



CONCERT PROGRAM

ESSENTIAL MOZART

Wednesday, January 17, 2018

8:00pm

Thursday, January 18, 2018

8:00pm

TELUS Centre for Performance
and Learning, Koerner Hall

Bernard Labadie

conductor

Jonathan Crow

violin

Teng Li

viola



MOZART FESTIVAL SPONSOR

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**Overture to *Die Zauberflöte*
(The Magic Flute), K. 620**

***Sinfonia concertante* in E-flat Major for
Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, K. 364/320d**

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Andante

III. Presto

Intermission

**Overture to *Der Schauspieldirektor*
(The Impresario), K. 486**

Symphony No. 36 in C Major, K. 425, "Linz"

I. Adagio – Allegro spiritoso

II. Poco adagio

III. Menuetto

IV. Presto

THE DETAILS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: Salzburg, Austria, Jan 27, 1756

Died: Vienna, Austria, Dec 5, 1791

6
min

Overture to *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute), K. 620

Composed: 1791

Mozart and the colourful impresario/singer/actor Emanuel Schikaneder (1751–1812) met in 1780, when Schikaneder arrived in Salzburg with his rowdy troupe of musical theatre performers. He quickly became friends with the entire Mozart family. Mozart relocated to Vienna the following year. In 1789, he and Schikaneder renewed what had become a lagging friendship, when Schikaneder & Co. set up shop at the barn-sized Theatre auf der Wieden in a Viennese suburb.

Schikaneder's German-language "machine comedies" (as such riotous, special effects-heavy musical productions were known) sported scores by such composers as Franz Gerl and Benedikt Schack, both performers in his company. They attracted a large and diverse audience. It was just a matter of time before he would ask his friend Mozart to collaborate on one with him. What spurred him on was the prospect of Mozart's talent producing a hot-ticket show that would rescue the company from near bankruptcy. Mozart, himself facing

serious monetary challenges, accepted the offer eagerly.

He completed *The Magic Flute* on September 28, two days before its first performance. The music won considerable acclaim, but the text was widely criticized. Nevertheless, 20 performances were given over the first month. Productions throughout the German-speaking lands followed shortly after Mozart's death.

Schikaneder's libretto for *The Magic Flute* is a rough-and-ready mixture of storybook fantasy, low comedy, melodrama, and high-minded philosophy. Mozart matched every ingredient with equally diverse and consistently inspired music, tones that frequently elevate the material above its worth. The hero is Prince Tamino, who must bravely undergo rituals of purification in order to achieve two goals: priesthood in the Temple of Wisdom, and the hand of his sweetheart, Pamina.

Since Mozart and Schikaneder belonged to Masonic lodges, their contributions to *The Magic Flute* reflect the principles of the Freemason brotherhood. Chief among these is the libretto's quest for inner harmony and spiritual enlightenment. On a more earthly level, both text and music make prominent use of Masonic symbolism: the number three, for example, as in the solemn, repeated chords that launch the overture. However, there is far more to the introductory music than a stateliness representing the lofty goals of Freemasonry. Like the opera it prefaces, it too sparkles with vigour and good humour.

Program note by Don Anderson



Engraving by Ignaz Alberti of Emanuel Schikaneder in the role of Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*

THE DETAILS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: Salzburg, Austria, Jan 27, 1756

Died: Vienna, Austria, Dec 5, 1791

30
min

***Sinfonia concertante* in E-flat Major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, K. 364/320d**

Composed: 1779

In 1777 and 1778, Mozart spent many months on tour in Mannheim and Paris, both cities that were home to many outstanding virtuoso performers and where, not surprisingly, orchestral music for multiple soloists (i.e. the *symphonie concertante*, or its Italian equivalent) was in vogue. In Paris, Mozart composed several works for multiple soloists, and he returned home to Salzburg intent on bringing this fashionable form to local audiences. The magnificent result, in 1779, was the *Sinfonia concertante* for violin and viola. Mozart was a violinist of professional calibre, but he had a special fondness for the viola, which in later life he preferred to the violin when playing chamber music. In K. 364, in which the viola is every inch the equal of the violin in presenting

and developing ideas, Mozart notated the viola part in the key of D major, requiring that the violist tune the instrument a semitone higher than usual; with this little technical trick (called *scordatura*), he sought to brighten the viola's sound, increase its dexterity in passage work, and give it the added resonance of open strings.

The *Sinfonia concertante* is a giant among Mozart's string concertos, a work of unusual grandeur and nobility. There is high comedy in this music, but also passion and brilliance, tenderness and melancholy, and great depth and richness of sonority, in both the orchestral and solo parts. Mozart's melodic imagination is astonishingly fertile here. Of the half-dozen themes introduced by the orchestra at the beginning of the first movement, not one appears in the solo exposition; instead, Mozart gives his soloists a handful of new melodies, then draws imaginatively and unpredictably on both sets of themes as the movement unfolds.

The moving *Andante*, in C minor, made especially affecting by the plaintive voice of the viola, is unusually dark and grave for a concerto movement. The rambunctious finale, though set in a conventional rondo form, is, like the first movement, a veritable riot of melody and colour. It is one of relatively few movements that Mozart marked *Presto*—a term he used only when he really meant it. This music that brings the *Sinfonia concertante* to a close dances—on the lightest feet.

Program note by Kevin Bazzana



*18th-century German viola strung with metal strings. The scordatura tuning Mozart required for the viola part of this *Sinfonia concertante* is more essential in performances by period instruments that use gut strings. This tuning method is less necessary*

when the work is performed with the more powerful, metal-strung viola, which is what you will hear at this concert.

3
min

Overture to *Der Schauspieldirektor* (*The Impresario*), K. 486 Composed: 1786

In 1786, Mozart received a new commission by Emperor Joseph II for one of two brief comic operas. The Emperor requested them for a “revel” or reception he was planning, in honour of an important guest, Duke Albert of Sachsen Teschen, Governor General of the Austrian Netherlands. In accordance with his patriotic desire to make German as common a language for opera as Italian, Mozart’s opera was to have a German text; it was supplied by Gottlob Stephanie, whom Mozart had worked with four years earlier on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*). It has been said that the Emperor himself supplied the storyline.

The other commission went to his official Court Composer (and rival of Mozart), Antonio Salieri. It was to be sung in Italian. Reflecting the relative statures of the composers, Salieri received 100 ducats for his contribution, Mozart just 50.



Schönbrunn Palace as viewed from the gardens, by Bernardo Bellotto, 1759–1760

Mozart interrupted work on *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*) to fulfill the commission.

On the afternoon of the “revel”, the entire party of noble guests was driven by coach from the Emperor’s winter residence, the Hofburg, to Schönbrunn, his lavish summer palace on the outskirts of the city. After an elaborate luncheon banquet held in the Orangery, the audience first watched *The Impresario*. They then faced about to the other end of the room, where a second stage had been set up, and were entertained by Salieri’s new piece: *Prima la musica, e poi le parole* (*First the Music, and Then the Words*). As a matter of record, the audience preferred Salieri’s piece by a substantial margin. Both operas were performed soon afterwards in a public Viennese theatre, and each received a warm reception.

The Impresario is a farcical backstage look at opera production. The title character, Herr Frank (played by Stephanie himself at the première) is assembling a new opera company. Various singers audition for him, among them two rival prima donnas who compete nastily for plum positions. Frank ends their quarrel by promising both of them star billing and large salaries.

Mozart did not find the libretto a great source of inspiration, as the four pleasant but not particularly memorable vocal numbers demonstrate. The Overture, on the other hand, is as sparkling and witty a bit of orchestral merriment as ever he composed.

Program note by Don Anderson

THE DETAILS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: Salzburg, Austria, Jan 27, 1756

Died: Vienna, Austria, Dec 5, 1791

26
min

Symphony No. 36 in C Major, K. 425, “Linz”

Composed: 1783

At the end of October 1783, on the way back to Vienna after a strained visit with his sister and widowed father in his native Salzburg, Mozart and his wife Constanze stopped in Linz—and ended up staying for a month, in the home of an aristocratic admirer, Count Thun. On October 31, Mozart wrote that he was to give a concert in Linz on November 4, “and, as I have not a single symphony with me, I am writing a new one at breakneck speed.” The great “Linz” Symphony, therefore, was composed in five days at most, without allowing time for the copying of

orchestral parts and at least one rehearsal. Count Thun’s orchestra was, by all accounts, first-rate, and judging from Mozart’s instrumentation of the symphony, it must have been quite large, although he did not call for flutes or clarinets.

The first movement is large in scale, and the spirit of Franz Joseph Haydn hovers over it, only most obviously in the slow introduction, with its mighty opening and pulsating, dissonant continuation. The overall form is conventional but the music is full of splendid details—surprising turns of phrase, strange harmonic detours, bits of Haydn-esque solo writing. As in the groundbreaking piano concertos and operas he was writing around this time, Mozart seeks to balance the conventional and the original, to appeal to both popular and connoisseur tastes.

The tender opening bars of the *Poco adagio* seem to promise a conventional slow movement, but, beginning with the unexpected entrance of trumpets and drums along with the woodwinds and horns, the music acquires depth and gravity that Mozart’s audience could hardly have anticipated. The third movement, with its Ländler-like rhythm and clever scoring—note the delicious oboe-bassoon duet in the Trio—again calls Haydn to mind, though the elegance of the music is pure Mozart. The bustling, high-spirited finale is one of those *Presto* movements Mozart wanted played as fast as possible. It is a brilliant and witty specimen of its kind, and if not so full of surprises as the first movement, it is not bad for a few days’ work!

Program note by Kevin Bazzana



Linz's main square, c. 1774

Mozart liked his “Linz” Symphony enough to include it in his big “academy” concert in Vienna on April 1, 1784, and he may have conducted it in Prague, too, in 1787. Yet, he was surprisingly cavalier about the autograph score, which he sent to his father, telling him that he could do with it what he wanted—copy it, perform it, or even give it away! Mozart viewed symphonies as far less important works than concertos, which were his principal vehicles for showcasing himself before the public. It was not until 1793, after Mozart’s death, that the “Linz” Symphony was published.

THE ARTISTS

For a biography of Bernard Labadie, please turn to page 13.



Jonathan Crow violin

TSO Concertmaster Jonathan Crow joined the TSO in 2011.

The 2017/18 season marks Canadian violinist Jonathan Crow's seventh season as Concertmaster of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A native of Prince George, BC, Jonathan earned his Bachelor of Music in Honours Performance from McGill University in 1998, at which time he joined the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) as Associate Principal Second Violin. Between 2002 and 2006, Jonathan was the Concertmaster of the OSM; during this time, he was the youngest concertmaster of any major North American orchestra. He continues to perform as guest concertmaster with orchestras around the world.

Jonathan has performed as a soloist with most major Canadian orchestras. An avid chamber musician, he has performed at chamber music festivals throughout North America, South America, and Europe, and is a founding member of the New Orford String Quartet. He is also the curator of The TSO Chamber Soloists series. Currently, he is Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Toronto and Artistic Director of the Toronto Summer Music Festival. Jonathan has recorded for ATMA, Bridge, CBC, Oxingale, Skylark, and XXI-21 labels, and is heard frequently on radio in North America and Europe.



Teng Li viola

TSO Principal Viola Teng Li joined the TSO in 2004.

Since joining the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 2004, Teng Li has established herself as a diverse and dynamic performer internationally. Along with her TSO solo appearances, she has performed with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra, Munich Chamber Orchestra, Shanghai Opera Orchestra, Canadian Sinfonietta, and the Esprit Orchestra, among many others. Her performances have been broadcast on CBC Radio 2, Toronto's Classical 96.3FM, National Public Radio, WQXR (New York), WHYY (Pennsylvania), WFMT (Chicago), and Bavarian Radio (Munich). Her *début* album, entitled *1939*, was released in June 2015 to great acclaim. Ms. Li is also an active recitalist and chamber musician; she is currently a member of Trio Arkel.

Teng Li is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. She currently serves on faculty at the University of Toronto and The Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists at The Royal Conservatory, and is also the Artistic Director of the Morningside Music Bridge International Festival. She plays on a 1703 Amati viola donated generously to the TSO by Dr. William Waters.