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Mozart's Music

By Robert Michael

The music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is perhaps the most well-known of any composer the

world has ever seen. Almost everyone has heard of how Mozart was composing music by the age of five (some urban legends even claim it was at age two) and performing before kings and queens, dukes and duchesses, before he was seven years old. He created more than 600 compositions, from operas to sonatas to full symphonies, and died tragically, mysteriously, before his 36th birthday in 1791. Some of his more famous pieces of music include *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (A Little Night Music, 1787) and the operas *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute, 1791).

The movie *Amadeus* (1984) put into popular parlance the idea of Mozart as an immature and spoiled musical prodigy, given to fast living and obnoxious, braying laughter. It also portrays him as having been tormented by a brooding, jealous rival composer named Salieri, who may or may not have killed him. History paints only a slightly less dramatic picture. Born in 1756 in Salzburg, Austria, Mozart was the only son of a professional musician who very early on recognized the boy's extraordinary musical talent. Today's critical and politically correct eyes may look with disfavor on the way that Leopold Mozart exploited his son's musical genius, but at the time it was neither uncommon nor unacceptable to parade child prodigies through the courts of Europe. The young Mozart spent his boyhood at the feet of kings and queens, performing and composing and perfecting his unique musical vision.

He also spent his childhood suffering from various illnesses—tuberculosis, tonsillitis, and typhoid are just some of the many ailments he is said to have suffered. He was a sickly child and each bout of poor health left him reduced in vigor, more frail, and more susceptible to what would, ultimately, kill him. Legend has it that he was poisoned, but recent, more scientific explanation has it that he died of rheumatic fever, even while working to complete one of his greatest musical accomplishments, the *Requiem*.

Mozart's music, like his life, defies easy classification. As a product of what historians term the Classical Era (1750–1825), he perfected the prevalent musical forms of symphony, opera, and concerto, and yet he also turned them on their heads. The upper-crust audiences for whom he played were jarred by his complex, mysterious, sometimes raucous music, accustomed as they were to lighter, more frivolous pieces. In 1782, the Emperor Joseph II even told Mozart that his German opera

had "too many notes."

Such a characterization of Mozart's music may well seem absurd to us today, who have been conditioned to think of Mozart as an unparalleled genius. Even before birth, babies are rocked to sleep by Mozart's music being piped into their mothers' wombs. We relax to his music, we grow to it, we learn through it; his music enriches and inspires our lives.

Robert Michael is a writer for Tcd

<http://Music.com>

which is an excellent place to find music links,

resources and articles. For more information go to:

<http://www.tcdmusic.com>

Elements Of Wedding Ceremony Music

By George Meszaros

When planning your wedding ceremony music, a common questions wedding planners receive is, "How many songs to be performed during the ceremony and where should they go?" There are no hard set rules and there is no wrong way to do it. The following is a useful set of guidelines you can use while planning your wedding reception music.

Prelude - music performed prior to the beginning of the wedding ceremony, while arriving guests are being seated. For the prelude, you may select a pianist a guitar player or a string quartet. The music played in the prelude is more often than not instrumental.

Common classical songs include:

"Air on a G String" by Bach "Ave Verum Corpus" by Mozart "Water Music (Air)" by Handel "Serenade" by Schubert

Processional - music performed while the wedding party enters the wedding ceremony site. The processional is meant to announce your arrival. The guests will stand as you make your way toward the center point.

Common processional pieces are:

"Canon in D" by Pachelbel "Concerto in D Major" by Vivaldi "Trumpet Voluntary" by Clarke "Wedding March" by Mozart

Ceremony - music performed for the duration of the ceremony.

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Songs frequently used are:

"Coronation March" by Walton "Ode to Joy" by Beethoven "Trumpet Tune in C" by Purcell "Triumphal March" by Grieg

Recessional - music performed as the wedding party leaves the ceremony site. For many, this part of the ceremony is considered the most exciting. You're husband and wife. All your ceremony guest will stand as you make your way out of the gathering place.

There are many choices for this music and some songs include:

"Brandenberg Concerto No. 4" by Bach "Exsultate, Jubilate" by Mozart "Rigaudon" by Campra "The Four Seasons" by Vivaldi

Postlude - music performed as the guests exit the ceremony site, which is normally the same music played during the prelude.

Regardless of what music you choose, be sure they can be performed by a traditional musical instrument such as piano, organ, guitar, or flute or harp.

George Meszaros with

<http://www.sweet-reflections.com>



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