

Wolfgang Mozart, *Serenade No. 10 for winds K. 361 "Gran Partita"*



The **Serenade No. 10 for winds** in B flat major was written in 1781 (or 1782). It is scored for thirteen instruments (twelve winds and a string bass). It consists of seven movements and it is approximately 45 minutes long.

- I. Largo. Molto Allegro
- II. Menuetto
- III. Adagio
- IV. Menuetto. Allegretto
- V. Romance. Adagio
- VI. Tema con variazioni
- VII. Finale. Molto Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (27 January 1756 – 5 December 1791), was a prolific and influential composer of the Classical era. He composed over six hundred works, many acknowledged as pinnacles of symphonic, concertante, chamber, piano, operatic, and choral music. He is among the most enduringly popular of classical composers.

Mozart showed prodigious ability from his earliest childhood in Salzburg. Already competent on keyboard and violin, he composed from the age of five and performed before European royalty; at seventeen he was engaged as a court musician in Salzburg, but grew restless and traveled in search of a better position, always composing abundantly. Visiting Vienna in 1781 he was dismissed from his Salzburg position and chose to stay in the capital, where over the rest of his life he achieved fame but little financial security. The final years in Vienna yielded many of his best-known symphonies, concertos, and operas, and the Requiem. The circumstances of his early death have been much mythologized. He was survived by his wife Constanze and two sons.

Mozart always learned voraciously from others, and developed a brilliance and maturity of style that encompassed the light and graceful along with the dark and passionate—the whole informed by a vision of humanity "redeemed through art, forgiven, and reconciled with nature and the absolute". His influence on all subsequent Western art music is profound. Beethoven wrote his own early compositions in the shadow of Mozart, of whom Joseph Haydn wrote that "posterity will not see such a talent again in 100 years". In 1781 Haydn also told Mozart's father, Leopold: "I tell you before God, and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer known to me by person and repute, he has taste and what is more the greatest skill in composition."

Mozart's music, like Haydn's, stands as an archetypal example of the Classical style. At the time he began composing, European music was dominated by the style *galant*: a reaction against the highly evolved intricacy of the Baroque. But progressively, and in large part at the hands of Mozart himself, the contrapuntal complexities of the late Baroque emerged once more, moderated and disciplined by new forms, and adapted to a new aesthetic and social milieu.

The Serenade No. 10 for winds begins with a slow introduction in B flat major in which *tutti* dotted rhythms are set in opposition to solo passages for clarinet and oboe. This leads into the *Allegro moderato*, which is a monothematic sonata form. The first theme of the exposition opens, originally presented in B flat major in the clarinets, later returns in F major in the basset horns and oboes in a modified form as the second theme. This theme continues to be explored in the development and returns in the recapitulation.

The second movement is a minuet featuring two contrasting trio sections. The minuet section is in B flat major and uses all the instruments extensively. The first trio employs is in E-flat major and employs only the clarinets and basset horns. This section leads into a repeat of the minuet section. The second trio section extensively uses the solo oboe, basset horn and bassoon.

Described by Goodwin as "virtually an 'operatic' ensemble of passionate feeling and sensuous warmth", the third movement, marked *Adagio*, is in E flat major. A syncopated pulse occurs almost throughout the movement while solo lines alternate between the solo oboe, clarinet and basset horn.

The fourth movement is a second minuet; like the second movement, it has two trio sections. The fast, staccato minuet section is in B flat major. The first trio, by contrast, has fewer staccato notes and is in the parallel minor, B-flat minor. After the minuet section is repeated, the second trio is played in F major.

The fifth movement, *Romanze*, returns to the slow tempo and E flat major tonality of the third movement. The movement begins and ends with an *Adagio* section in the tonic and in triple meter with many long notes in the melody. Contrasting with these sections is an Allegretto section between them, which is in C minor and features constant pulse in the bassoons.

The sixth movement is a set of six variations on an andante theme in B flat major. The theme is presented primarily by the solo clarinet. The variations make use of various rhythmic motives and often feature solo instruments; for example, the first variation features the solo oboe.

The seventh and last movement is a rondo. The movement employs many *tutti* passages in which the oboes and clarinets play in unison, particularly in the rondo theme. The episodes between the returns of the theme feature a greater degree of interplay between the instruments.