Wolfgang Amadé Mozart (1756–1791)

The Piano Concertos

Piano Concerto No. 1 in F major, K 37

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Allegro

Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat major, K 39

1. Allegro spiritoso
2. Andante staccato
3. Molto allegro

Piano Concerto No. 3 in D major, K 40

1. Allegro maestoso
2.Andante
3. Presto

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, K 41

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Molto allegro

The four so-called 'pasticcio' concertos on this disc precede any of Mozart's original piano concertos (the earliest of which is that in D major, K 175, completed in December 1773). They are each transcriptions of 'accompanied sonatas' for keyboard and violin by composers whose works he had first encountered as a child during an extended European tour (1763–66): Johann Schobert (c. 1740–1809), Leontzi Honauer (1737–c. 1790), Johann Gottfried Eckard (1735–1809) and Hermann Friedrich Raupach (1728–78). Perhaps the exercise was suggested to Mozart by his father as part of the gradual process of his musical instruction, building on earlier experiences of composing in relatively large-scale forms such as the sonata (some of which had already been published) and symphony. Although the material is not wholly Mozart's, the composition of concerted movements out of pre-existing sonatas demonstrates even at this early stage (1767) a sure grasp of the contrasting functions of different themes, modulating passages, cadential closure, types of texture and, especially, the power of dialogue in creating a musical narrative.

It was not until the early 20th century that these concertos were recognized as transcriptions of other composers' work. All of the pioneers of Mozart research (Jahn, Köchel and André) assumed these pieces were evidence of the young composer's brilliance in the concerto genre; K 37, 39, 40 and 41 were included within the old Breitkopf & Härtel Mozart *Gesamtausgabe* in 1877 as original works. It was only some thirty years later, when two French musicologists, Théodore de Wyzewa and George de Saint-Foix, began work on a comprehensive survey of Mozart's life and work (published in five volumes between 1912 and 1946) that doubts began to surface. In 1909 Wyzewa and Saint-Foix revealed that the second movement of K 39 was based on the first movement of Schobert's sonata Op. 17 No. 2, leading to further exploration of these concertos as being possibly arrangements, rather than original compositions. Such suspicions were soon confirmed, and the two French authors were

able to announce that they had uncovered the source of five more movements among the sonatas of Honauer and Eckard. Raupach was found to be the composer of four further movements. In the third edition of the Köchel Catalogue (1937) a further movement was discovered to be the work of C. P. E. Bach; only in 2000 was the one remaining piece of the jigsaw put into place by Gregory Butler: the *Andante* of K 37 was shown to be the joint work of Mozart and his father (and actually the earliest extant concerto movement at least partly composed by Mozart). In summary the origins are as follows:

K	**First movement**	**Second movement**	**Third movement**
37	Raupach Op. 1 No. 5/i	Mozart and his father	Honauer Op. 2 No. 3/i
39	Raupach Op. 1 No. 1/i	Schobert Op. 17 No.2/i	Raupach Op. 1 No. 1/iii
40	Honauer Op. 2 No. 1/i	Eckard Op. 1 No.4*	C. P. E. Bach Wq 117/26*
41	Honauer Op. 1 No. 1/i	Raupach Op. 1 No. 1/ii	Honauer Op. 1 No. 1/iii

*entire – a single-movement work

The autograph manuscripts of each of these pasticcio concerto s survive, allowing us to date these composition exercises (if that is what they were) quite precisely: K 37, April 1767; K 39, June 1767; K 40 and K 41, July 1767. It may well be that there was an additional practical reason for producing the works; perhaps the prospect of a performance by the l1-year-old boy was envisaged at which his talent as both performer and composer could be exhibited in the concerto genre (one possible occasion, suggested by the editor of these works for the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe*, was the Mozart family's brief stay in Brno in October 1767, thus avoiding an outbreak of smallpox in Vienna). In fact, the handwriting of both Mozart and his father occurs in the autograph manuscripts, perhaps a clue that these were not wholly the youngster's own unaided work. There are frequent corrections by Leopold of his son's musical notation, especially in the first and second movements of the first pasticcio, K 37. Given that these were the boy's first forays into the concerto genre, it is unsurprising that he needed some help; in one sense, these four works bear a trace of Mozart's composition lessons with his father.

Mozart's strategy, in converting the original sonatas into concertos, was to add tutti passages to the pre-existing material, creating a form that relies fundamentally upon the alternation of extended blocks of sound (contrasting solo and tutti sections), while also featuring more intimate dialogue between the partners. In all the first movements – all of which are in sonata form – Mozart adds four tuttis, beginning with an introduction based on the opening material of the original, but scored for the tutti of strings, woodwinds and horns, holding to the tonic and sometimes incorporating a strong cadence, newly composed (K 37, K 40). Following the first solo entry (which, as in the original, includes the essential modulation out of the home key), there is normally a codetta (=the second tutti) in the dominant key, reinforcing the modulation; sometimes this is a restatement of the opening idea (K 37, K 39, K 40), or else derived from a subsidiary theme within the original sonata exposition (K 41). Towards the end of the movement there is a freely-composed tutti passage leading to the conventional 6/4 chord, followed by a cadenza; and the movement is rounded off by a repetition (or adaptation) in the tonic of the codetta passage that had been introduced earlier (K 39, K 41), or else a reprise of some other material from the tutti introduction.

Mozart quite rigorously respects the original sequence of ideas from the sonata models, but intervenes more drastically in some cases than in others in the way in which he adapts the material to the concerto form. Mozart sometimes needed to take the initiative in inserting material in the right key because the sonatas from which he was working did not adhere to the 'standard' format that by this time had become familiar. In the first movement of K 39, for instance (based on Raupach's Sonata in B flat, Op. l No. l), he needed to give a clear sense of thematic recapitulation at the start of the third

tutti despite the fact that at the analogous point in Raupach there is no actual return of the opening theme. Whether the need for such interventions was noticed originally by Mozart, or whether they were suggested to him by his father, must remain speculation.

Slow movements and finales in these pasticcio concertos tend to hold quite closely to the models: with the exception of additional opening and closing tuttis, the extended quotations from the original sonatas remain relatively undisturbed. Interestingly, the autograph manuscript of K 37's *Andante* is significantly different in its appearance from those of the other pasticcios, strong evidence that in this case, we are looking at a composing score, rather than the record of an arrangement.

Throughout these delightful works, the composer's early mastery of keyboard writing shines through. In the original 'accompanied sonatas', the violin part rarely takes a melodic lead. In fact, it often supplies harmonic filling, or else contributes a kind of 'pedal effect' with frequent long notes held throughout an arpeggio passage on the keyboard, supplying continuity of tone that was lacking on the harpsichord. Mozart rarely changes the original keyboard figuration, but carefully notes its idiom, convincingly extending passagework into longer phrases, or diverting it into new tonal regions. Mindful of the greater opportunities for colourful dialogue in a larger ensemble context, he is careful to design his keyboard textures, and choice of register, in such a way that they make a distinctive impact when set against a fuller chordal body of sound.

Three Concertos after J. C. Bach, K 107 for keyboard, two violins and basso

Concerto I in D major

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Tempo di Menuetto

Concerto II in G major

1. Allegro
2. Thema. Allegretto - Variations I-III

Concerto III in E flat major

1. Allegro
2. Allegretto

The three 'pasticcio' concertos, **K 107 Nos i–iii**, scored for keyboard, two violins and basso, are all arrangements made from solo keyboard sonatas Op.5 (1766) by Johann Christian Bach at some point between the end of 1770 and 1772. Mozart had encountered J. C. Bach during his visit to London in 1764–65 and was immediately won over by 'the London Bach's' graceful *cantabile* style of composition. Perhaps much of the credit for Mozart's subsequently effortless command of melody should be laid at Bach's door. Certainly Mozart later acknowledged his debt to Bach, and incorporated a reference to an overture Bach had written for Galuppi's opera *La calamità dei cuori* (1763) in the slow movement of the A major Concerto, K 414 (1782–83). On hearing of Bach's death, he wrote to his father (10th April 1782) that it was 'a sad loss for the world of music'. In K 107 Mozart takes material from Bach's Op. 5 Nos 2, 3 and 4 (which he may have got to know in London) and re-imagines it in the context of a concerto ritornello structure, alternating tutti and solo sections, possibly inspired by Bach's own Op. 7 concertos for the same combination of instruments.

The opening tuttis in the first movements hold closely to Bach's original layout, following precisely the sequence of ideas with just a couple of standard alterations: the transitions between

opening and secondary themes are typically curtailed; and the secondary theme, originally in the dominant key, is retained within the tonic at first, allowing the soloist's reprise to effect the dramatic modulation. Sometimes Mozart adapts Bach's closing exposition material to make it sound more grand, reflecting the sharp distinction still observed at that time between the 'private' domestic world of the sonata and the 'public' arena of the concerto. In K 107 i and ii the first solos feature relatively little reworking of the opening tutti (and in particular, there is almost no punctuation of solo statements by the tutti). The solo writing in K 107 iii, however, begins to resemble more closely the dynamically unfolding narrative that was soon to characterise Mozart's arias and violin concertos, incorporating also an additional, new tutti passage not found in Bach's Op.5 No. 4, on which it is based. Quite how much of these arrangements was Wolfgang's unaided work may be doubted, to judge from the autograph manuscripts (in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin): whereas the string parts are in his handwriting, the solo parts and figured bass indications throughout the tuttis are in his father's script, perhaps suggesting a joint enterprise.

Piano Concerto No. 5 in D major, K 175

1. Allegro
2. Andante ma un poco adagio
3. Allegro

Piano Concerto No. 6 in B flat major, K 238

1. Allegro aperto
2. Andante un poco adagio
3. Rondeau. Allegro

Composed in Salzburg in December 1773, the **Concerto No. 5 in D major, K 175** is the earliest of Mozart's 'original' piano concertos. It was preceded by several 'pasticcio' arrangements, all made from earlier sonatas by other composers, written either for solo keyboard, or else for the popular mid-century idiom of keyboard 'avec accompagnement d'un violon' – the so-called 'accompanied sonata'.

K 175 was to become one of Mozart's most popular piano concertos following his relocation to Vienna in the early 1780s. Mozart himself performed it often, and held it in such high regard that he replaced the original finale (in a fugal idiom, combining counterpoint with sonata form in a manner similar to that found later in the G major String Quartet, K 387) with a Rondo, K 382 (included on BIS-2064, a previous disc in this series) – actually a set of variations in which the opening theme is frequently reprised. In addition to two early editions (the first appearing in 1785) there are several surviving sets of manuscript parts – some with the original finale, some with the replacement Rondo – all of these postdating the composition of the Rondo in 1782 (no sources from 1773 are known).

The solo keyboard part has a significantly narrower range than Mozart's other concertos, including the early B flat concerto, K 238 (January 1776). Possibly in 1773 Mozart was writing for an instrument of limited compass, perhaps a harpsichord. In several places in the first movement recapitulation, Mozart significantly adapted the shape of the corresponding passagework from the exposition – almost certainly in order to keep it within the treble compass of the instrument. The delightful *Andante ma un poco adagio* opens unusually with a three-bar phrase; even more unusual is that this is answered by a regular four-bar phrase, giving a delightful expressive tension between asymmetry of phrasing (maintained throughout the movement) and melodic elegance. In the finale, Mozart highlights the virtuoso potential of a concerto soloist, not in an artificially flashy way but with a sense of purpose: he probably realised that the long notes of the opening tutti would not transfer well to the keyboard, and so from the start of the solo entry he elaborated the melodic outline idiomatically in a cascade of quaver arpeggios. While it was in Vienna that this work made such a splash, Mozart

had performed it earlier in Munich (December 1774) and Mannheim (February 1778). But the new Rondo finale (and perhaps also the majestic scoring, including trumpets and timpani) must have appealed to the Viennese public at Lenten subscription concerts, as it was played on 3rd March 1782, 11th March 1783, and twice more later that month (23rd and 30th March). Mozart described it as 'a great favourite', and sent a copy of the Rondo home to Salzburg with the injunction to his father and sister to guard it 'like a jewel'. It is as clear an indication as one could wish for of Mozart carefully assessing the taste of his audience and adapting his style to suit.

The autograph manuscript of K 175 is regrettably lost, but in the original edition of the famous Köchel Catalogue of Mozart's works (1862), it is noted that at that time it was bound together with Mozart's manuscript of the **Concerto No. 6 in B flat major, K 238** (today in the Library of Congress, Washington DC), and owned by the André family, publishers of a large number of Mozart's compositions in the decades after his death (K 238 appeared in print for the first time in 1793). Like K 175, the work was intended primarily for Mozart's own use in concert tours (perhaps his sister, Nannerl also played it). In Munich, on 4th October 1777, Mozart gave a private concert including some of his recent compositions for the benefit of his host there, Franz Josef Albert, an innkeeper who evidently owned a superb fortepiano according to Daniel Schubart's *Deutsche Chronik*. Soon afterwards, Mozart discovered the pianos of the Augsburg maker, Johann Andreas Stein, which were to have a remarkable effect on his later keyboard compositions. In particular, his keyboard writing immediately began to exploit Stein's lightly regulated key action and nimble 'escapement mechanism' (allowing rapid repeated notes, tremolo octaves and neat ornaments), for instance in the C major Piano Sonata, K 309. The crispness with which rapid figuration could be executed on Stein's instruments no doubt enhanced the clarity of the triplet passagework in the finale when Mozart performed K 238 in Augsburg on 22nd October. The concerto was to make a further appearance in the Mannheim performance of 13th February 1778 at which K 175 was played (see above). On this occasion, however, it was not Mozart who played the solo part, but Rosa Cannabich, daughter of the *Konzertmeister* of the Mannheim Orchestra, to whom Mozart had been teaching piano for several months.

The scoring of K 238, by contrast with K 175, is light and delicate. In the slow movement Mozart replaces the oboes with a pair of flutes, and instructs the lower strings play *pizzicato* for most of the movement, while the upper strings are marked *con sordino*; together with the sound of the flutes these special effects give the *Andante* a memorably luminous quality. The solo piano part is blended into this delicate mixture with staccato quaver chords in the left hand supporting filigree sextuplets above. All told, the texture of this movement calls for great sensitivity on the part of the soloist to articulation (frequently notated with great precision by Mozart), shading and control of dynamics (though none are marked in Mozart's score); he may still have had the expectation that it would be performed on a harpsichord, as his autograph merely describes the instrument generically as '[Concerto di] cembalo...'. Mozart evidently had high hopes of this concerto, preparing it for publication as he noted in a letter to his father on 11th September 1778. As so often happened, nothing came of the plan during his lifetime.

Piano Concerto No. 8 in C major, K 246 ('Lützow-Konzert')

1. Allegro aperto
2. Andante
3. Rondeau. Tempo di Menuetto

Composed in April 1776, **Concerto No. 8 in C major, K 246**, was written for Countess Antonia Lützow, one of Leopold Mozart's pupils and an influential member of the local Salzburg aristocracy. In terms of technical difficulty, it is among the least demanding of Mozart's piano concertos. Perhaps

it originated as a teaching piece of some kind (albeit on an extended scale). Most of its passagework is restricted to the right hand (with a relatively straightforward, slower-moving left-hand accompaniment) and involves few difficult changes of hand position. In the outer movements, there are quite extensive reprises of material (sometimes transposed to a different key), reducing the amount of note-learning required for performance. Its possible pedagogic origin is reinforced by the survival of some written-out continuo realizations in the solo piano part found in the performance materials that still survive in the Abbey of St Peter, Salzburg (the copying of which was overseen by Leopold Mozart), and the provision of three sets of cadenzas for the first two movements – both practical aids for an inexperienced player, no doubt. Some of the cadenzas are written on paper contemporary with the autograph composing score; others were added later (even perhaps as late as 1779, suggesting that performances of K 246 were still happening then). Mozart's widow evidently had access to the autograph circa 1800, selling it to Johann Anton André who based a published edition on it that year.

Mozart frequently performed the concerto himself, and so did one of his pupils, Thérèse Pierron, in January and February 1778. On the first occasion the noted theorist Georg Vogler (a.k.a. Abbé Vogler) was present and had earlier attempted to sight-read the work himself, a circumstance to which Mozart refers humorously in a letter to his father of 17th January 1778:

> Before dinner [Vogler] scrambled through my concerto at sight. He took the first movement [marked *Allegro aperto*] *prestissimo*, the *Andante allegro* and the Rondo [a graceful Minuet] believe it or not *prestississimo*. Generally, he played the bass different from the way it was written, inventing here and there quite another harmony and even melody... Vogler's fingering too is terrible; he does all the treble runs downwards with the thumb and first finger of his right hand.

For some time, K 246 remained a staple of Salzburg's amateur music scene. Mozart's sister, Nannerl performed it, and taught it to her pupils. One of them, Mlle Villersi, had thought herself quite competent until she came embarrassingly to grief in a rehearsal of the work; within two weeks, Nannerl had taught her to play it 'so proficiently that she did herself great credit' (Leopold Mozart, letter of 11th June 1778).

Piano Concerto No. 9 in E flat major, K 271 'Jenamy' ['Jeunehomme']

1. Allegro
2. Andantino
3. Rondeau. Presto

Although frequently referred to as the 'Jeunehomme' concerto, the **Piano Concerto in E flat major, K 271** (completed in January 1777) was, as Michael Lorenz pointed out a few years ago, actually written for the French virtuoso pianist Victoire Jenamy. Judging by the solo piano part, Jenamy must have possessed considerable technical security (note in particular the *moto perpetuo* finale's prodigious demands), and also a gift for rhetorical expression. The latter is exploited to the full in the C minor slow movement (*Andantino*), arguably Mozart's most impressive essay in declamatory writing to date (outside of the opera house, at any rate). It is not simply Mozart's use of the minor mode that so firmly captures the listener's attention here, but also the judicious use of dynamic contrasts (the louder outbursts typically highlighting those points where Mozart explores distant chromatic regions), the different registers, delicate melodic tracery, and especially the affective use of silence. Mozart's conception of the concerto genre in K 271 was quite definitely one in which dramatic, soloistic virtuosity is pushed to the foreground. That is apparent from the outset: unusually, the work begins not with the expected extended *tutti* introduction, but with an opposition of *tutti* and solo, the piano entering in bar 2 to complete the fanfare phrase announced *unisono* by the *tutti*. Visually, as well as audibly, this is an extraordinary effect, belonging to the concert hall, not the private chamber. One might almost say that it belongs equally to the opera theatre, since K 271 is, in

both content and scale, operatic throughout. It was perhaps a work which served to establish Mozart's own reputation as a keyboard virtuoso; he is known to have performed K 271 later in 1777 in Augsburg. That the work was also performed in Salzburg is attested by the survival of quite extensive manuscript performance materials there (including no fewer than ten cadenzas and *Eingänge* [brief improvisational 'lead-ins'] written out either by Mozart himself, or else by his father or sister). An *Eingang* to the finale in Mozart's hand was sent in the post to Salzburg from Vienna in 1783, suggesting that he was still performing the work at that date; copies of the tutti parts were still being made in Salzburg in 1784 or thereabouts.

Piano Concerto No. 11 in F major, K 413

1. Allegro
2. Larghetto
3. Tempo di Menuetto

Piano Concerto No. 13 in C major, K 415

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Rondeau. Allegro

Concerto No. 11 in F major, K 413, and **Concerto No. 13 in C major, K 415**, belong to the set of three 'subscription concertos' that Mozart composed in Vienna at the very end of 1782 and during the spring of 1783, and which he confidently advertised in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 15 January 1783 in the following terms:

> Herr Kapellmeister Mozart herewith apprizes the highly honoured public of the publication of three new, recently finished pianoforte concertos. These 3 concertos, which may be performed either with large orchestra with wind instruments or merely a Quattro, viz. with 2 violins, l viola and violoncello, will not appear until the beginning of April this year, and will be issued (finely copied and supervised by himself) only to subscribers... for four ducats.

Indeed, so confident was Mozart of the forthcoming success that he had described the works to his father on 28th December 1782 as:

> a happy medium between what is too easy and too difficult; they are very brilliant, pleasing to the ear... there are some passages from which only connoisseurs will derive satisfaction, but they are composed in such as way that the less learned listener cannot fail to be delighted, though without knowing the reason.

Sales talk? Probably not. The surviving autograph manuscripts (today in the Jagiellonian Library, University of Kraków, Poland) clearly bear out Mozart's striving for a sophistication of musical style only rarely achieved in his previous concertos (K 271 in E flat, 'Jenamy', being an obvious case). His manuscripts reveal layer up on layer of painstaking refinement of detail, and suggest that he was working on all three concertos simultaneously. In the case of K 415, for example, Mozart originally drafted seventeen bars of a triple-time slow movement in the tonic minor, but cancelled it, continuing immediately with the replacement F major *Andante*, within which several passages were revised in terms of scoring and harmonic succession.

K 415 is for quite a large band comprising, in addition to the strings, oboes, horns, bassoons, trumpets and timpani. Originally issued in print by Artaria in Vienna in 1785, it was reprinted in 1802 by André, and it is only in this 1802 text that the trumpet and timpani parts appear. It is likely that these parts (not notated in the main autograph score) were originally provided on separate manuscript sheets which were available to André (perhaps through Constanze Mozart) but not to Artaria. Its first documented performance on 23rd March 1783 was attended by Emperor Joseph II and for this Mozart doubtless intended to make a spectacular impression. It may well be that the trumpet and timpani parts

were ‘supplementary’, composed for this occasion. Something of the concerto’s imposing, ceremonial scale is suggested at the very opening with the successive fugal entries in the strings mapping out the territory *piano*, with an inexorable build up to the first tutti in bar 10. In terms of its construction, this opening orchestral section is not unlike K 271 (Mozart’s grandest piano concerto hitherto, composed in Salzburg some six years earlier), presenting a wide range of contrasting figures that might be thought to represent the *dramatis personae* in a play or opera – each precisely characterized. Operatic too is Mozart’s control of the pace of events: at bar 24 he introduces a prolonged, hushed dominant pedal-note *piano*, grounding the rate of chord change beneath the chirping patterns imitated across the strings in such a way that the entry of militaristic dotted rhythms *forte* at bar 36 provides a dramatic sense of relief – escape even – from confinement. The timing and proportions of this opening ritornello is superb, a foretaste of some of the great *opera buffa* masterpieces to follow within a few years.

Mozart’s solo piano writing is of an entirely different order from that in K 246: virtuosic and technically demanding, featuring extended passages of showmanship calling for the utmost dexterity from the player, and indeed from the instrument. The first movement’s central solo in particular demonstrates how close the relationship was between the developing instrumental technology of the Viennese fortepiano and Mozart’s creative imagination. With its sparkling, clear tone and light hammer action, responsive to the subtlest variations of touch, pianos such as those of Anton Walter (one of whose instruments Mozart owned at the time of K 415’s composition) opened up many possibilities to juxtapose radically different textures, harmonic patterns and registers in close succession, without the slightest fear that these would be unclear. Without such technology (offering immediate onset of sound, with just as immediate decay, therefore allowing textural clarity), full chords moving rapidly through complex chromatic progressions, as at the opening of this solo, cannot be heard adequately; nor can they dissolve effectively into the quicksilver tracery of semiquavers darting across the octave registers. Yet this is precisely Mozart’s expressive strategy here, and on a Viennese piano it works gloriously.

We should also credit the instrumental technology with a development of Mozart’s ability to craft a singable aria-like solo line within the slow movements of both K 415 and its less well-known counterpart on this disc, K 413 in F major. This is arguably the most intimate of the three ‘subscription’ concertos, and certainly the one that works best in Mozart’s advertised ‘a Quattro’ format. Unusual in that both the outer movements are in 3/4-time, the F major concerto offers a ‘happy medium’ not simply of the ‘too easy and the too difficult’, but also of solo virtuosity and the integration and partnership of chamber music. Most notably within its minuet finale, the nature of the keyboard writing achieves an effortless weaving back and forth between these two worlds of expressive continuity. Compositionally, too, this movement offers an early glimpse, in its middle episode, of a kind of texture that was to grace many of Mozart’s later concertos: one in which the piano presents a decorous tracery of arpeggios as a backdrop to a ‘circle-of fifths’ progression elsewhere in the ensemble, typically enlivened by harmonic discord and resolution and the imitation of an innocuous descending scale-figure. But it is in the *Larghetto* middle movement that Mozart achieves some of his most memorable writing, with the strings marked *sotto voce*; lower strings alternately *pizzicato* and *coll’ arco*; wind interjections precisely slurred; horn entries specifically labelled *tenuto*; all of this yielding a cushion of sound for a delicious *cantabile* aria played by the piano that was to become almost a trademark of Mozart’s later concerto slow movements. Almost every note of the right-hand part has a carefully-notated articulation of some kind, once again, a response to the sophisticated touch (and resulting colour possibilities) of the Viennese piano. Without such a miraculous instrument, many dimensions of Mozart’s language – which extends well beyond what he could notate – are lost.

Piano Concerto No. 12 in A major, K 414

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Rondeau. Allegretto

On 28th December 1782 Mozart wrote to his father describing three piano concertos he was then composing for the forthcoming spring concert season in Vienna. In particular, he pointed out that the style of these new works was deliberately adapted to Viennese tastes, treading a path between what his listeners would consider too easy and too difficult, and thus ensuring that they appealed to the widest possible audience. So confident was Mozart of the likely success of these three concerto s that in January 1783 he placed an announcement in the *Wiener Zeitung* offering them for sale in finely-produced manuscript copies written under his own close supervision, on payment of a subscription of four ducats, the entire series (playable not only with orchestra, but 'a quattro' with string quartet, should subscribers wish to perform these pieces in their private chambers) to be available from the beginning of April that year. The three concertos in question are K 413 in F major, K 414 in A major and K 415 in C major.

The first of these new works (and probably the only one actually completed when Mozart wrote to his father at the end of 1782) was the **A major concerto, K 414**. In its optimistic, sunny tone and its broad tonal spans, keeping to the major modes for much of its length and largely avoiding the remoter chromatic, rhetorically expressive regions explored in K 271, it certainly fits Mozart's general description of these new concertos as 'a happy medium between the too difficult and the too easy'. But probing a little beneath the surface, we can see that K 414 fulfils two more particular characteristics Mozart outlined in his letter: first, that the new concertos, while containing brilliant passagework, were not just empty virtuosity; and secondly, that they contained passages that were composed so as to be satisfying to the musical connoisseur, and yet still enjoyable by those listeners without specialised musical training. Self-evidently, the brilliant passagework found throughout K 414's solo piano part is thrilling to listen to, and that may have been the main focus of attention, satisfaction and excitement for many of Mozart's Viennese listeners. But for those more formally trained in music (those who prided themselves on their more sophisticated listening habits), there were compositional delights in store right from the start: the opening theme is a typically symmetrical four-plus-four bar phrase, in the 'question-and-answer' format of many classical themes. Yet the scansion of bars 5–8 – featuring melodic syncopation over a steady and regular tread of chord changes – is wholly different to the first four bars, whose melodic component emphasises the downbeats over a much more slowly moving chord succession. Looking a little more closely, we may easily imagine that the rhythmic pattern formed by the chord changes in bars 1–4 prefigures the much more animated melodic syncopations to come in the next phrase: yet another feature to be savoured by those musical connoisseurs.

On the 'learned' side of the equation, there is also the strong involvement of contrapuntal textures – for instance in the opening and intervening – in the first movement. It can be no coincidence that just prior to the composition of K 414 Mozart had made the acquaintance in Vienna of Baron Gottfried van Swieten, a prominent music-loving civil servant who had amassed an extensive library of works by J. S. Bach, which he allowed Mozart to study at first hand. Fascinated by Bach's command of fugal counterpoint, Mozart began to arrange items from Bach's 48 *Preludes and Fugues* for string quartet, and to incorporate contrapuntal writing into works such as his new string quartets dedicated to Haydn as well as these 'subscription concertos'. Perhaps the resulting blend of easy-going eight-bar symmetrical phrases featuring theme and accompaniment strands, and more closely integrated contrapuntal interplay between all the parts of the texture (a feature inspired by his recent discovery of Bach's music) was what Mozart was trying to represent to his father when he referred to that 'happy

medium between the too difficult and the too easy'? As a footnote, we should recall that J. S. Bach was not the only Bach whose music was influential on Mozart. He had encountered Johann Christian Bach in London as an infant in the 1760s, and in about 1771 he arranged three of Bach's Op. 5 keyboard sonatas as piano concertos. Mozart greatly admired J. C. Bach's music, most especially his operas; the opening theme in the slow movement of K 414 makes explicit reference to an aria from Bach's opera *Amadis de Gaule* (1779).

Despite their remarkable sophistication of musical style, it seems that Mozart's 'subscription concertos' were not as immediately successful as Mozart had hoped. Marketing of the 'finely-produced' manuscript copies continued throughout 1783, suggesting that the composer needed to keep reminding potential purchasers of their existence; indeed, a letter from the composer to Baroness Waldstätten of 15th February 1783 specifically notes that Mozart was at that time unable to repay a loan from her since copies of the concertos had not sold as quickly as he had hoped. Two months later he tried – without success – to sell the set to the Parisian publisher Sieber. In fact, they were published only in spring 1785 by Artaria in Vienna, as three separate items, rather than as a set – a marketing ploy which generated considerable sales, since a second impression of the edition had to be issued quite quickly.

Rondo in A major, K 386

Allegretto

A work often closely associated with K 414 is the **A major Rondo, K 386** (dated 19th October 1782 on the first page of the autograph manuscript). The rondo's scoring, key and date all suggest that this may originally have been intended as the finale of an A major piano concerto, and that the first and second movements of what later became K 414 might have been composed at the end of 1782 as companion movements to this pre-existing work (in which case the finale of K 414 may have been an afterthought, replacing K 386). Weighing against this view is the fact that in the autograph manuscript of K 414 (which is a composing manuscript, not a fair copy) the finale starts on the reverse side of the same page on which the last few bars of the *Andante* are written, suggesting immediate succession. Probably, then, K 386 is a separate, free-standing rondo, which Mozart may have written for Barbara Ployer (1765–1811), a pupil of his for whom he subsequently composed several of his other piano concertos; certainly in 1800, the composer's widow, Constanze, claimed that the manuscript of K 386 was in Ployer's possession.

Piano Concerto No. 14 in E flat major, K 449

1. Allegro vivace
2. Andantino
3. Allegro ma non troppo

The **Piano Concerto No. 14 in E flat major, K 449**, has the honour of being the very first of his compositions that Mozart entered into a handwritten Thematic Catalogue of his works begun in 1784. This personal 'Verzeichnüss aller meiner Werke', as he described it, was continued right up to the end of his life. The dates recorded there are dates of completion, not dates of commencement, and quite often the compositions were started significantly earlier, and left in an incomplete state before Mozart returned to them in order to finish them off – usually just weeks or even days ahead of a projected performance. The catalogue is useful in many respects, including, for instance, the opening theme (occasionally notated in a subtly different way from the autograph score), and details of scoring. In the case of K 449 (dated 9th February 1784), Mozart notes that the orchestral forces were '2 Violini, Viola e Basso (2 oboe, 2 corni ad libitum)'. Thus, like the three so-called 'subscription' concertos (K 413–15), K 449 was performable 'a quattro', with just single strings (note that Mozart indicates 'viola',

rather than ‘viole’). In letters of 15th and 26th May 1784 he compares K 449 to those earlier ‘a quattro’ works, both in scoring and idiom, and contrasts it with other recent piano concertos (K 450 in B flat major, K 451 in D major and K 453 in G major), noting that only K 449 ‘can be performed *a quattro* without wind instruments... a concerto of a very special kind, written more for a small orchestra than a large one’. Playing parts for the E flat concerto survive in Salzburg; Mozart’s sister Nannerl evidently performed it from a solo piano part she wrote out herself, incorporating an embellished variant of a passage in the first movement (perhaps suggested to her by Mozart).

In addition to this information from the ‘Verzeichnüss’ we have the following from Mozart’s autograph score (which survives today in the Library of the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland): ‘Di Wolfgango Amadeo Mozart per la Sig^{ra} Barbara de Ployer Viena li 9 di Feb^{ro} 1784’. K 449’s dedicatee, Barbara Ployer (1765–1811), was a talented pianist, and pupil of Mozart. Ployer performed it on 24th March, exactly one week after Mozart gave the première.

While the work was completed just before these first performances, the genesis of K 449 is quite complex. Alan Tyson’s detailed researches into the watermarks found in the first ten leaves of Mozart’s manuscript paper shows that it originated at the same time as the three ‘subscription’ concertos (late 1782, early 1783), whereas the rest of the concerto is on paper of a different type altogether, which Mozart was using in the spring of 1784. There is a visual clue, too, to a break between compositional phases: sandwiched between the paper of the first phase (bars 1–192 of the first movement) and the rest is a completely unrelated sketch for a tenor aria (subsequently deleted). So he must have left K 449 alone for quite some period of time before resuming it in 1784, evidently envisaging a lucrative series of concerts ahead!

In terms of the relationship between the solo and orchestra, K 449 achieves remarkably close integration with the piano (perhaps not so surprisingly, given the *a quattro* associations mentioned above) functioning much more as a chamber music partner with in the ensemble, in contrast to its overtly soloistic role in, say the majestic B flat major Concerto, K 450. Both exposition and recapitulation sections of the first movement operate in much the same way as the chamber music with piano (the Quintet for Piano and Winds, K 452, for instance, or the Piano Quartets, K 478 and K 493), though in the central development (based almost exclusively on one subsidiary theme from the exposition), Mozart playfully sets off the piano and tutti in opposition, suggesting a more dramatic scale and reminding us that this piece is equally suited to the concert hall as to the domestic music room. In the following *Andantino*, Mozart treats us to some of his most sensitive melodic decoration in the piano part, along with some exquisitely balanced scoring (the violas and the piano’s left hand memorably sharing an accompaniment figure at two points, delicately supported by sustained horn notes). In the sonata rondo finale, Mozart merges two contrasting sound worlds, similar in type to the finale of the G major String Quartet, K 387: the rather ‘highbrow’ *alla breve* texture of the opening is soon usurped by the livelier rhythms of the dance (which in both strings and piano begin to cloak the original foursquare crotchet patterns rather like ivy twisting around an oak tree. Mozart appends a coda in 6/8-time, reimagining the *alla breve* theme one final time in yet another form, as he sometimes does in his piano variations.

Piano Concerto No. 15 in B flat major, K 450

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Allegro

Piano Concerto No. 16 in D major, K 451

1. Allegro assai
2. Andante
3. Rondo. Allegro di molto

Thus Mozart in a letter to his father of 26th May 1784, regarding his two recent piano concertos in B flat major, K 450 and D major, K 451. The previous week he had sent his father and sister a fat bundle of his recent compositions through the post, including the 'Linz' Symphony, K 425, and four piano concertos (K 449 and K 453, as well as those in B flat and D just mentioned), noting in the covering letter that he distrusted Viennese copyists – who were also expensive – and that he preferred these compositions to be circulated only within his family at first, in case illicit copies got out into the public domain. This also gave his sister an opportunity to learn the solo parts to the concertos before anyone else and in fact a copy she made of the piano part of K 451 still survives. It is copiously figured throughout the tuttis, revealing the dual function of the pianist as continuo player as well as soloist – a performance practice evidently regarded as standard, at least in Salzburg.

The role of the wind instruments in these two concertos is something to which Mozart draws especial attention in his correspondence. In the first of his two letters about the se concertos he even wonders if they would be practical for performance within the Mozart household in Salzburg since they could not be performed without the winds (and Leopold Mozart so rarely had wind players available). This point is borne out by the very opening of the **B flat concerto**, where the winds take the leading roles, with the strings answering – a far cry from the normal disposition of orchestral forces in the emerging classical symphonic tradition in which the winds were to some extent ancillary. Throughout the first movement, the woodwinds are absolutely vital to the narrative which is founded on dialogue either among the winds or between the winds and strings (as in the main contrasting theme in the opening tutti). Mozart playfully exploits the diverse colours of the winds too, frequently featuring oboe/bassoon, oboe/horn or horn/bassoon octave combinations, as in the little codetta that introduces the first solo piano entry. He is equally sensitive to the blend of different wind instruments two octaves apart, or else in thirds or tenths. Once the piano has completed its opening virtuoso flourish it too freely engages in dialogue with the winds, eventually taking over the role formerly occupied by the strings, which remain silent for quite some time, their function in the first solo being directed towards accompaniment and cadential punctuation to a degree never seen before in a Mozart concerto. Partly this is because of the importance given to the wind colours, partly the desire to highlight the sheer brilliance of the solo keyboard part, which is exceptionally busy, covering the whole of the five-octave range of Mozart's Walter piano with scalic and arpeggiated movement in semiquavers, triplets and double thirds, with a left-hand part almost equally as challenging as the right in terms of technical difficulty. It is this attitude towards keyboard writing that Beethoven was later to take up and develop in his piano concertos. Both Nannerl and Wolfgang Mozart were accomplished pianists; but this level of difficulty was not something that would have easily fallen within the grasp of the amateur, and suggests a conception of the concerto genre as something belonging to the realm of the professional player in a concert setting – a tradition later extended by Beethoven in his own piano concertos.

The autograph of K 450 contains some intriguing revisions made during the course of its composition, affecting not only the precise shape of some of the first-movement semiquaver passagework (crossed out and rewritten onto the blank staves above in his manuscript) but even the outline of the slow movement theme. The opening phrase of this theme and its supporting bass line were originally written onto the extreme top (violin 1) and bottom (cello/bass) staves of the 12-stave manuscript paper, but were crossed out and redrafted before the inner parts (which only fit the revised

harmonic pattern) were added. This basic technique of extending the outer parts for twenty or thirty bars at a time, adding in the inner parts subsequently is one we encounter again and again in Mozart's autographs. In this case, the solo part was advanced bit by bit along with the main orchestral melody and bass strands, and occasionally Mozart needed to go back and amend this piano part to conform to revisions made to the design of the opening theme once he had changed his mind. The delicacy of the piano writing throughout this *Andante* along with the very finely calculated orchestral textures add to the very special quality of this concerto. The winds are entirely silent for the first 74 bars of the *Andante*; thereafter they dominate colouristically, supported by filigree pizzicato in the strings. Once again Mozart points the way to the language of Beethoven's slow movements.

For the finale, Mozart adds a flute to the top of the wind chorus, greatly enhancing the quasi-military quality of this rondo with its shrill tones, competing with the solo piano right at the top of its range. But Mozart makes its presence felt in more subtle ways too: twice it sustains a single long note above deft passagework in the piano part (supported by rising chromatic scale fragments in the strings), making for an utterly magical effect. At such times it is difficult to believe Mozart's claim to have disliked the flute!

The flute is found throughout the **D major concerto, K 451**, likewise a work of virtuosic nature, though not quite so challenging for the keyboard soloist in Mozart's view. In particular, the left-hand part is not as technically demanding as in the B flat concerto and the solo sections are slightly shorter, separated out from each other by tuttis long enough and frequent enough to give the soloist time to breathe! In the outer movements Mozart revels in the soloistic capabilities of the winds, sometimes entrusting the flute, oboe, bassoon and horn with contrapuntal dialogue punctuated by brief semiquaver flurries from the piano, and elsewhere building up chordal textures in which the winds' distinctive colours dominate the foreground while the strings provide support. As in the B flat concerto, Mozart's imagination seems to relish the challenge of deploying this dramatic orchestral potential. A cadenza for the Rondo finale written out by Nannerl Mozart survives, and on the back of her manuscript is a very beautiful decoration of a secondary theme from the Andante which is almost certainly authentic. Mozart, in a letter to his father drafted between 9th–12th June 1784, had asked him to tell Nannerl that 'it is correct that something is lacking in the C major solo. I will send it to her as soon as possible along with the cadenzas'. In all probability his decoration is what survives on the back of Nannerl's cadenza sheet.

Rondo in D major for piano and orchestra, K 382

'I regard them both as concertos which are bound to make the player sweat.'

The **Rondo, K 382**, was composed in February 1782 as a replacement finale for the Piano Concerto No. 5 in D major, K 175 (1773), a popular work that Mozart frequently performed in the years immediately after his removal to Vienna. 'Rondo' is a bit of a misnomer, in fact – K 382 is more akin to a set of variations, the opening rondo theme recurring in the tuttis between successive episodes developing increasingly elaborate pianism as the movement progresses. As in many of Mozart's variation sets for solo piano, there is a *minore* episode exploring mock pathos, and a change of time signature towards the end of the piece, showing the theme in yet another distinctive light. Given the variety of quasi-operatic characters introduced in this movement, there is little wonder at the Rondo's popularity in Vienna and beyond (in fact, it was sometimes published as a stand-alone work, as well as a finale to K 175). Like the two concertos on this disc, it features the flute, though in this case in the company of a grand orchestra also containing pairs of trumpets and timpani.

Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K 453

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Allegretto - Presto

Two schools of thought dominated late eighteenth-century perceptions of the concerto. On the one hand, there were those who felt that the concerto was nothing more than a vehicle for soloistic virtuosity (this was not intended to be a flattering comment). On the other, there were those who celebrated that very virtuosity as the epitome of what a concerto should be. Johann Karl Friedrich Triest believed that only about one in a hundred concertos could lay any claim to artistic value, the rest being merely grounds for lavish virtuosity. Dittersdorf implies that blame for this cult of the virtuoso lay at the door of Italian composers, and flatly refused to take some early advice to model his concertos on those for violin by Lolli (1725–1802), resolving to do exactly the opposite and cut a more dignified figure.

Mozart tended towards a similar view, eschewing mere virtuosity for a creative dialogue between the soloist and the orchestra in a world that parallels very closely that of his contemporary chamber music with piano (for instance the piano trios and quartets). His earliest advocate as a concerto writer, Heinrich Christoph Koch, explained in his *Musikalisches Lexicon* of 1802 that Mozart's concertos exemplified that 'passionate sense of dialogue between the player and the accompanying orchestra... something similar to a tragedy of the ancients'.

The slow movement of the **G major Concerto, K 453**, expresses Koch's notion of the passionate dialogue exactly. Here the soloist and orchestra face each other in a delicate courtship ritual, the action unfolding in broad tableaux, at times calm and serene. The deployment of colour (including woodwind colour), register, texture and especially chromatic harmony is sometimes harnessed to passionate expressive effect. At the return of the opening theme, the subtle alterations to the chordal support for the theme almost presage the world of Schubert.

Elsewhere throughout this sunny work the dialogic urge expresses itself most especially in its involvement of the woodwind instruments (flutes, oboes and bassoons vying for attention along with the piano) as soloists whose appearances flit in and out of the texture. But while the focus is largely on integration of the piano and the orchestra in the first movement, Mozart reminds us from time to time that the two camps always retain separate identities by making sure that there are certain materials that the piano and orchestra never share – notably a dramatic outburst in E flat in the opening tutti. The last movement is one of only two of Mozart's concerto finales cast as a set of variations. Rather as in the case of his solo piano variations, the finale develops the bourrée-like theme at a helter-skelter pace, so that within a variation or two the variety of character which Mozart takes his listeners through has severed any direct connection back to the theme. It is an operatic journey, in fact, as if a scene is unfolding on stage. The movement ends with a quasi-ensemble finale straight out of the world of opera buffa – a genre with which Mozart was soon to take Vienna by storm.

Completed on 12th April 1784, the G major Piano Concerto was the second Mozart had written for his pupil Barbara Ployer (K 449 in E flat was the first). It was performed by her in the Viennese suburb of Döbling on 13th June that year. (Rather charmingly, about a fortnight before Ployer's performance, Mozart noted in his diary that his pet starling had learned to sing the theme of the finale's variations.) Mozart sent the autograph of this work to his father along with three other of his concertos in mid-May 1784. No one knows quite when Leopold returned it, though return it he did as it was among the bundle of concerto autographs sold by Mozart's widow Constanze to Johann Anton André in 1799. Curiously, it remained in the André family archive until 1854 (when it passed to the ownership of the Berlin State Library, from where it was transferred, after World War II, to the

Jagiellonian Library in Kraków, Poland). In many of its details the autograph differs from the early editions and copies known to survive (the first edition dates from 1787). Evidently Mozart had little if anything to do with the preparation of these early sources.

Piano Concerto No. 18 in B flat major, K 456

1. Allegro vivace
2. Andante un poco sostenuto
3. Allegro vivace

In the Act I finale of *Così fan tutte*, Despina, disguised as a 'quack-doctor', attempts to cure the supposedly poisoned Ferrando and Guglielmo by waving a magnet above them. It is, she declares, 'a piece of Dr Mesmer's magnetic stone'. In reality, Dr Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) was a physician who became famous for treating his patients through 'animal magnetism' (a form of hypnosis), though his methods were largely discredited by the medical community and he was expelled from the medical faculty of Vienna University in 1778 less than a year after his treatment of a blind patient who partially recovered her sight for a while, but soon lapsed back into the total blindness from which she had suffered since the age of three. Mesmer's patient, the daughter of a Viennese court official, was Maria Theresia von Paradis (1759–1824), a fine pianist and composer who, despite her disability, embarked successfully on two European concert tours. From the mid-1780s, Paradis devoted herself principally to teaching and composition, and she wrote sonatas, concertos, stage works and a set of twelve songs published by Breitkopf in Leipzig in 1786, the piano parts of which display a quality of decoration strongly reminiscent of Mozart's in its elegance and sophistication.

Mozart met the blind prodigy Paradis during his brief visit to Salzburg in August 1783 (which coincided with a stage of Paradis's tour that year) and the following year he wrote the **Piano Concerto No. 18 in B flat major, K 456**, apparently for her to play on her subsequent tour dates in Paris (where she was resident from March to November 1784). In fact, the evidence for K 456's connection with Paradis is retrospective. Reporting on one of Mozart's subscription concerts in Vienna, Leopold Mozart recounted in a letter to his daughter on 16th February 1785 that Wolfgang had 'played a splendid concerto, that he wrote for Paradis to play in Paris'. Leopold goes on to remark that he had been overcome with emotion at such a beautiful work, owing to its variety of instrumentation. Definitive performances of K 456 by Paradis are not documented, though Mozart played the concerto again in Leipzig on 12th May 1789.

Entered in Mozart's own Thematic Catalogue on 30th September 1784, K 456 makes a splendid orchestral effect, principally through the use of the winds. The wind chorus intervenes early on, in dialogue with the strings, and both groups come together in a resounding *forte* at bar 18 (up to this point the textures have been light and delicate within an overall *piano* dynamic, despite the underlying march rhythms – a curious feature). It is worth pursuing Leopold's observation about the orchestration a little further, because the ensuing tutti deploys the strings and winds in ways remarkable for Mozart at this phase. Beginning with a traditional texture in which the main motivic detail appears in the upper strings, reinforced by wind chords and characteristic march-like punctuations in the horns, there follows an astonishing variety of combinations: a unison passage; a quite unusual reversal of the traditional strings/winds hierarchy (with winds leading and strings playing a supporting role); rapid alternation between the string and wind groups; wind phrases left hanging in mid-air, to be completed by the strings and vice versa; and so on. Mozart's scoring here is so much more than the mere vehicle for presenting his musical material; it has become a narrative element in its own right. It is into this flux of energy that the soloist intrudes. The virtuosity of the piano part leaves us in no doubt about Paradis's abilities as a pianist. There are some especially agile passages in the first solo, spanning a

broad keyboard range in various ways (arpeggios, scale-sweeps, and frequent leaps across the registers). Those register-leaps seem more prominent than in most other Mozart concertos – perhaps this was a particularly strong feature of her playing to which Mozart tailored his writing (as he was later to do when working with individual singers in the composition of his operas). If so, that might also explain the extended passages in the high treble end of the keyboard (again, more noticeable than usual in Mozart's concertos). Presumably Paradis had to learn her repertoire aurally; Louis Braille's *Method of Writing Words, Music, and Plain Songs by Means of Dots, for Use by the Blind* was not published until 1829.

Mozart's elaboration of the keyboard part in the successive variations within the *Andante un poco sostenuto* is handled with his customary sensitivity to the related effects of accentual placement and dissonance, expressed through delicate tracery and subtle chromaticism. It is here that similarities are most noticeable between Mozart's keyboard writing and that of Paradis herself in the piano accompaniments to her *Zwölf Lieder* of 1786. While the strophic *Lieder* necessarily limit the pianistic scope, Paradis's basic principles of decoration in these charming miniatures are uncannily similar to Mozart's, thrown all the more sharply into relief by the colourful soloistic wind writing. Wind sonorities characterize the rondo finale too, pursuing nifty soloistic dialogues with the piano part throughout the episodes, while the refrains tend to recapture the centreground for the strings. It is the winds that have the last word, though, engaging the piano in close canon at the very end, with the strings doing their best to keep order from the sidelines.

Piano Concerto No. 19 in F major, K 459

1. Allegro
2. Allegretto
3. Allegro assai

Writing in his travel diary on 15th October 1790, Count Ludwig von Bentheim-Steinfurt noted that 'at 11.00 in the morning there was a grand concert by Mozart at the National Playhouse [in Frankfurt]... Mozart played a concerto of his own composition which was extraordinarily charming and pretty; he had a forte Piano by Stein of Augsburg which is surely ideally suited to this genre...'

In fact Mozart played two of his piano concertos on this occasion, which was advertised in the local press as 'a Great Musical Concert for His Benefit'. The two concertos were the D major, K 537 – commonly known by the nickname 'Coronation' – and the F major, K 459, which is just as deserving of the 'coronation' epithet.

On the title-page of the first edition of the **Concerto in F major, K 459**, the publisher, Johann Anton André, remarks: 'This concerto was performed by the composer at Frankfurt-am-Main on the occasion of the coronation of His Majesty the Emperor Leopold II.' André was being slightly disingenuous, in fact, for Mozart's concert on 15th October 1790 was only loosely associated with Leopold's coronation festivities, for he had already been crowned in Frankfurt Cathedral on 9th October. Mozart played no official role in the provision of music for the coronation, and while the Frankfurt performance brought his talents as composer and performer to the attention of the assembled nobility, it did not translate into financial reward.

K 459 was, by the time of the coronation, almost six years old. Its dotted march-like rhythms at the opening would perhaps have made it quite suitable for a ceremonial occasion such as the coronation, though there is an interesting ambiguity about its scoring: the entry for the concerto in Mozart's handwritten Thematic Catalogue mentions a pair of trumpets and timpani among the orchestral forces (along with strings, flute, oboes, bassoons and horns), but in the autograph score in the Berlin State Library no trumpets or drums are to be found. It may be that, as in some other

concertos such as the double concerto, K 365 and in K 482 (both works in E flat), the scoring was adaptable to different circumstances, the extra brass and percussion being added if those circumstances were grander than usual. The trumpet and drum parts were probably written out on loose separate sheets. (Annoyingly, Count Bentheim-Steinfurt makes no mention of the wind and brass in his remarks, but notes that the strings were pretty feeble.)

For all that its dotted-rhythm opening suggests the idiom of the march, there is a strongly lyrical aspect to the movement as a whole, and it is notable that, amid a plethora of themes, the dotted figure never assumes dominance (as it had done definitively in the two immediately preceding concertos, K 450 and K 456, each in B flat). Subtle wind colours, distinctive octave scorings, frequent triplet roulades and the delightfully casual ending of the framing tuttis are among the many contrasting facets that capture the attention. Uniquely among Mozart's piano concertos, the recapitulation of the first movement's main theme after the central developmental section is presented by the solo piano. In every other case it is the orchestra that delivers this crucial moment in the structure. It has the effect of slightly 'cooling down' the march-like idiom, revealing it in a new light and is a quite remarkable moment; why Mozart never repeated this gambit in other concertos is unknown.

While most contemporary theory textbooks recommend symmetrical even-numbered phrase lengths as a *sine qua non* of classical perfection, Mozart achieves a remarkable equilibrium from odd-numbered phrases in the central 6/8 *Allegretto*. It opens with a ten-bar unit and has a prominent five-bar cadential punctuation that returns from time to time in this delightful interlude that features some of Mozart's most exquisitely judged wind solos. The finale is a sonata rondo in which Mozart experiments with contrasting musical characters as well as with the integration or separation of the solo piano from the orchestra. Among many features of interest, two stand out in particular. The first is the adaptation of the playful opening theme (highlighted by slurring across the beat in pairs), which is treated to dense development later on in the movement. The second is Mozart's recourse to fugal writing. He picks out a seemingly innocuous closing figure, opening with a prominent rising sixth, and subjects it to extended contrapuntal treatment in the central episode. In each case the relationship between the individual character of the material and the nature of its treatment seems at first quite incongruous; and yet it works with the utmost clarity and coherence and without the slightest hint of strain. Such was Mozart's genius.

Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K 466

1. Allegro
2. Romanze
3. Allegro assai

Among the most widely performed of Mozart's piano concertos for a good half century after its composition in February 1785, the **Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K 466**, still assumes a commanding place in the concert hall. Among its early devotees were Beethoven and Mendelssohn (both of whom wrote cadenzas for it). Another was the talented virtuoso pianist and violinist Heinrich Marchand (1769–after 1817), a pupil of Leopold Mozart's to whom he gave instruction in composition, piano and violin in Salzburg between 1781 and 1784, and for whom he managed to secure a court appointment in Salzburg as a violinist. In March 1786 Marchand performed K 466 from a score (the page-turner on this occasion was Michael Haydn), because the solo piano part was at that stage being learnt for yet further future performances by Mozart's sister Nannerl. Leopold notes in a letter to Wolfgang (then earning a good living in Vienna) that Marchand took the rondo finale rather quickly, requiring three attempts during the one and only rehearsal (on the morning of the performance) so that the orchestra could play it satisfactorily. Even Archbishop Colloredo – by this stage little less than an arch-enemy of the Mozarts, regularly intercepting the family letters in order to discover what they

might be plotting – was overwhelmed by the sixteen-year-old Marchand's playing. 'With what art it is composed, how delightfully the parts are interwoven and what a difficult concerto it is', wrote Leopold to Nannerl.

Mozart himself performed this 'difficult' concerto. He gave the première at the Mehlgrube in Vienna on 11th February 1785, the day after it was completed. Leopold was visiting his son at the time and wrote to Nannerl in glowing terms: 'We drove to the first subscription concert [of six being given by Wolfgang that spring], at which many members of the aristocracy were present... The concert was magnificent and the orchestra played splendidly... we heard a new and very fine concerto by Wolfgang, which the copyist was still writing out when we arrived; your brother didn't even have time to play the rondo through because he was overseeing the copying.'

Four days later Mozart played the D minor Concerto again at the Vienna Burgtheater, this time in rather less hectic conditions (Leopold described his playing as 'magnificent'); and he may have given it the following day too at a concert in the suburb of Döbling. On each of these occasions, it may well be that Mozart used a special pedal attachment to his Walter fortepiano. We know that he had this pedalboard available for his 1785 concert season (Leopold, with his unfailing eye for detail, described it in passing as being 'very heavy'!), and it may be that the device allowed some curious left-hand passages in the first movement to have been played not only without spreading the otherwise unplayable chords, but in a fashion that gave extra depth to the tone, reinforcing the tonic-dominant harmonies doubled in the trumpets and timpani. (Mozart's English pupil, Thomas Attwood, also referred to this extraordinary pedalboard, stating that Mozart had it constructed at a time when he was diligently learning the preludes and fugues of Bach.)

Beethoven, who performed the D minor Concerto at a benefit concert for Mozart's widow at the Kärntnerthortheater in March 1795, might have found much to admire in the work's brooding opening, characterized by destabilizing rhythmic syncopations and later punctuated by more aggressive outbursts. In other ways too, K 466 may have been influential on the young Beethoven, not least in the very strong developmental aspects in which quite extended narratives are built from the 'organic' treatment of the musical materials, repeating, transposing and otherwise working through their potential recombinations in a way Beethoven was soon to make his own. In the central *Romanze*, in B flat major, Mozart returns at first to a more familiar world of operatic cantilena within which the piano's right hand weaves the most delightful melodic gems against a delicately scored accompaniment. This is interrupted by a violently contrasting central section featuring swirling triplet figures traversing the whole of the piano range, and pungent chromatic harmonies, accompanied almost entirely by the winds. While this activity subsides back into the graceful world of the *Romanze*, the respite is brief, for the rondo finale (*Allegro assai*) returns to the restless idiom of *Sturm und Drang*, with its rocketing arpeggio opening for piano solo, the prominent diminished-seventh chords, lack of settled harmonic resolution, unbalanced phrasing and barely suppressed violence, with upper and lower strings fighting it out almost as soon as they have entered. Successive piano entries play unexpectedly with the rocket figure (occasionally tagging it on the end of a phrase, rather than as a beginning), and explore continuously challenging passagework reminiscent in some ways of the *moto perpetuo* struggling of the A minor Piano Sonata, K 310, completed seven years earlier. Mozart's grittiest concerto ends happily however, taking over in a sunny D major coda a subsidiary figure introduced almost casually by the winds in an earlier episode and concluding with the high-jinks of an *opera buffa* finale, complete with comic horn calls.

Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K 467

1. Allegro maestoso
2. Andante
3. Allegro vivace assai

Just over a year later than K 449, Mozart completed one of his most technically challenging and popular concertos, the **Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K 467**. There is no question that this is for a much larger orchestra, with obligatory flute, and pairs of oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets and timpani as well as strings. Mozart sent the autograph score to his father in Salzburg for Nannerl to learn and perform there. Leopold noted that K 467 was 'astonishingly difficult' and that he was curious about the harmony and scoring of the work, conceding that some curious passages here and there might not make sense 'until one hears all the instruments playing together'. K 467 was first performed by Mozart on 10th March 1785 at the Burgtheater in Vienna, for which he used a special pedal attachment made to fit his Walter fortepiano. Mozart's father was present at this event and remarked that the pedal attachment was very heavy and cumbersome to move! There are several passages in the first movement especially in which the reinforcement of the bass line by this pedal device, against the large orchestra, would have sounded most effective.

Largely because of its slow movement theme (used in the film *Elvira Madigan*), the C major Concerto has become perhaps Mozart's most famous. In fact, this *Andante* is one of the most unusual episodic structures Mozart ever devised, subtly masked by its tonal scheme and colouristic devices (including *pizzicato* strings), and, of course, the memorable throbbing triplet accompaniment. In both the outer movements the contribution of the wind group is absolutely on a par with the strings. They function at times as a chorus, sometimes as individual soloists, sometimes in dialogue with the piano. The blending of winds and strings as contrasting, yet cooperating blocks of sound in K 467 is a watershed in Mozart's orchestral development. Likewise in terms of piano writing, there are some particularly innovative passages with arpeggiated figures spanning a broad range of the keyboard. Yet the figuration is always purposeful, taking the musical narrative forwards. The central episode of the finale contains some fascinating examples of this coordination between innovative piano writing and rigorous contrapuntal logic – again, something of a breakthrough.

Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat major, K 482

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Allegro

Mozart's **Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat major, K 482**, completed on 16th December 1785, and first performed by him in Vienna later that month, is one of his most inventive. Among the features that could be singled out for comment are his treatment of sound and of structure. Immediately following the opening fanfare, the bassoons are thrust into the spotlight, their jaunty bass line partnered by a descending suspension chain in the horns. Straight away this texture is reconfigured (following another fanfare) with the clarinets replacing horns and the violins replacing the bassoons. Materially, these two phrases are identical, yet they sound worlds apart (and we are still only twelve bars into the piece). Successively the flute, and pairs of clarinets, bassoons and horns outline the next passage over an undulating string texture (all in a piano dynamic) before the first extended tutti arrives, *forte*, in bar 29. This tutti takes over as its main statement the figure that the horn pair had sounded as a casual cadence-idea just seconds previously, a sign of things to come in terms of Mozart's handling of theme as a marker of concerto structure. The soloist's first entry has nothing to do with the opening fanfare, but is instead entirely new, and highlights extremes of the

piano's range, exploiting sound for sound's sake. Further new material follows in the second main solo, taking us into the remote dominant minor key. All in all, the soloist and the tutti inhabit quite different worlds in the *Allegro* to such an extent that when the piano takes over an element of the tutti's opening section, after the triumphant recapitulation of the fanfare about two-thirds of the way through the movement, the sudden integration between the forces comes as quite a shock. Yet there has been integration of a more subtle kind pervading the whole movement: one sign of this is the frequency with which the piano tends to add layers of texture around the tutti's successive presentations of the main themes so that it acts not only in a solo capacity but as one element among many in a symphonic narrative.

The *Andante*, according to Mozart's father, writing on 13th January 1786, has to be repeated at the first performance, such was its emotive force. As in Mozart's earlier E flat concerto, K 271 (1777) it is in C minor, a key Mozart tends to reserve for expressions of pathos. For those readers unconvinced of the power of key characteristics (much vaunted in Mozart's day, in fact), it should be pointed out that in the eighteenth century 'equal temperament', in which all perfect fifths are compressed by an equal amount, and resulting in all triads sounding exactly the same, was almost everywhere rejected in favour of specialized tuning systems that made some triads 'pure' while others were harsh (deliberately so, for dramatic effect). This means that the melodic contours Mozart writes in the first solo entry from bar 32, for instance, strongly emphasize local detail, such as descending pairs of notes, rather than extended cantabile phrases. (By contrast, Chopin's nocturnes tend to 'sing' very naturally as long legato sentences rather than individual turns of phrase, partly because they were written for later, larger pianos more likely to be tuned in equal temperament). In an unequal temperament tone- and semitone-steps on different degrees of the scale sound differently because they are slightly wider or narrower than their neighbours. Mozart's opening solo in this *Andante* exploits this feature so that, for instance, successive falling semitone pairs in the right hand each carry a special character, not just melodically, but harmonically too, against the bass. The extent to which Mozart uses falling scale-steps – either as part of a sequential pattern, or else more rhetorically following a large upward leap – is very finely attuned to the prevailing theories of key characteristics, and achieves its purpose precisely because of the expected inequality within the scale.

Once again as in K 271, the ebullient rondo finale of K 482 contains a central episode in the subdominant. In K 482, however, the episode (*Andantino cantabile*) prominently features the winds, and especially clarinets. The expressive chromaticism within the melody lines is well suited to the lugubrious colour of eighteenth-century boxwood instruments, enhanced to some degree by the fact that because there were just five keys on a clarinet when Mozart wrote this work, many notes had to be produced by subtle fingerings, the effect of which was to produce a kaleidoscopic range of tones, from the relatively bright to the soft and muted – often on adjacent scale-steps (for instance, in the chromatic contour in bar 5 of the *Andantino*). Mozart's fine ear for colouristic effect extends also to the string pizzicato towards the end of this episode, supported by *pianissimo* flute and horn chords, and filigree offbeat syncopations in the piano right hand. The 6/8 rondo is characterized throughout by great delicacy in the construction of textures, the piano's near-continuous semiquaver sextuplets frequently acting as a background 'halo' of sound surrounding solos for the flute, or else alternating in dialogue with the clarinets and bassoons. Mozart's exploration of *piano* dynamics in conjunction with chromaticism is a recurrent characteristic of this finale, as is his finely judged scoring: at one point the opening theme returns in a combination of flute, first violins and first horn, spread across three octaves (and preceded by a texture featuring pairs of clarinets and bassoons gliding sedately down the scale in octaves, with surrounding filigree decoration supplied by the piano). Memorably, the soloist's finale statement is *piano* (with *pianissimo* string quavers in the background along with delicate wind chords), before Mozart plays us out with a rousing flourish.

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major, K 488

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Allegro assai

Entered in Mozart's Thematic Catalogue on 2nd March 1786, the **Concerto in A major, K 488**, is one of only three in Mozart's œuvre to feature a pair of clarinets (the others being K 482 in E flat major and K 491 in C minor). K 488 was actually begun considerably earlier – the watermarks in the paper on which Mozart wrote the first section of the first movement dates from the spring of 1784 – and at first it contained no clarinets, but a pair of oboes instead. It was long suspected that, having put the piece away in its unfinished form for subsequent completion (which Mozart often did if an immediate occasion for performance did not present itself), he picked up the piece once again in winter-spring 1785–86 for inclusion in a series of Viennese concerts (also to include K 482 and 491) for which clarinets would be available, making an adjustment to the scoring of K 488 at this point. But close inspection of the autograph (in the Paris Conservatoire Library) suggests that the picture may be more complicated, for the ink and, crucially, the pen nib in which the earliest traces of parts at transposed pitch for the A clarinets appear, are of the same colour and thickness as the 1784 portion, and not the 1786 portion. Perhaps, then, Mozart had made a distinctive colouristic adjustment in his mind as early as two years before K 488 was first performed. It is difficult for those of us familiar with this concerto to imagine its sound world without clarinets, especially in the *Adagio* (Mozart's only movement in F sharp minor). The adjective 'luminous' has frequently been used of this movement, and the clarinet colouring adds crucially to the effect. While Mozart's compositional logic of melody, harmony, rhythm and texture is, as always, rigorous and sometimes surprising (note the solo piano's low staccato E sharp in bar 2), it is colour which most deeply characterises this remarkable movement, enhancing its declamatory effects. In a way uncannily similar to the central slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, this *Adagio* moves from an opening in which the solo and orchestra inhabit different worlds, separated as if by opposite polarities, to a final state of mutual acceptance.

K 488's outer movements are much sunnier. Like two other A major works featuring the clarinet (the Clarinet Quintet, K 581 and the Clarinet Concerto, K 622), K 488 begins with a prominent falling third motif from the dominant note, E, to the mediant, C sharp. The piano writing is at times rather virtuosic, with extended passages of semiquavers in the right hand (sometimes set off colouristically by the winds). The second main solo episode is quite developmental, in a sense that would later become the norm for understanding 'sonata form'. Here Mozart's contrapuntal handling of the thematic argument gives added prominence to the winds, around which the piano adds surrounding accompanimental semiquaver patterns in a texture very familiar from his chamber music with piano, and raising in our minds the question of whether the concerto is so separate a genre from chamber music after all. Unusually, Mozart wrote a cadenza for this movement not on a separate sheet of paper but straight into the autograph manuscript. He would surely have improvised one of his own in performance; perhaps his notated example might be taken as a clue that he had high hopes that this work would immediately be published, complete with a cadenza for the benefit of those unable to improvise their own? Curiously, it is actually quite unlike any of his other surviving cadenzas.

The fast and furious rondo finale is punctuated by three announcements of the main theme by the soloist, each of them slightly different in its ending, as if Mozart is encoding a message in the notation that recurring themes are not to be played exactly the same each time but freshly characterised, and sometimes departing from the expected. As is typical for Mozart's sonata rondos, our structural expectations are given a gentle shake too: following the central episode (returning to F sharp minor),

Mozart prepares for a return of the main rondo theme... which doesn't appear. His timing is as expert here as in his operatic finales: he leaves us in suspense, certain that the expected entry will eventually arrive (and satisfying us all the more when it does). Just for good measure while we are waiting for the inevitable rousing close, he treats us to some of his most spectacular woodwind writing.

Mozart clearly regarded this as one of his most successful concertos. At the end of September 1786 he offered it to Prince Fürstenberg as one of his most select compositions 'which I keep just for myself and an élite circle of music lovers'.

Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K 491

1. Allegro
2. Larghetto
3. Allegretto

Piano Concerto No. 25 in C major, K 503

1. Allegro maestoso
2. Andante
3. Allegretto

Grandeur comes in many forms. Both concertos on this disc illustrate that fact. In each case Mozart balances the competing claims of structural cohesion, individuality, dramatic dialogue, character contrast, virtuosity and intimacy to achieve something that transcends its generic space. Think of the opening *tutti* of the C major concerto, K 503, for example. Its straightforward opening military topic is both a gesture and a structure, mapping out the tonic-dominant tonal space in 'textbook' fashion, rather like the standard first moves in a chess game. Contained within it, though, is a little bit of individualistic chatter from the winds, introducing the element of dialogue that will become so crucial to the forward flow of this movement. When that chatter tums quickly to the minor mode, we sense that Mozart is signalling in an instant something of the grand scale of this movement, as if one of the chess players had suddenly moved one of his pieces so brilliantly and unexpectedly as to change the landscape of the game entirely, raising the stakes, threatening the security of the 'textbook' view. From this moment, the fingerprints all leave a trace of the symphonic. Close-knit contrapuntal interplay among the strings and winds, invertible textures, developmental passages, military references (with a brief nod at revolutionary France, encoded in a hint of *La Marseillaise* heard as if from afar?) ... these are not the expected ingredients of a concerto.

The piano enters not with a statement, but in dialogue, its shape emerging as if in improvisation (Mozart had several attempts at perfecting this fantasia-like section as the changing shape of the piano part in a surviving autograph sketch reveals). Only gradually does the triumphant military opening return, with the filigree piano writing at the very top of the range of a fortepiano of Mozart's time now enhancing those chattering wind figures. From this point on, we begin to realise that this is a concerto after all, within which virtuosity is key. And Mozart achieves yet another balancing act here, because although the solo part is characterised by being virtuosic (and the solo player by being a virtuoso), this is music that does not lack intimacy, moving smoothly and effortlessly between the contrasting worlds of the theatre and the chamber. So the composer is also a virtuoso.

Now compare the quiet, brooding opening of K 491 in C minor. Its thematic and tonal space is established tentatively through fragmentary, chromatically swirling shapes lacking any harmonic underpinning at first. Again, the winds break in, defining the structure this time through continuity and contrasting register, rather than witty interplay, and leading to the forceful restatement of the opening theme, whose harmony, thus far withheld, speaks with raging power. While the broadly symphonic

nature of the continuation from this point corresponds in its techniques to K 503, the quality of grandeur is quite different. In both movements the winds are defining actors in the drama. But whereas in K 503 they make their gestural and structural contribution largely as a chorus, in K 491 there is a more soloistic contribution, with greater individualistic deployment of woodwind colours. Notably, K 491 (completed in March 1786 and scored for a huge band, for which Mozart needed to purchase especially large, 16-stave manuscript paper) uses clarinets which lend a satisfyingly rounded tone quality to the dialogues, subtly highlighting register contrast when set against the bassoons. (In K 503, there are no clarinets: perhaps no players were available in December 1786, when Mozart completed the piece from a fragment of a C major concerto that had been drafted perhaps as far back as 1784 to judge from the watermarks in the paper of his manuscript; or perhaps he felt that the particularly shrill sound of the C clarinet did not fit his requirements and risked masking the flute and oboe.) As in K 503, the first solo entry in K 491 postpones the expected arrival of the main theme with an interjection of something else; unlike K 503's fantasia, the piano sets out a measured succession of phrases, tending increasingly towards the declamatory and culminating in a challenge, thrown down at the orchestra's feet – to which they respond with an angry restatement of the opening theme. When the piano picks up the threads of this theme and continues an extended process of dialogue we realise that we are in the environment of a concerto once more.

The respective slow movements of these two concertos illustrate well the precision of Mozart's ear for sonority. That of K 503 tends to continue the first movement's deployment of the winds as a chorus (with beautiful linking of flute and bassoon in double octaves), although there are momentary soloistic touches, a notable example being the imaginative counterpointing of the bassoon against the piano's line just before the recapitulation of the main theme. While 'chorus' woodwind writing is not absent from K 491 (memorably completing a restatement of the main theme by the piano at one point, for instance), one tends to notice the sonority of the clarinets more and more as the work proceeds. That is equally true of the variation finale, one of only two occasions where Mozart uses this form in his piano concertos (the other is K 453 in G).

The autograph manuscript of the C minor concerto is an utterly fascinating document. There are multiple revisions to the continuity within the first movement, with curious annotations showing the wholesale repositioning of quite large sections. Mozart's first thoughts were significantly different from the final narrative, which seems so natural in its flow. In the variation finale there are revisions of a different kind. At one point there are four different versions of the right hand in the solo part (for some of which Mozart needed to write into the – fortunately empty – timpani and trumpet staves in the autograph); not all of these are crossed out, suggesting that the different versions may represent not anything so much as a definitive view, but rather a succession of contrasting provisional possibilities for the player. Elsewhere, we can detect from careful examination of Mozart's handwriting that the soloist's right-hand part was at first notated merely in outline sketch, the precise in-filling being in a lighter shade of ink (and not quite properly aligned with the rest of the bar); perhaps Mozart just needed the most basic of cues for such passages in performance, and the details were filled-in afterwards? At any rate, this kind of 'archaeology' of Mozart's creative process suggests that at least a spirit of improvisation inhabited his own performances, and that historically informed performers might attempt something of that same spirit in their approach to these pieces.

K 491 was performed on 3rd April 1786 by Mozart himself, and possibly again on 7th April, according to contemporary newspaper reports. It may have been conceived as the final concerto in a set of three including parts for clarinets (the others are K 482 in E flat and K 488 in A). Quite possibly it influenced Beethoven's third piano concerto in the same key, and soon became a staple of nineteenth-century concert life (Mendelssohn had it in his repertoire through the 1820s and 1830s). K 503 was perhaps completed for performance in one of a series of four Advent concerts held in the

Trattner casino in Vienna in early December 1786, although the only documented performance by Mozart himself dates from May 1789 at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig.

Piano Concerto No. 26 in D major, K 537 'Coronation Concerto'

1. Allegro
2. Larghetto
3. Allegretto

Mozart's personal Thematic Catalogue (which he had been keeping since shortly before the composition of the G major Concerto) tells us that the **D major Concerto, K 537**, was completed on 24th February 1788. Probably Mozart originally envisaged that he would perform the D major piece during the 1788 Vienna season. There are, however, no documented performances dating from that time and the earliest mention is of a performance at Dresden on 14th April 1789, when Mozart played it at the Dresden Court. According to the title page of the edition produced subsequently by André (1794), the work was 'performed by the composer at Frankfurt-am-Main on the occasion of the Coronation of Emperor Leopold II' – hence the concerto's nickname, 'Coronation'. That is not entirely correct, however, for Mozart's performance was not part of the official coronation festivities (much to Mozart's displeasure) but occurred instead about a week later at the Frankfurt Municipal Playhouse (15th October 1790). This coronation 'fringe' performance was a success in terms of prestige, or so Mozart wrote to his wife that same day, but a miserable failure financially.

The 'Coronation' Concerto is rather unusual in that the autograph does not consistently notate woodwind and brass parts. The trumpet and timpani parts are described in his Thematic Catalogue as 'ad libitum' and for much of the time they are notated at the extreme top and bottom of the stave braces in Mozart's autograph, as if they were something of an afterthought. (Interestingly, it has been proposed that the woodwind parts are also 'ad libitum', which would make this work analogous to the 'a quattro' concertos, K 413–15, that Mozart had composed to be performable just with string quartet in 1782–83. Even the solo keyboard part is sketchy (the left hand staves are blank throughout the slow movement). Indeed, it is possible that the left-hand part in André's edition is largely by him rather than Mozart. For instance, in the first movement, the piano enters at bar 81, but there is no left-hand accompaniment notated in Mozart's autograph until bar 108. And there are some quite extended stretches of the finale without left-hand support notated in Mozart's manuscript. This casual-seeming approach would have been no barrier to performance by Mozart, of course, as he would have simply improvised the missing left-hand part. But the fact that it could be left out entirely for passages lasting thirty or more bars might be taken as a hint as to the kind of texture Mozart envisaged for this work – generally melodic, with chordal support rather than complex and contrapuntal.

Piano Concerto No. 27 in B flat major, K 595

1. Allegro
2. Larghetto
3. Rondo. Allegro

First published in Vienna just four months before Mozart's death, the **Piano Concerto No. 27 in B flat major, K 595**, had been completed in January 1791 and Mozart performed the work for the first time at a concert in Ignaz Jahn's Restauranthalle that was reviewed in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 12th March: 'Herr Kapellmeister Mozart performed a concerto for the fortepiano, and everyone admired his art, both in composition and performance.' The concert, which took place on 4th March, was to be Mozart's last public appearance as a soloist. The autograph manuscript is a fascinating document that betrays several stages of composition separated by several years. The first and second movements, and the first few pages of the finale, are written out on paper dating from before February 1789 (and

possibly as early as December 1787); the completion of the finale is on a much later type of paper, dating from 179l. Looking in more detail at Mozart's script, we can detect that the first 300 bars of the first movement, and also the first 39 bars of the finale, were initially written out as a 'particella' (a kind of sketch, in which the leading melodic parts and the essential harmonies were drafted in detail, and the rest of the texture left blank for subsequent filling in). The implication is that much of the concerto was left in this incomplete state for at least two years (February 1789–January 1791) before Mozart completed it – presumably in response to potential concert dates in the spring of 1791, including his performance of K 595 on 4th March.

K 595 has sometimes been considered as a work in which the typical 'sparkle' of Mozart's virtuosity is tempered by a quality of resignation, as if Mozart were already aware of his imminent demise. That seems untenable in view of the manuscript evidence just cited. However, its language is certainly more introverted than, say, that of K 467 in C major or K 488 in A major – or indeed, either of the previous B flat major concertos, K 450 and K 456, both of which are scored for near-identical orchestral forces, but used to more strident effect. Mozart seems to be aiming for a sublime delicacy of expression rarely captured elsewhere in his concertos (the slow movement, in F sharp minor, of K 488 is an exception). This affects both sonority and structure. Among many unforgettable sonorities is the final reprise of the *Larghetto* (slow movement) theme, where the piano's right hand and flute in unison are shadowed an octave lower by the first violins, with the piano's left hand filling in simple chords. Another is the astonishing opening of the first movement development section, where Mozart recasts his opening theme (here played by the piano) in B minor, one semitone higher than the tonic, interrupted by the strings pared down to bare octaves and unisons, straddling a diminished seventh: a thoroughly unsettling moment heralding one of the tautest, most 'Beethovenian' development sections in any of Mozart's concertos. As in most of Mozart's Viennese piano concertos, his soloistic use of the woodwinds liberates them from any preconception that their role is straightforward reinforcement of the narrative outlines established by the string band. While the sometimes lugubrious sound of the clarinet is absent from K 595, his deployment of the winds (and especially the flute, frequently doubling the first violins at the upper octave) seems to take on a magical quality as if somehow they symbolize a remote world, a good example being the 'halo' of sound that the winds contribute to the G flat major episode of the *Larghetto*. As with the other B flat concertos, K 450 and K 456, the finale is a 6/8 rondo (similar in outline to the song *Sehnsucht nach dem Frühlinge*, K 596, completed on 14th January 1791), though the bucolic idiom of those concertos is somewhat more muted here. It is noticeable, for instance, that Mozart generally avoids full-scale *forte* cadences, diverting instead towards closure via a quieter route. Similarly, he curbs any tendency for the narrative flow to get fully into its stride by means of pithy interruptions (typically *piano* in the winds), highlighting the expressive potential of contrasting local colours and articulations as alternatives to overarching architectural form. In so many respects, K 595 is a unique offering in Mozart's concerto output.

Recitative and Rondo: Ch'io mi scordi di te?

for soprano and orchestra with obbligato piano, K 505

The concert aria **Ch'io mi scordi di te? K 505**, for two clarinets, two horns, strings, soprano and piano, was composed for Nancy Storace, perhaps as a farewell gift. (The English soprano, who in 1786 had performed the role of Susanna in the first production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, gave her final concert in Vienna on 23rd February 1787; Mozart had entered the piece in his Thematic Catalogue on 27th December 1786, noting very precisely that the work was for Storace and himself). The two sections of the work comprise a recitative (*Ch'io mi scordi di te?* – 'That I forget you?') and the aria itself, in rondo form (*Non temer, amato bene* – 'Fear not, beloved'), the texts perhaps being by Lorenzo Da Ponte, librettist for Mozart's most famous comic operas. Following an opening section for

strings, the voice enters dramatically and alone, later joined by the strings, before the winds and piano broaden out the palette of tone colours (the piano part alternating between accompanimental patterns and solo phrases). The superb quality of Storace's voice is exploited by Mozart's vocal writing, sometimes featuring powerful and declamatory melodic lines, and also frequent coloratura passages for the soprano within the rondo, along with some prominent high notes, the whole work culminating with a majestic ending dominated by rippling piano arpeggios.

John Irving

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Concerto in F major for three pianos 'Lodron concerto', K 242 (1776)

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Rondeau. Tempo di Menuetto

Concerto in E flat major for two pianos, K 365 (1779)

1. Allegro
2, Andante
3. Rondeau. Allegro

The first fortepianos were produced by Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655–1732) in Florence before the end of the 17th century; he called them *Arpicimbalo che fá il piano e il forte*. Around 1730 Gottfried Silbermann (1683–1753), the first important German piano builder, became acquainted with Cristofori's instruments and copied them so successfully that, as early as around 1740, a number of such fortepianos were ordered for the Berlin court. Johann Sebastian Bach was already involved in this development, and as a court virtuoso in Berlin his eldest son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, was one of the earliest significant players of the fortepiano.

For Mozart – who was familiar with C, P. E. Bach's *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* – the acquaintance with the person and instruments of Johann Andreas Stein (1728–1792) was of great importance. From 1748 onwards Stein had been employed at the Silbermann workshop in Strasbourg, where he had become a pupil of Franz Jakob Späth, before he settled in Augsburg in 1751. Späth and Stein – the leading German piano makers in the generation after Silbermann developed significant aspects of what was to become known as the Viennese mechanism (*Wiener Mechanik*). Stein's daughter Nanette, an outstanding pianist, later moved to Vienna, where together with her husband, the pianist Streicher, she founded a piano factory that was one of the most important establishments of its kind until the end of the nineteenth century.

The extent to which Mozart occupied himself with the fortepiano, even in his youth, becomes apparent from his letter from Augsburg dated 17th October 1777: 'Now I must start to tell you about the Stein pianos. Before I had seen anything of Stein's work, I liked Späth's pianos best. Now, however, I must come down in favour of Stein's, because their dampers are much better... I can strike the keys however I wish; the tone will always be consistent. It does not become coloured; it does not get louder or softer, or fade away completely... When he [Stein] has completed such a piano, he first sits down and tries out all kinds of passages, runs and leaps, and he scrapes and works away until the piano can do everything...'

'He takes care that the sound board will not break or crack. When he is ready with the sound board of a piano, he leaves it out in the rain, snow, hot sun and other torments so that it will break, and then he puts in a support and glues it into place so that it is really strong and steady. He is very glad when it cracks; after that it is rather sure that nothing more can happen to it. He often even makes incisions himself, and then glues them back together and strengthens them well.'

On 28th October 1777 the *Augsburger Staats- und Gelehrten Zeitung* described a performance of the **Concerto in F major, K 242**, in which Mozart was one of the soloists: 'As Mr Stein had three instruments of this type ready, the opportunity presented itself to perform an impressive concerto for three pianos in which Mr Deymler, organist of the cathedral, and Mr Stein himself played the other two piano parts... the playing on the fortepiano was so pleasant, so pure, so full of expression and yet so extremely agile that one scarcely knew what to remark on first; and all the listeners were enchanted...'

'A piano concerto with three fortepianos, a very rare occurrence but here made possible by a fortunate combination of circumstances...' – as the same newspaper remarked – could also serve as a motto for the present recording. Works for several solo instruments, especially pianos, are rare and rarely performed. Mozart was evidently attracted by the *sinfonia concertante* genre: in addition to the concertos for two and three pianos he composed the *Concertone for Two Violins*, *Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola* and *Concerto for Flute and Harp*; other similar works remained unfinished.

The 'Lodron Concerto' for three pianos, K 242, composed in Salzburg in February 1776 for Countess Antonia Lodron and her daughters, is the third of Mozart's piano concertos – after the less important K l75 and the magnificent *Jeunehomme Concerto*, K 271. No doubt for practical reasons Mozart later – probably in 1779 – made a reduced version for two pianos, leaving the orchestral part unchanged. One might describe the difference by observing that two pianos and two pianists play fewer notes, and the work as a whole sounds less ample. Mozart himself played both versions in concert, the last occasion being in Salzburg in 1780 with his sister Nannerl.

The *Concerto in F major* differs from the Concerto in E flat major principally in its wholly dissimilar treatment of the solo piano parts. In the *Concerto in E flat major* we find what might be termed a 'reasoned dialogue' between the two soloists, in the course of which each player can bring his phrase or statement to a conclusion undisturbed; some ideas are presented by both soloists together, one accompanying the other. By contrast, in the *Concerto in F major* Mozart sets in motion a true 'musical joke' with three pianos, in which the musical line is divided between the three players quite arbitrarily; one piano continues what another has started and the third will conclude. This division of the main musical line and its accompaniment between the three soloists is without question is as unusual as it is witty. The listener hardly notices the humour, however, as the music sounds quite 'normal', and only the pianists know (and the score shows) what Mozart is up to. Mozart's triple concerto might be called a card game, like Stravinsky's ballet *Jeu de cartes*, in which the motifs are shuffled like the cards in a pack (incidentally, both Mozart and Stravinsky were keen card players). It also seems like a musical card trick when Mozart ends the second movement in the orchestra but then allows the pianos to add an extra phrase, like the wave of a white handkerchief – or when, towards the end of the third movement, in *tutti*, he seems to compose a *forte* conclusion in F major but then – after a moment in which applause always threatens to break out (like similar moments in the finales of Haydn's *Symphony No. 90* or Tchaikovsky's *Fifth*) – allows the pianos to continue. They find their way back to the theme (*piano*), whereupon the orchestra repeats the theme once again, *forte*, and all the participants bring the movement to its real conclusion. The listener will surely find other similar examples in this extremely witty composition.

The **Double Concerto in E flat major, K365**, written for himself and his sister Nannerl, is the last piano concerto from Mozart's Salzburg period. On this recording it is presented in two versions: the first from Salzburg (1779, with smaller orchestra) and the second from Vienna (1782, with larger wind forces). Mozart played both versions in Salzburg and Vienna. In many respects the *Concerto in E flat major* is Mozart's first 'big' piano concerto. It is the first in which we find the very characteristic intertwining of the woodwind and the piano part, accomplished very effectively and virtuosically. Mozart seems to have been particularly fond of this symphonically oriented work: in 1781 he took it with him to Vienna (along with the *Concerto in F major*, K 242), using it to introduce himself as a keyboard virtuoso and composer. In late 1781 he played it twice at smaller functions, and in 1782 he performed it at the so-called 'Augarten concerts'. These imperial gardens, situated in the Danube meadows, were opened in 1775 by Emperor Joseph II as 'a place of recreation for all people, dedicated by their admirer'. There were several palaces there and a large ballroom in which, between fashion shows and culinary delights, Sunday morning concerts were held for elegant society. Owing to the size of the hall, these matinées were performed by a relatively large orchestra, and this probably caused Mozart to add clarinets, trumpets and timpani to the orchestra for his double concerto (which in its Salzburg version had required only two oboes, bassoons and horns plus strings). Subsequently the authenticity of these additional parts has been called into question; Mozart did not write them into the score, although in itself this was not unusual for the time.

There is much to suggest that the 'Vienna version' of the *Concerto in E flat major* is Mozart's own work. In the inventory by Jean André, the most important publisher of the works left unpublished at Mozart's death, we find as early as 1800 a reference to the additional parts. The clarinet parts are so finely crafted that they could really only be the work of Mozart, who was especially fond of this instrument. The clarinet – developed by the Stadler brothers in Vienna – was then still relatively rare; in Salzburg it were rarely if ever to be found (as late as 1791 Haydn had to do without it in London!). Owing to the instruments' construction and the playing techniques of the time, however, the trumpets and timpani writing could not have been very different. And why should just this one concerto by Mozart have been arranged later by a third party?

The remarkable thing about the 'Vienna version' is the astonishing difference in overall effect owing to the larger orchestral forces – giving the work a new, larger-scale, even majestic character. One might even say that the music is laid bare and is perceived as a forerunner of Beethoven's *Fifth Piano Concerto*.

In this recording we have make every effort to do justice to all the details of an historically faithful interpretation. These include the reduction of the string sections in solo passages; small, spontaneous ornamentation in the solo parts; a certain degree of 'classical' rubato; and, finally, the solo pianos playing during *tutti* passages (which was still required by Beethoven in his concertos). All of these stylistic details – which contribute to a vivid performance – are known to correspond to the manner in which Mozart himself played his concertos. The Viennese pianist Friedrich Guida was the first to play Mozart's concertos in such a manner (K 467 und K 599) – together with Hans Swarowsky – and he recorded them as early as 1962 (!) – a pioneering achievement and, at the same time, one of the most beautiful of Mozart recordings.

We should add a word ab out the soloists playing continuo in *tutti* passages, a practice dating back to the era of *basso continuo* that enriches the sound of the bass group to a small but significant extent. From this recording it is easy to see why, towards the end of the eighteenth century, it ceased to be usual to direct an orchestra from the 'piano': the fortepiano with its wide range of sonorities was becoming increasingly widespread, but was unable to produce the percussive sound of the harpsichord. As the size of orchestras was steadily increasing as well, the keyboard thus lost its

‘leading’ role. Haydn, who still directed his London concerts from the keyboard, made use of this in a ‘musical joke’: in the finale of his *Symphony No. 98* he introduced a comical solo for harpsichord/fortepiano, just a few bars long, a last sonic allusion to his presence at the keyboard. At the latest from 1795, after his return to Vienna, Haydn directed his concerts exclusively with a baton.

Manfred Buss