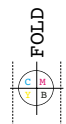


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appreciation that it deserved. The citizens of Prague, on the other hand, seemed to 'get' Mozart's music. A recent production of *The Marriage of Figaro* in that same city had created a wave of what might be called 'Figaro fever' – one could hardly turn around without hearing one or more musicians scraping out one of the opera's 'greatest hits'.

And so, when Mozart and Constanze (plus their dog, plus several other travelling companions) arrived in Prague in January 1787, they received a warm welcome. The new symphony was played at the National Theatre on January 19, along with other works by the composer. It was an extremely happy occasion for him. Three nights later, he conducted a performance of *Figaro*. He left the city in February with a contract to compose a new opera for the city's autumn season; this would turn out to be *Don Giovanni*.

Unique among Mozart's late symphonies, the 'Prague' has no minuet, but the work certainly does not feel incomplete. It also makes uncharacteristically high demands on orchestral musicians – not least on the woodwind and brass players, who were supposed to have been notably accomplished

in Prague. As in the 'Linz' Symphony, the inclusion of trumpets (and drums) gives the 'Prague' a particularly brilliant quality.

In Mozart's time, the terms 'divertimento', 'serenade' and 'cassation' were used to describe very similar genres of music. These works were not composed for formal concerts, but rather to entertain, and to complement festive occasions, such as weddings, name-day celebrations and so on. There were some differences among them, however. Mozart's serenades tended to be written for use outside of the household: at graduation exercises, for example, or for the outdoor pleasure of Salzburg's most prominent figures. Mozart's divertimentos, on the other hand, generally were written for more intimate occasions, such as family gatherings in which smaller groups of instruments were available.

Divertimento No. 10 was written for the name-day celebration of Countess Maria Antonia Lodron – the sister of the Archbishop – in June 1776. It is scored for strings and two horns. One month later, Mozart wrote the Divertimento No. 11 for Nannerl's name-day celebration; the piece sometimes goes under its nickname 'Nannerl-Septett'. Here, he added an oboe to the scoring of the

Today, we think of symphonies as long works in which the composer has something important to say. In contrast, when Mozart was a child, symphonies generally were modest affairs, both in size and in content. Over Mozart's lifetime, the symphonic genre both grew and deepened, and by the time of his death, it had evolved into a weighty art-form. Symphonies now were serious matters, with the power to inspire or to disturb. No longer functioning primarily as introductions to something else, they could stand imposingly on their own two feet. While this evolution cannot be attributed solely to Mozart, he nevertheless reflected and even, to a degree, spurred the development of the symphonic genre during the 24 years in which he contributed to it.

In his teens and early twenties, Mozart suffered repeated disappointments over his failure to break away from his father, Leopold Mozart, and from his employer, the Archbishop Colloredo. Both exercised a level of limitation and control over the young composer which he found increasingly difficult to stomach. Mozart's frustrations found a larger artistic equivalent in the so-called *Sturm und Drang* ('Storm and Stress') movement of the 1770s, of which Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* is a prime

example. Literary works written in the *Sturm und Drang* style are characterised by their intense emotionality, subjectivity and lack of concern for what society as a whole would consider decorous.

Leopold was not pleased by his son's effusions of what we might call 'teenage angst' and encouraged him to repress them. Symphony No. 28 contains elements of the *Sturm und Drang* style, despite its major key. During this period, one feels that Mozart was being pulled in two directions: towards exploration and emotional frankness in some works, and towards capitulation to the conservative tastes of his audience in others. Symphony No. 28, probably dating from November 1774, was the last Mozart composed until 1778, when his Symphony No. 31 ('Paris') was first heard in that selfsame city. (Nos. 29 and 30, out of chronological order, were written in earlier in 1774.)

Symphony No. 33 was one of the three written during Mozart's final residence in Salzburg; it is dated July 9, 1779. The composer, then 23, recently had returned from the aforementioned visit to Paris – a visit which had been both extended and troubling. He needed to mend fences not just with the Archbishop, but also with his father.



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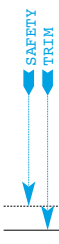
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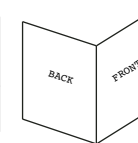
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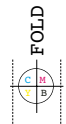


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For the headstrong Mozart, work in Salzburg was as unstimulating and frustrating as before. Nevertheless, he continued to grow as a composer during this last period, producing several admirable works, including not just symphonies, but also church music (the 'Coronation Mass' among others), and the glorious Sinfonia Concertante in E flat for violin and viola (KV 364). Symphony No. 33, originally in three movements (Mozart added the minuet some time later), may have been written for a travelling theatre troupe that visited Salzburg for several months in the spring of 1779, and again later that year.

With the Symphony No. 36 ('Linz'), composed in 1783, Mozart confirmed his mastery of the symphonic idiom; the inventiveness and the emotional richness of the final six symphonies is never anything less than sublime. If we are to believe Mozart's letter to Leopold, it took him only five days to compose this symphony from scratch, as it were, and to prepare it for performance – a feat so remarkable even for a composer as fluid and fecund as Mozart that he has been accused of stretching the truth at least a little.

Why did Mozart write this symphony? To answer that question, one must discuss

Mozart the newlywed. Leopold had not encouraged his son's talk of marriage. Quite possibly he saw any spouse as a competitor for his son's attention. Even though Mozart had moved from his family home in Salzburg to Vienna in the spring of 1781, Leopold continued managing – perhaps 'micromanaging' would be a better word – his son's creative and personal life to the best of his ability.

In May, after arriving in Vienna, Mozart took up lodgings at the residence of Frau Caecilia Weber, a widow living with three daughters: Josepha, Constanze and Sophie. (A fourth daughter, Aloisia, a talented singer, had been courted by Mozart several years earlier – also to Leopold's distress.) Mozart's ready attraction to Constanze quickly intensified. This living arrangement did not last for long: Mozart did not wish to taint Constanze with rumours that his conduct with her was inappropriate, and so in August he moved in with the family of his pupil Josepha Auernhammer. Mozart rather maliciously described Josepha to Leopold as fat, sweaty and given to walking about in revealing clothing. (For her part, Josepha found Mozart delectable.) Needless to say, this arrangement was even more short-lived. After an unsettled

period, he found lodgings more or less across the square from the Webers – where, it should be noted, he continued to receive his mail.

Mozart's courtship of Constanze continued through 1781, and late that year, he wrote to Leopold seeking approval for marriage. Leopold expressed several reservations: Mozart's income was insufficient, denigrating remarks (apparently without basis) were made about Constanze's reputation, and Frau Weber had attempted to have Mozart sign a nuptial agreement obliging him to pay a large sum of money to Constanze should he decide not to marry her after all. Finding arguments of no avail, Leopold next tried ignoring his son's pleas. Mozart, however, was unwilling to wait any longer, and the marriage took place on 4 August 1782. Leopold's grudging acquiescence arrived a day later.

Relations between father and son remained coolly civil after the marriage. A trip to Salzburg to introduce Constanze to Leopold was repeatedly postponed – one reason was that Constanze had given birth to a son, Raimund, the following June. Finally, in July 1783, the long-anticipated visit took place, and Mozart and his wife remained in

Salzburg for three months. It was not a happy time: Leopold was cold to the newlyweds, as was Mozart's sister Anna Maria ('Nannerl'). Then news came in August that, back in Vienna, little Raimund had died. Mozart found consolation in work; the 'Great' C minor Mass was performed for the first time at the end of October.

On the following morning, Mozart and Constanze commenced their journey back to Vienna. On 30 October, they stopped in Linz, where the couple was hosted by Mozart's old friend Count Johann Joseph Anton Thun-Hohenstein, who had an orchestra. It is for these circumstances that the 'Linz' Symphony was written at such a great speed. In the 1780s, it was not a foregone conclusion that symphonies would include trumpets and drums. The 'Linz' Symphony includes parts for both, and most unusually, both are used in the slow movement, occasionally creating an 'almost apocalyptic intensity', in the words of commentator Neal Zaslaw.

The Symphony No. 38 ('Prague') was written at the end of 1786 for a short visit to that Bohemian capital, to which Mozart had been invited by a group of that city's musical connoisseurs. Mozart had begun to feel that the Viennese were not giving his music the

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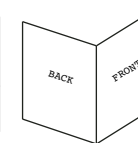
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