

The life and story of wolfgang amadeus mozart



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The Life and Story of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Johannes Chrysostomus

Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart better known as just Wolfgang Amadeus

Mozart was baptised January 27, 1756 in Salzburg on Getreidegasse street in the ninth house, which at the time was a part of the Holy Roman Empire but is now Austria. He was born to Leopold and Anne Maria Pertl Mozart in the same house he lived in until he was 17 with his mother, father and his big sister Maria Anne, she was his only sibling to survive infancy. He was baptised in St Rupert's Cathedral the day after he was born.

His father was the deputy " Orchestra Master" of the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, a composer, and a teacher as well. In fact the year Wolfgang was born his dad successfully published a violin textbook, which was a best selling " introduction to violin book". Wolfgang's sister nicknamed " Nannerl" commented on his youth saying that when he was 3 he spent much of his time picking out thirds, and they sounded good. When Wolfgang was 4 his dad started teaching his young son some minuets and other pieces on the clavier.

While he was 4 still, Wolfgang could hear a piece one time and play it back exactly note for note and perfectly in time, sometimes even making changes to improve the music. By the time he was 5 he was composing small pieces, and at age 6 he knew how to play the piano, violin, and organ. In 1762 the Mozart family made several tours around Northern Europe where Wolfgang and his sister Nannerl would perform starting at the court of Prince elector- Maximilian the third in Munich and then to the Imperial Court in Vienna and Prague.

This led to the three and a half year long tour to the courts Munich, Mannheim, Paris, London, the Hague, once again to Paris then on his way home he stopped at Zurich, Donaueschingen, and again to Munich. During this trip Wolfgang met many musicians with whom he familiarized himself with their music along with the music of the greats such as J. S. Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Pachelbel, Purcell, and Palestrina. One of the great role model moments of Wolfgang was when he sat on the knee of Johann Christian Bach (J. S. Bach's youngest son) in London and improvised a fugue.

Wolfgang's time spent with J. C. Bach would influence his concerto style, whom the Mozarts visited in 1764 and 1765. It was here at age 8 where Wolfgang wrote his first two symphonies. In late 1767 the Mozarts went back to Vienna where the 12 year old Wolfgang staged a production of his first opera, *Bastien und Bastienne*. This is also where he composed the Latin drama, *Apollo Et Hyacinthus*. Next year Wolfgang and his dad visited the major cities of Italy. Wolfgang met with G. B. Martini in Bologna where he was accepted into the famous *Accademia Filarmonica*.

Then they went to Rome and on July 8, 1770 where the pope dubbed Wolfgang a Knight of the Order of the Golden Spur. While in Rome they went to the Sistine Chapel to hear Gregorio Allegri's *Miserere*, he heard the performance once then wrote the entire piece from memory only returning once to fix small mistakes. This was the first illegal copy of the closely guarded work of the Vatican. Between 1770 and 1772 Wolfgang and his dad returned to Milan 3 times where he composed 3 more Operas on commission. Towards the end of this journey in Italy Wolfgang composed his first masterpiece, the solo motet *Exsultate, jubilate*, K 165.

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All of this traveling around to cultural hotspots exposed young Wolfgang to a wide variety of music and styles from instrumental to choral and his talented ear absorbed them all ultimately giving him a broad breadth and substance of music and art. Back in Salzburg in 1773 Wolfgang got a job with the Salzburg court by Prince-Archbishop Colloredo as a court musician. The Archbishop was a stern frugal man with little sympathy and paid Wolfgang only 150 florins a year, so he called the Archbishop “ Archboobie”.

Wolfgang had a hard time not exercising his full potential and being a common musician after all he has been knighted and hobknobbed with kings and queens. In 1777 Wolfgang resigned his position to search for work in Paris where he befriended members of the best orchestra of the time and fell in love with Aloysia Weber. Wolfgang's mother died in 1778 and his dad found him a job back in Salzburg as a court organist and concertmaster for 450 florins a year. Before going back to Salzburg to his new position in 1779 he composed the A minor piano sonata (K 310/300d) and the “ Paris” symphony (No. 1). In 1781 the 25 year old's opera Idomeneo premiered successfully in Munich. His current employer Archbishop Colloredo threatened to fine half a years wages if he did it again so Wolfgang tried to resign several times and was finely awarded his termination with a literal “ kick in the ass” administered by the Archbishops Steward, Count Arco. He decided to be a freelance musician and composer in Vienna, not just to enjoy the musical culture of Vienna but also to get away from his overbearing father.

In a letter to his sister he explains how he gives lessons and performs in concerts to get by, this is also when and where he met his dear Constanze

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(Aloysia's older sister). Wolfgang's reputation was sealed when he won a piano duel and became Vienna's best keyboarder. In 1782 Wolfgang and Constanze got married and he found time to study Bach and Handel which greatly influenced his music. He also played chamber music with his friend Joseph Haydn in 1784 and joined the freemasons that year.

Still a practicing catholic in 1791 he composed the opera Die Zauberflöte which embraces masonic ideals. The couple had six kids but only two of them managed to live past infancy. From 1782 to 1785 Wolfgang put on many concerts usually in an apartment or restaurant for more room. Many of Wolfgang's greatest works were created between the years 1785 to 1787 as this was a time when he had a full complement of pupils, he played several concerts a week, and collected the spoils from the commissions of composing.

It was at this time that Wolfgang Mozart combined artistic forces with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte and together they created two of Wolfgang's most refined operas, The Marriage of Figaro (1786), and Don Giovanni (1787). These pieces were accepted and popularized all over Europe especially in Prague. In December 1787 Wolfgang got a steady job as Emperor Joseph the second's "chamber composer" which only required that he compose dances for the annual ball.

This same year the 17 year old Ludwig Van Beethoven came to Vienna hoping to study with Mozart, they met for only a short while until the death of Beethoven's mother temporarily drew him back home. Unfortunately by the time Beethoven made it back to Vienna Mozart had already passed

away. By 1786 Wolfgang's financial situation had declined due to the money of the aristocracy going to supporting the war that Austria was involved in and his shrinking appearance at concerts.

In 1788 Wolfgang and his family relocated to a suburb of Alsergrund in attempt to improve his living space for money spent on rent. A broke Wolfgang resorted to begging for loans most often from his friend and fellow mason, Michael Puchberg. Even though it was suspected that he began to suffer from depression and his works were slowing he still managed to produce three more symphonies and one more opera with Da Ponte in 1790. Around this time Wolfgang toured many German cities to try and improve his financial situation but only with limited success and didn't help as much as he hoped. 1791 was Mozart's last year on this earth which is highly unfortunate being that his luck was starting to change, he produced some of his most admired works then including The Magic Flute, his last piano concerto K595 in B flat, the K622 clarinet concerto, a string quintet, a motet, and his unfinished masterpiece Requiem. His financial situation also began to improve because of the support of wealthy Hungarian and Amsterdam patrons in exchange for occasionally composing a piece for them, on top of his job as the imperial chamber composer.

While at the Emperor's coronation festivities and premier of his latest opera in Prague Mozart fell ill, although he was still able to do work and conduct the premier of The Magic Flute his condition worsened to the point where he was bedridden due to swelling, pain and vomiting. And even though he was fatally ill and in great pain Mozart was determined to continue his work on Requiem which was finished by Franz Süssmayr after his death. When

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Wolfgang was only 35 years old he unexpectedly died at 1 am on December 5, 1791.

Although the exact reason for his death is unknown there are 118 probabilities doctors agree on. The most accepted cause of death is acute rheumatic fever and kidney failure which was worsened by needless “ blood letting”. His funeral was simple and not well attended which was customary at the time, but his memorial services and concerts were well attended and a wave of enthusiasm for his work pursued shortly after. Mozarts premature death was the single most regrettable event in the history of music.