

concertante," the term that Mozart himself employed elsewhere. But his earliest attempt at a multiple-soloist concerto was called a "concertone" (con-chair-TONE-eh), which is simply the word "concerto" with an added suffix that in Italian denotes largeness. Here it means a concerto which has more than expected, namely, not only an official second violin solo part, but also frequent additions of two more solo parts (the principal cello and the first oboe) from the orchestra. This is Mozart's fourth entirely original concerto of any sort, written in Salzburg in 1774 (between the first and second violin concertos), and it highlights a period of rapid growth in his compositional imagination. It is not only the added solo parts that makes this a "large concerto"; Mozart uses a fairly full wind section of two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and two trumpets, in addition to timpani. Much of the music sounds like that of his contemporaneous divertimenti. The music is elegant, with frequent ornamentation where later in his career Mozart might have opted for a telling simplicity. This is a tuneful, intriguing, and entertaining piece, more often heard on recordings (where it is often paired with one of the violin concertos or with the Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, K. 364), than in the concert hall.



Mozart

Violin Concerto In G Major K.216

Concertone In C Major K.190

Alan Loveday, Iona Brown, Carmel Kaine

The Academy Of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner



Mozart's five authentic violin concertos are traditionally attributed to the year 1775, but recently there has been some speculation that the first and possibly the second are in fact products from a few years earlier. If this is indeed the case, the distinctly greater sophistication of the Violin Concerto No. 3 in G major, K. 216 as compared to its immediate predecessors ceases to be the great mystery that it has for so long been. Even a composer given to as rapid spurts of artistic growth as Mozart would have been hard-pressed to travel such a great distance in the span of only a few months.

This is arguably Mozart's most popular violin concerto; it has neither the boisterous enthusiasm of No. 4 in D nor the electric virtuosity of No. 5 in A -- it is a far more intimate work than either of those -- but the sweetness and ingratiating simplicity of its melodies are surpassed by virtually nothing Mozart ever wrote. Furthermore, it is here that for perhaps the first time Mozart is completely successful in his effort to fill the outlines of the three-movement Classical chamber concerto with the kind of clever, colorful, and continually changing dramatic course that makes Mozart's operas the glorious events that they are.

So, when the orchestra decides in the middle of the Allegro first movement to interrupt the happy, charming discussion

and shove the violinist, willing or not, into the role of unhappy protagonist for a while we can feel safe chalking it up to Italian opera: a pair of sobbing outbursts grow into a vehement series of sixteenth notes; a little later on, at one of the concerto's most spectacular moments, the sobbing outburst becomes nearly heroic, and, satisfied at having achieved concord from discord, launches the recapitulation.

During the celebrated Adagio, Mozart asks the two oboists to cast their instruments aside and play flutes instead. Each of the finales of Mozart's last three violin concertos is interrupted mid-course by an episode that contrasts with the main music far more than one normally finds in a rondo (the movements are examples of the so-called French Rondo, or Rondeau, then just entering its heyday). In the Concerto No. 3, that episode is a delightfully impish Allegretto whose folk-like tune is so full of joie de vivre that the violinist cannot but explode into effervescent triplet arpeggios. Another sign of Mozart's growing mastery is found at the very end of the concerto, as the traditional bombastic conclusion is thrown out in favor of lighthearted little cadence for just oboes and horns.

There was a vogue in the middle of the last half of the eighteenth century for concertos featuring more than one soloist. Usually these were called by the name "sinfonia

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1 Allegro 8:37

2 Adagio 7:26

3 Rondo 6:19

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4 Allegro Spiritoso 8:02

5 Andantino Grazioso 10:22

6 Tempo Di Menuetto 6:05

Cello - Kenneth Heath Oboe - Tess Miller Violin - Alan Loveday, Carmel Kaine, Iona Brown

Recording Info: Recorded by Decca (Argo) 24-25 July 1972 at St John's Smith Square, London

Producer Michael Bremner Engineers: Stanley Goodall



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