

30 March  
City Recital Hall

# MOZART'S GRAN PARTITA SERENADE



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ORCHESTRA

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# CONCERT DIARY

## MARCH 2023



**JS BACH'S MAGNIFICAT IN D**  
EXHILARATING & BEAUTIFUL

**PÄRT** Trisagion\*  
**JS BACH** Magnificat in D  
**EŠENVALDS** Passion and Resurrection

*\*Great Classics performance only*

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Great Classics

**Thursday 30 March, 7pm**  
**Friday 31 March, 11am**  
**Saturday 1 April, 2pm**

Concert Hall,  
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## APRIL 2023



**DONALD RUNNICLES**  
**CONDUCTS BRAHMS 2**  
LUSH & TRIUMPHANT

**DETLEV GLANERT** Idyllium  
**SCHUMANN** Piano Concerto  
**BRAHMS** Symphony No.2

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Royal Caribbean Classics Under the Sails  
Sunday Afternoon Symphony

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Emirates Masters Series  
Emirates Thursday Afternoon Symphony

**Wednesday 19 April, 8pm**  
**Thursday 20 April, 1.30pm**  
**Friday 21 April, 8pm**  
**Saturday 22 April, 8pm**

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**ARABELLA STEINBACHER**  
**PERFORMS LENTZ**  
LUMINOUS & TRANSCENDENT

**BIBER** Battalia in D  
**GEORGES LENTZ** "...to beam in distant  
heavens..." – Violin Concerto  
**R STRAUSS** Thus Spoke Zarathustra

**UMBERTO CLERICI** conductor  
**ARABELLA STEINBACHER** violin

Royal Caribbean Classics Under the Sails

**Friday 28 April, 7pm**  
**Saturday 29 April, 8pm**

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## MAY 2023



**STEPHEN HOUGH PERFORMS**  
**RACHMANINOV 2**  
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**Thursday 11 May, 7pm**  
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**ROMOLA SMITH** guest principal bass clarinet

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**EUAN HARVEY** acting principal horn

**MARNIE SEBIRE** horn

**RACHEL SILVER** horn

**EMILY NEWHAM** horn

**KEES BOERSMA** principal double bass

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)**

Quintet for three Horns, Oboe & Bassoon, H19

i. *[Allegro]*

ii. *Adagio maestoso*

iii. *Minuetto: allegro*

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)**

Serenade No.10 in B-flat major, K361, 'Gran Partita'

i. *Largo — Allegro molto*

ii. *Menuetto I — Trio 1 & 2*

iii. *Adagio*

iv. *Menuetto II: Allegretto — Trio 1 & 2*

v. *Romanze: Adagio — allegretto — adagio*

vi. *Thema mit Variationen: Andante*

vii. *Rondo: Allegro molto*

Pre-concert talk by Leonard  
Weiss in the Function Room  
on Level 1 at 6.15pm.

## ESTIMATED DURATIONS

15 minutes, 43 minutes

The concert will conclude at  
approximately 8pm

## COVER IMAGE

Matthew Wilkie,  
Principal Emeritus Bassoon  
Photo by Pierre Toussaint

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# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

### Quintet for three Horns, Oboe & Bassoon, H19

Music for wind ensemble (usually with string bass) was a favourite entertainment among the Austrian aristocracy in the later 18th century. Various titles: serenade, partita, notturno, cassation, divertimento and so forth, these were multi-movement works, usually beginning and ending with a march (on occasion the ensemble would in fact march on and off stage, just to keep things interesting for the bass player; often they would fake the effect with a long crescendo and corresponding diminuendo).

The internal movements, much like other chamber music, included pieces of abstract design alongside those whose provenance was the aria or a dance form. Mozart wrote a number of such pieces, mostly for the court of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, before he moved to Vienna to seek his fortune.

After Mozart's death and the 18th century yielded to the 19th, aristocratic fashion increasingly favoured ensemble more suited to the salon than the garden, in particular the piano trio and string quartet. Beethoven, therefore, only caught the tail end of the vogue for wind ensembles, and as Maynard Solomon has written, many of his works 'did not survive the century that adored such combinations'. On the other hand, as any young composer will attest, sometimes one simply has to write for the available forces if one is to write anything at all. Beethoven's very first chamber works included piano quintet, which was hardly known of at the time, and both in his last years in Bonn and early in his residence in Vienna, he wrote for groups that included winds. The 1790s, which saw the composition of the quintet for piano and winds (1796-7), also saw the Trio for Clarinet, Cello and Piano, Op.11, the Sonata for Horn and Piano (dashed off in one day, according to legend) and then, in 1799, the celebrated Septet. Beethoven seems at first to have avoided genres in which



Beethoven in 1800

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

his teacher Joseph Haydn (with whom he had a not entirely friendly rivalry) had excelled, namely the symphony and in chamber music, the string quartet. (Publishing three piano trios as his Op.1 was a gesture whose significance was not lost on Haydn.)

The Quintet in E-flat major for Oboe, three Horns, and Bassoon is one such uniquely constituted ad hoc ensemble. The piece as we now know it comes from a fragmentary autograph manuscript rescued from the Royal Library in Berlin, that provided enough musical DNA for the composer LA Zellner to reconstruct it for a performance in 1862. Or almost. No material for a presumed fourth movement exists, and Zellner didn't presume to make one up. And, more curiously, what does exist in Beethoven's hand includes a line for clarinet, which is completely empty. Leaving aside that Beethoven might have been indulging in a John Cagean kind of joke, we can only assume that it shared some of the material in the extant oboe part.

The opening pages of the work (along with the entire finale) are missing, with the first movement manuscript beginning just before the moment of recapitulation. What that means is that all of the thematic material is presented, and almost certainly in the order in which it would have been played in the first part — the exposition — of the movement, so Zellner had only to adjust the key relationships which in classical convention differ between those sections; a simple case of transposition. Where Zellner was obliged to invent was in the central section of the movement — the development — where a composer typically presents the themes in new guises and keys, sometimes chopping them up into shorter motifs, and avoiding the home key of the piece (in this case E flat major). Willy Hess, who prepared the work for publication in 1909, wrote that Zellner 'in particular made a development out of Beethoven's motifs admirably suited to the surviving sections.' Hess further notes that Beethoven's themes in this movement are reminiscent of some in the Septet, Op.20.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

The slow movement is completely intact, a tender *Adagio* with gentle opening syncopations that support a soulful oboe melody, which passes into elegiac minor mode writing.

The third movement is the conventional dance, a minuet. All that survives is the first 19 bars (Zellner signals this by a subtle but sudden use of sparer, staccato textures) and the completion of the movement, as Hess puts it, 'was, of course, of necessity a *pis aller*'. Not that it was as desperate as that might suggest: any minuet follows certain formal conventions of phrase length and key movement, so Zellner had merely to extend what Beethoven had already provided.

## WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

### **Serenade No.10 in B-flat major, K361, 'Gran Partita'**

In Peter Shaffer's screenplay for the film *Amadeus*, the composer Antonio Salieri describes hearing the *Adagio* from Mozart's 'Gran Partita':

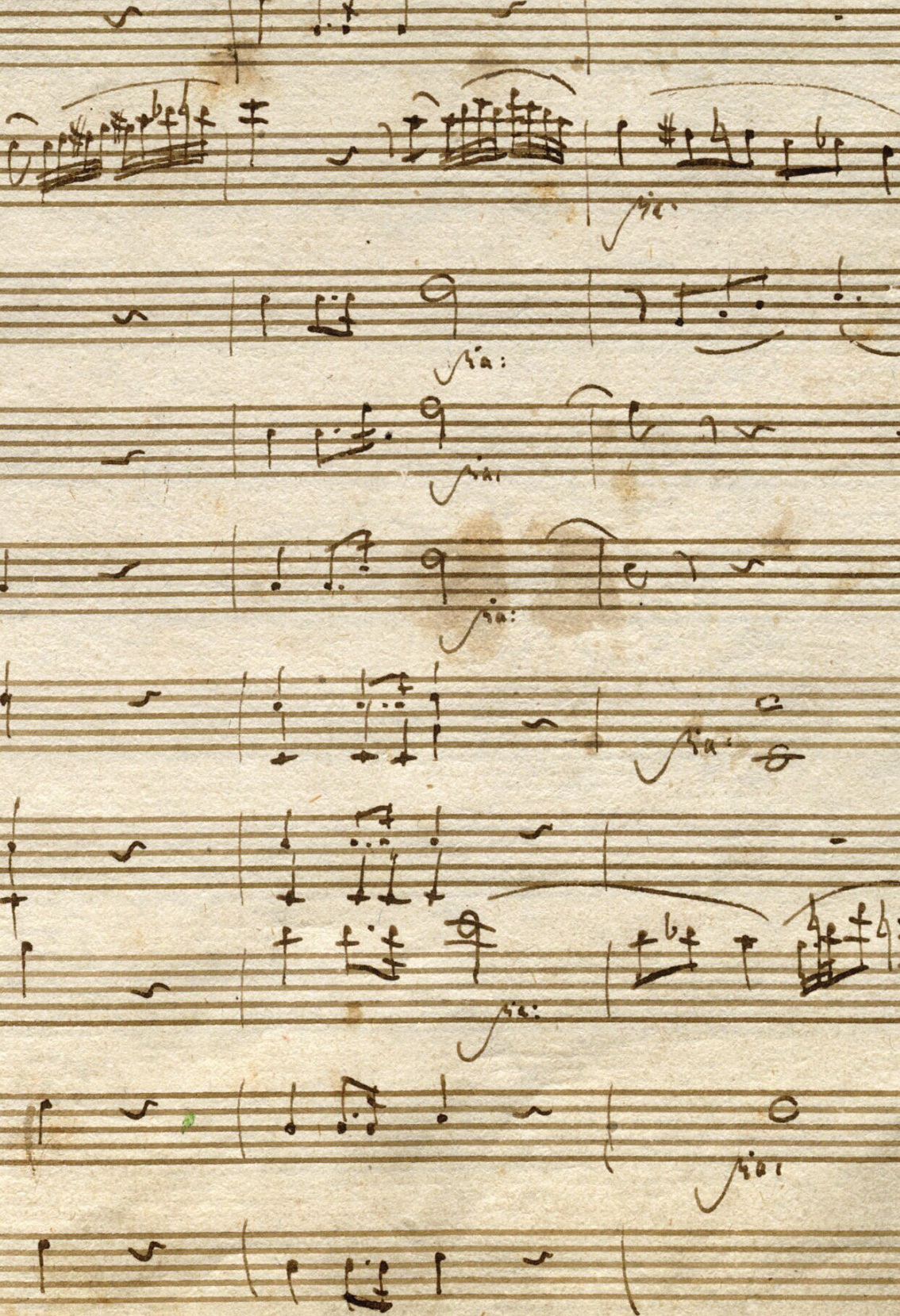
On the page it looked...Nothing! The beginning simple, almost comic. Just a pulse. Bassoons, basset-horns...like a rusty squeezebox. And then, suddenly, high above it, an oboe. A single note, hanging there, unwavering. Until a clarinet took it over and sweetened it into a phrase of such delight...

The film, of course takes numerous liberties, quite apart from the fact that Salieri had nothing to do with Mozart's death, or that no such thing as a squeeze-box existed. The piece, for instance, was not, as far as we know, written while Mozart was still in the employ of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, nor played at a soirée in the imperial palace in Vienna, and it is unlikely the band would have started with one of the internal movements. But Shaffer's Salieri makes a hugely insightful response, not just in his description of the ravishing theme of the movement, but that it coexists with material that is 'almost comic'.



Mozart, portrait  
by Joseph Lange 1782





The first page of Mozart's manuscript for his 'Gran Partita' Serenade.  
Courtesy Library of Congress, Music Division.



# ABOUT THE MUSIC

Add to this Pierre Boulez's observation that the opening unison motif is 'like a ritual' and we have in essence a sense of the emotional amplitude and range of Mozart's art, concentrated here in a few bars of music.

As we have noted, Mozart was obliged to provide serenades and such like — multi-movement works of background music for archiepiscopal garden parties. Wind bands were a favourite, and Mozart makes a joke at his own expense in using one in the finale of *Don Giovanni*, where it plays a hit tune from *The Marriage of Figaro* ('I know this only too well', grumbles the servant Leporello). But it is interesting that once ensconced in Vienna, he continued writing them. There is a C minor work, K384a, composed in 1783, which survives in a transcription for string quintet (K516b), and the 'Gran Partita', a kind of Platonic ideal of the genre, probably written in the same year. It uses 13 winds in pairs (though with four horns, and the bass line can be taken by string bass or contrabassoon), and Mozart makes great use of textural variety with striking blends, such as oboes with basset-horns, and frequent solo passages for most instruments.

The 'Gran Partita' is plainly a concert work, not background music. It begins not with the usual march but with a ceremonious slow introduction, whose solemn opening motifs are linked by ornate clarinet figures, a reminder of the importance in Mozart's work of the Stadler brothers, for one of whom he composed the late Clarinet Quintet and Concerto. Many of the introduction's textures are generated by syncopation, anticipating the 'squeeze-box' motif of the *Adagio*, which Beethoven may be recalling in the slow movement of his Quintet. The march, when it appears as the *Allegro* movement, makes no use of the crescendo that suggests the approach of the band in some other composers' serenades. Rather the clarinets, again, introduce the short four note motif that generates much of the movement's energy.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

The first minuet is noteworthy for its length, its rich scoring and bittersweet alternation of major and minor modes. It also contains two contrasting trio sections. The first of these is a quartet for clarinets and basset horns (the band for the first known performance, in 1784, included a celebrated pair of Bohemian basset-horn virtuosos); the second has a delicate but intricate texture that recalls aspects of Baroque counterpoint. There follows the great *Adagio*, in which Shaffer's Salieri hears 'the voice of God', that is succeeded by a more rustic minuet, featuring the oboe, which also has two trios, the second of which comically sets out its dizzy theme in widely spaced octaves.

A *Romanze*, in simple ternary form, contrasts a slow hymnal music with a jaunty march before Mozart launches into a substantive movement consisting of a theme, given out by clarinets, and six sometimes comic-operatic variations that offer endless excuses for solo display. The piece closes with a bucolic rondo with something of the simple joy of the roughly contemporary *Rondo alla Turca*.

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