro con spirito* of impressive stature and vigour, often suggestive of the first movement of the "Prague" Symphony (K. 504) of 1786; it is prefaced by a short but imposing *Adagio* introduction, which reappears, in tempo, between the development and the recapitulation. Mozart also makes effective use of the "Mannheim" crescendo, a device he resorted to only on rare occasions. Next comes a dignified minuet, with a gentle trio (in A) that is a duet for flute and bassoon, doubled by the first violins. The two concertante movements are cast in G: they are a melting *Andante grazioso*, complete with written-out cadenza, and a delightful, lilting rondeau in which the first flute and the first oboe are the main protagonists. The fifth movement is a dark-hued, brooding *Andante* in D minor, of an intensity totally unexpected in the context of a festive serenade. It is followed by a second, more homely, minuet, with two trios: the first for strings (marked piano throughout) and *flautino* (whose stave Mozart left blank, presumably intending it to double the first violins two octaves higher), and the second (in A) for strings, oboes and posthorn, with characteristic upward slurs over an octave for the latter instrument. The serenade ends with a brilliant *Presto* finale, whose pace and occasional indulgence in counterpoint again look forward to the "Prague" Symphony.

### **"Eine kleine Nachtmusik" in G major, K. 525**

1. *Allegro*
2. *Romance (Andante)*
3. *Menuetto (Allegretto)*
4. *Rondo (Allegro)*

What prompted Mozart to write his solitary "Little Serenade" for strings in Vienna in August 1787, while he was busy with Act II of "Don Giovanni" (K. 527), remains a mystery. By any standards the work is short, and its four movements are models of economy and apparent simplicity. Leopold Mozart once summed up the essence of music like this, in his own slightly pompous manner, but with such truth that his words are worth quoting: "What is slight can still be great, if it is written in a natural, flowing and easy style, and at the same time bears the marks of sound composition. Such works are more difficult to compose than all those harmonic progressions which are difficult to perform." (But ask any good string player whether "Eine kleine Nachtmusik" is easy to play really well!) Like most well-bred eighteenth-century serenades it originally had two minuets, the first coming between the first *Allegro* and the Romanze (Mozart's thematic catalogue, which gives the date of composition as 10 August 1787, describes it as consisting of "an *Allegro*, minuet and trio,

Romance, minuet and trio, and finale”) but the autograph score lacks the page on which the first minuet was written; could Mozart have torn it out because he felt that four movements suited the compact nature of the music better than five? Convincing attempts have been made to supply a substitute for the missing minuet, but the “Nachtmusik” is habitually played, as here, in its surviving four-movement form.

*Robin Golding*