



# **MOZART *A LITTLE* *NIGHT MUSIC***

**May 2 + 4, 2021**

HANDEL+HAYDN SOCIETY

# MOZART

## A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

May 2 + 4, 2021  
Symphony Hall

Streamed Online  
2,531st Concert

### PERFORMERS

Emily Marvosh, *host*  
Aisslinn Nosky, *director*  
H+H Orchestra

### PROGRAM

#### Serenade in D Major, K. 329, *Serenata notturna*

Marcia: Maestoso  
Menuetto  
Rondeau: Allegretto

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart  
(1756-1791)

Aisslinn Nosky, *violin*  
Fiona Hughes, *violin*  
Kyle Miller, *viola*  
Heather Miller Lardin, *bass*  
Jonathan Hess, *timpani*

#### Serenade in G Major, K.525, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*

Allegro  
Romance: Andante  
Menuetto: Allegretto  
Rondo: Allegro

Mozart

### SPECIAL BONUS CONTENT

#### Epistle Sonata No. 7 in F Major, K.224/241a

Mozart

#### Epistle Sonata No. 4 in D Major, K.144/124a

Mozart

Aisslinn Nosky, *violin*  
Susanna Ogata, *violin*  
Guy Fishman, *cello*  
Ian Watson, *organ*

**This program is made possible in part by the  
generous support of Kathleen and Walter Weld.**

**Aisslinn Nosky, director, is sponsored in part by Joseph M. Flynn.**

### PROGRAM NOTES

#### MUSIC FOR THE NIGHT

With a history dating back to the Renaissance, if not earlier, the word “serenade” conjures images of a lover singing under the beloved’s window at night under the stars. This meaning was transformed in the 17th century so that a serenade became the means for honoring another person, whether for a birthday, wedding, or even a job promotion. These performances still took place at night, usually beginning at nine in the evening, and were usually outdoors. The serenade was popular in Salzburg in the mid-18th century where there was also a tradition of university students honoring their professors with a serenade at the end of the term. The variety of occasions and venues led to equally varied descriptions for these pieces, such as *Finalmusik* (for the end of the school), *Notturmo* (played at 11pm), or *Nachtmusik*, a term often used to describe the music’s function.

In Salzburg, serenades were particularly popular in the 1760s and 1770s, with no set group of musicians designated for the playing of serenades; ensembles could be large or small and comprised of any combination of student, professional, or amateur players. The practice of playing serenades to honor someone seems to have waned in the later decades of the 18th century and the title “serenade” was more often used for chamber works.

A typical serenade of about ten movements lasted between 40 and 60 minutes and usually began and ended with a march to accompany the procession to and from the location. Other movements, newly composed or sometimes borrowed from other compositions, might include concerto-like sections as well as minuets and trios. The music from a specific serenade might also be reworked for another composition; Mozart adapted some of the movements from his *Haffner* Serenade for his Symphony No. 35, also called the “Haffner.”

#### Serenade in D Major, K. 329, *Serenata notturna*

Scored for two groups—two solo violins, viola, and double bass as the *concertante* (small ensemble), and strings plus timpani for the larger ensemble—the Serenade in D Major, K. 239, is one of 13 serenades or other works associated with evening entertainments that Mozart wrote in Salzburg in the 1770s. Only this serenade was written for strings and timpani; all of the others are scored for strings, winds, brass, and timpani in a variety of combinations.

The designation *Serenata notturna* in the manuscript was not notated by Mozart and why he composed this piece is not known. There is also a question about whether this serenade and another, titled *Notturmo* (K. 286), were written for actual serenading as practiced in Salzburg, since the three movements in these works are significantly fewer than Mozart’s other serenades and, whereas Mozart’s other serenades were completed for warmer months of the year, these two were completed in January 1776 and January 1777, respectively.

Still, with the opening March of the Serenade in D Major, Mozart acknowledges the opening processional music of a traditional serenade. This imposing fanfare quickly subsides, however, into a sweet, slightly capricious line for the *concertante*. The alternation of these two ideas keeps the feeling of this first movement quixotic and, as listeners, we might wonder which state of mind will win out in the end. The Minuet and Trio movement nudges us toward the latter state with harmonic “stumbles” in the Minuet in addition to the stops and starts at the close of the Trio. In the final movement, a Rondeau, Mozart abandons all



sense of seriousness with an opening theme full of good-natured, grace-note humor. The repeated return of this theme always generates a smile, but will not be outdone by the stately central Adagio or swirling country dance evoked in the Allegro, after which the only question left to be answered is, “What will happen next?” Mozart answers that question with pizzicato strings, referencing the original meaning of the serenade by suggesting a guitar accompaniment, before pulling out all the musical stops at his disposal, leaving us with smiles, laughter, and a wish that this finely crafted serenade may never end.

The apposition of styles in Mozart's *Serenata notturna* runs through the entire composition, yet creates a kind of balance in and of itself. This fits with the idea of “pleasing variety” that has been used to describe many aspects of music in the 18th century, from the order of works in a concert, to the relationship of several musical ideas within a single movement, or the balance between two parts of a single melodic idea. According to this aesthetic, a concert needs more than one type of composition to keep the audience engaged and not tire the listener, musical characteristics need to change from one movement to the next, and, within a movement, there might be multiple, contrasting sections. Even the components of a musical phrase (rhythm, shape, etc.) offer the opportunity to introduce variety, something Mozart utilizes throughout his Serenade in D Major.

#### **Serenade in G Major, K.525, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik***

Pleasing variety within a musical phrase sums up almost every idea in *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (“A Little Night Music”), beginning with the how the rising idea that opens the first movement is immediately answered by a descending one. What follows is an Allegro filled with infectious rhythmic energy and memorable themes. Next, the Romanza suggests the original meaning of the serenade; that is, a love song performed beneath the beloved’s window at night. It may be this movement that inspired the first publisher to apply the title “Serenade” to the whole, even though it does not appear in Mozart’s score or catalog. The Minuet and Trio are refined and stately dances with a touch of whimsy. By recalling the exuberance of the first movement, the final Allegro rounds out the composition. The opening theme returns throughout the movement in various guises, acting as an anchor for the rest of the musical excursions in between.

On August 10, 1787, Mozart entered this work into his personal catalog, followed by a list of the five movements. Unfortunately, only four of the five movements have survived; the original second movement, a minuet and trio, was inexplicably torn out of the score. Some scholars have suggested that Mozart’s annotation “eine kleine Nachtmusik” may not have been intended as a title, but as a description of its use. Also unexplained is why Mozart wrote this piece, interrupting work on his opera *Don Giovanni* in order to complete it.

Serenades in the 18th century accompanied evenings of community and socializing. No matter their original purpose, the two serenades on today’s program recall a time in Mozart’s day when socializing was anticipated and enjoyed. We can share in that relaxed atmosphere, even as we anticipate a time when our musical community can gather together once again.

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CHRISTOPHER HOGWOOD HISTORICALLY INFORMED PERFORMANCE FELLOW



# HAYDN + SAINT-GEORGES

**May 23 + 25, 2021**

Chevalier de Saint-Georges was one of the first known classical composers of African descent. He was also the concertmaster of the orchestra that commissioned Haydn’s Paris symphonies.

**Saint-Georges:** Violin Concerto in G Major, Op. 2, No. 1

**Haydn:** Symphony No. 43, *Mercury*

**LEARN MORE**

HANDEL+HAYDN SOCIETY

## WOLFGANG AMADÉ MOZART

1756-1791

Like many composers, Mozart's professional life was filled with accolades and disappointments. Unlike other composers, he had the benefit of traveling extensively as a young performer and composer and he drew on these experiences throughout his life.

At the age of six, Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, often joined by his sister Maria Anna, began performing to enthusiastic audiences in Vienna and Munich. Over the next eight years, Mozart traveled to European capitals, astonishing professional musicians and amateurs alike with his musical abilities and knowledge, even as he absorbed an array of compositional styles from the countries and musicians he impressed.

Not long after being named concert master to the Salzburg court (first as an honorary title in 1769, then with a small salary three years later), Mozart set his sights beyond his home. He continued to travel with the mounting hope that he would be offered a position at another court. When no offer was made, the discontented musician returned home to his duties.

In 1777, Mozart, with help from his father, asked to be released from his responsibilities at the Salzburg court. His employer, Archbishop Colloredo, responded by firing both father and son. His father's position was soon restored, but Wolfgang, who had not been reinstated, was free to offer his talents to other courts and traveled with his mother in search of a better post. No position was offered and the trip ended tragically when his mother died while they were in Paris in 1778. Soon after, Leopold instructed his son to return to Salzburg; in addition to his old post as concert master, there was a new position as court organist available. With no other options available, Mozart accepted. After traveling to Munich in 1780 to fulfill an opera commission, Mozart was summoned to Vienna as part of the archbishop's household. Mozart came to Vienna reluctantly and, after heated exchanges with his employer, resigned his post in June 1781. He remained in Vienna, married Constanze Weber the following year, and returned to Salzburg only once.

His first years in Vienna were filled with success. He composed one of his most popular operas, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and was in demand as a piano concerto performer and composer. His association with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte produced his three greatest operas, one of which, *The Marriage of Figaro*, made him a favorite of the city of Prague as well. This led to an invitation for the composer and his family to visit that city. The trip was a success from the start; Mozart wrote that "Nothing is played, sung or whistled but Figaro! Nothing, nothing but Figaro! Certainly a great honor for me."

Mozart returned to touring in 1789 when he accompanied Prince Karl Lichnowsky on a trip to Berlin. This was not a financially successful tour, but while in Leipzig, Mozart had the opportunity to play the organ at the Thomaskirche, where Johann Sebastian Bach had been music director. The last two years of Mozart's life were busy with composing new works, including symphonies, two operas, and a requiem. He died on December 5, 1791.

## THE WORLD BEYOND



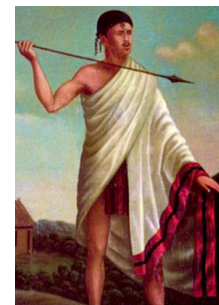
**Misty Bamboo on a Distant Mountain (detail)**

by Zheng Xie (in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection)



**Wolfgang Amadé Mozart**

Portrait by Johann Nepomuk della Croce



**Andrianampoinimerina**

Portrait by Philippe-Auguste Ramanankirahina

**1753** Zheng Xie, also known as Zheng Banqiao, creates *Misty Bamboo on a Distant Mountain*. "Official calligrapher and painter" for the Qianlong Emperor, Zheng Xie develops a new style of calligraphy and is one of the Eight Eccentrics of Yangzhou, a group of artists known for rejecting traditional techniques.

**1756** This date is often assigned to a celebration in Oruro, Bolivia, which is said to commemorate the appearance of an image of the Virgin Mary. The Uru people, however, celebrated their Ito festival in this city—which is a sacred site—long before the Spanish settled the area in 1606.

**1760-65** *A young nobleman celebrating Holi with his consort*, is attributed to Nidha Mal, an artist who worked at the court of Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah before moving to Lucknow in 1748. He was known for his refined style and natural settings.

**1769** The Shakespeare Jubilee celebrates the birth of William Shakespeare with three days of performances in Stratford-upon-Avon.

**1776** Mozart completes his *Serenade for Orchestra*, K. 239, *Serenata notturna*.

**1787** Merina prince Andrianampoinimerina begins ruling the reunited Kingdom of Imerina. From his use of musicians to draw attention to his political speeches, hiragasy or hira gasy, developed in Madagascar. The day-long event features music, dance, and oratory coupled with active audience participation.

**1787** Mozart enters *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* in his catalog of works on August 10.

**1790** Pinkster, a holiday surrounding Pentecost observed throughout the 18th century by enslaved Africans and Dutch settlers, reaches its peak in popularity. Adapted from West Central African traditions, the festival was celebrated over several days and included sporting events, dance, and music; it was one of only a few holidays that allowed captive men and women time off as well as permission to travel.



## INSTRUMENT SPOTLIGHT

### TIMPANI

PHOTO BY STU ROSNER



PHOTO BY ALEX AVERY



The terms “timpani” and “kettledrum” are often used as synonyms in Western music, but timpani are only one type of kettledrum, an instrument used throughout the world. Because timpani can be tuned to precise pitches by adjusting the tension of the drumhead, they became important additions to many European ensembles beginning in the 17th century.

Jean-Baptiste Lully’s opera *Thésée* from 1675 is considered the first work to use timpani in an orchestra; by the 18th century, timpani were scored for celebratory occasions, whether sacred or secular.

Although timpani are used in some of Mozart’s other serenades, only the *Serenade in D Major, K. 239*, is scored for just strings and timpani. The two timpani are tuned a fourth apart and add dramatic emphasis throughout the work, including, in today’s performance, a timpani cadenza in the third movement.



Former timpanist John Grimes performing with the Handel and Haydn Society in 2013. The timpani heard in today’s concert were donated to H+H through the estate of John Grimes.

## ARTIST BIOS

PHOTO BY LIZ LINDER

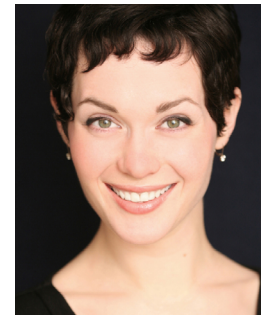


### Aisslinn Nosky, *director and violin*

Aisslinn Nosky was appointed Concertmaster of the Handel and Haydn Society in 2011. With a reputation for being one of the most dynamic and versatile violinists of her generation, Aisslinn is in great demand internationally as a soloist, leader, and concertmaster. Recent collaborations include the Thunder Bay Symphony, the Lameque International Baroque Festival Orchestra, Arion Baroque Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, Collegium Musicum Hanyang, and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.

Aisslinn is also a member of I FURIOSI Baroque Ensemble. For over a decade, this innovative Canadian ensemble has presented its own edgy and inventive concert series in Toronto and toured Europe and North America, while drawing new audiences in to Baroque music. With the Eybler Quartet, Aisslinn explores repertoire from the first century of the string quartet literature on period instruments. The Eybler Quartet’s latest recording of Haydn’s Opus 33 string quartets was released to critical acclaim in 2012.

Since 2005, Aisslinn has been a highly active member of Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and has toured and appeared as soloist with this internationally renowned ensemble.



### Emily Marvosh, *host*

Emily Marvosh has been a frequent soloist with the Handel and Haydn Society since 2011. She has also received praise for her “plum-wine voice,” and “graceful allure,” on the stages of Carnegie Hall, Jordan Hall, Disney Hall, Lincoln Center, Prague’s Smetana Hall, and Vienna’s Stefansdom. Recent solo appearances include the American Bach Soloists, Charlotte Symphony, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony, Chorus Pro Musica, Princeton Festival, Music Worcester, and Cantata Singers.

She is a member of the Lorelei Ensemble, which promotes innovative new music for women. With Lorelei, she has enjoyed collaborations with composer David Lang, BMOP, and the BSO.

She supports Common Cause and Rosie’s Place as a member of Beyond Artists, a coalition that donates concert fees to organizations they care about.

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### Violin II

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