

Musical Biography of WA Mozart.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, a name nearly every person in the world knows. Many of them however, only vaguely attach Mozart to the best of classical music. Few people have taken the time to understand why they know the name of Mozart. Pure talent flowed from his fingertips, and with it Mozart overcame social and financial obstacles to impact Western music more than any other.

Wolfgang Mozart had two ups in life, his musical talent, and a musical family. Mozart grew up with a father who made a living as a fairly accomplished composer, a musically inclined mother, and a sister talented at the harpsichord. At the age of three Wolfgang began to learn the harpsichord, along with his sister, under the thumb of their father. (Gutman, 54) Wolfgang's introduction to the harpsichord, organ, and violin from his father provided the only real training he ever had. (Einstien, 26) For several years the elder Mozart could teach his son, and did introducing Wolfgang to all variety of music which he quickly mastered. (Einstien, 25

The young Mozart contained talent that astounded all that heard him. The Mozart family took this talent on the tour around Europe hoping for financial support from the enchanted royals of Europe. Financial support, would prove Wolfgang's most prominent problem throughout his life.) A combination of his father's ambitious plans, a genius's need for independence, and displeasure with the patronage system, led Mozart to break from a salary and relatively stable life with the Archbishop of Salzburg. From this time forth Mozart would stay near Vienna, penning his greatest contributions to Western music.

In Vienna, Mozart wrote some of his greatest operas know to man. Monteverdi began the opera in Italy, but Wolfgang used his enormous talent to advance the genre throughout much of Europe. Indeed some claim that Mozart's German operas, some of the first of their kind, provide the very foundation for German operas altogether. (Ewen, 461) Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serai*, or Abduction from Seraglio, and *Die Zauberflöte*, or the Magic Flute, premier as this foundation. With these Mozart brought the German style of *singspiel*, or song-speak, to an entirely new level. Additionally, Mozart also altered Italian opera forever. In line with his free, comic spirit, his best efforts went to *opera buffa*, the comic Italian opera. Following the pattern of traditional Italian opera Mozart used his gift with sound to bring out musical characterisations, and insight into the idiosyncrasies and hidden motivations of the character. (Ewen, 461) *Le nozze di Figaro* or the Marriage of Figaro, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte* or the School for Lovers, represent the peak of Mozart's work in this genre. Some would go so far as to say that these form the foundation for the modern repertory. (Sadie, 9) Undoubtedly Wolfgang could have brought much more to these genres if he had lived longer.

Despite all of the effort Mozart put into opera, he remains among the greatest of all western composers because he contributed so much more to music. He faced a life full of financial and other challenges that only increased his creativity, leading him to significantly contribute to concerto, symphony, and string quartet among many many others. (Ewen, 461) In short, classical musicians celebrate Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart not as a performing monkey, but as a composer that forever altered the face of classical music, and indeed all western music from that time forward.

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