

Wolfgang Mozart, *Concerto for violin and orchestra in D, K. 218*



The **Concerto for violin and orchestra in D major, K. 218** was written in 1775 in Salzburg. It is scored for 2 oboes, 2 French horns, and strings and it is approximately 23 minutes long.

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante cantabile*
3. *Rondeau (Andante grazioso – Allegro ma non troppo)*

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 was still a teenager in the service of the Salzburg court when, in 1775, he composed his **Concerto for violin and orchestra in D major, K. 218**. From all five violin concerti, this one remains the most immediately scintillating, the most technically challenging and the most often performed and recorded.

It is not happenstance that D major is the key most often selected by composers in which to cast their violin concertos (two of Mozart's are in that key), for it is in D major that the instrument, because of the tuning of its strings, vibrates most freely and rings longest. Mozart exploits this tonally-concocted capacity many times as the Concerto No. 4 moves along, from the resounding unisons and octaves of the orchestra opening to the shining entrance of the soloist on that same material (two octaves higher) to the rich arpeggios that later on lead the way into the recapitulation of the opening.

The *Andante cantabile* slow movement has not the fame of either the slow movement of the Concerto No. 3 in G or that of the Concerto No. 5 in A, but there is no shame in being a lesser-known gem. The main music of the *Andante grazioso* finale cannot decide between a light 2/4 and a more energized 6/8. But this is not the only such argument of tempo and meter in the movement: Mozart has returned to the kind of French Rondo finale that he used in the previous violin concerto, this time incorporating a rolling gigue and a folk-like gavotte in the middle portion.