

MOZART

Divertimenti K136, K137, K138
Eine kleine Nachtmusik K525



I Solisti Aquilani

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Salzburg, 1756 - Vienna, 1791)

Divertimenti K136, K137, K138 - Eine kleine Nachtmusik K525

Divertimento for Strings No. 1 in D major K136

13:58

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 01 I. Allegro | 03:48 |
| 02 II. Andante | 07:31 |
| 03 III. Presto | 02:39 |

Divertimento for Strings No. 2 in B flat major K137

11:56

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| 04 I. Andante | 05:09 |
| 05 II. Allegro di molto | 03:14 |
| 06 III. Allegro assai | 03:33 |

Divertimento for Strings No. 3 in F major K138

12:20

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 07 I. Allegro | 05:06 |
| 08 II. Andante | 04:56 |
| 09 III. Presto | 02:18 |

Serenade No. 13 in G major K525 "Eine kleine Nachtmusik"

16:49

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| 10 I. Allegro | 05:07 |
| 11 II. Romanza. Andante | 05:36 |
| 12 III. Minuetto e trio | 02:22 |
| 13 IV. Rondò. Allegro | 03:44 |

Running Time

55:12

I Solisti Aquilani

Daniele Orlando, Concertmaster

I SOLISTI AUILANI

Violins: Daniele Orlando*, Azusa Onishi, Rocco Roggia, Daniela Marinucci, Federico Cardilli*, Hinako Kawasaki, Gian Maria Lodigiani, Eugenia Lentini

Violas: Gianluca Saggini*, Margherita Di Giovanni, Luana De Rubeis

Cellos: Giulio Ferretti*, Simone De Sena

Double bass: Alessandro Schillaci*

Harpichord: Ettore Maria Del Romano*

* first parts

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MOZART. Eine kleine Nachtmusik K525 – Divertimenti K136, K137, K138

Few Mozart instrumental compositions enjoy the popularity of the serenade for strings *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* K525, that page of incomparable grace the beginning of which is so well known that it can almost be considered the Salzburg musician's identification tune – and one would be tempted to say of all the instrumental music of the second half of the 1700s. Elegance, refinement, inexhaustible rhythmic liveliness are terms that are frequently used when trying to describe in words – a feat that often fails – this work's main distinctive traits, which, incidentally, we know very little of save for its date and place (Vienna) of composition. Mozart enters it into his personal catalogue of works with his customary mix of German and Italian on 10th August 1787 as "Eine kleine Nacht Musick, bestehend in einem Allegro, Menuett und Trio – Romance. Menuett und Trio, und Finale. – 2 Violini, Viola e Bassi", without mentioning what occasion it was destined for and who, if anyone, had commissioned it. His letters say nothing about it: between August 1st and September 3rd of that year, Mozart did not write to anyone, or if he did, those letters have not come down to us. There are no events, in Viennese chronicles, suggesting that *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* might have been composed for them. What we do know is exactly where to place it chronologically, and, needless to say, it is preceded and followed by a series of masterpieces. Before it, Mozart composed the

delightful *Ein musikalischer Spass* K522 (14th June 1787) – to which *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is often compared by contrast – and the two wonderful Lieder *Abendempfindung* K523 and *An Chloe* K524, both composed on 24th June. More impressive yet are the works that follow it: the *Sonata in A major* for violin and piano K526 (24th August 1787) and, of course, *Don Giovanni* K527, which Mozart began working on in March of that year and would complete (save for midstream changes) in the last days of September. On 1st October the composer left for Prague, where *Don Giovanni* would have its triumphant première on the 29th. With its wonderful lightness, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* at the same time delights us and keeps us wondering about the transformation skills of Mozart's genius, about its variability, its being both integral part of its times and inhabiting a *someplace else* inaccessible to others. Symbol work of European 18th-century instrumental music, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is nonetheless unique, a composition that no one outside Mozart could have conceived.

When we listen to *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and study Mozart's creative path, we see that it has its solid roots in the musician's training years. The composer's artistic life is in good part also the result of the many travels and encounters with different musical traditions he made during his adolescence. Besides being very precocious, Mozart was also endowed with an extraordinary capacity for assimilation. In London, Paris, Milan, Mannheim and Vienna – only to mention five of the most important music

capitals of 18th-century Europe – the composer was able to meet in person the music protagonists of his day, listen to and play their works, and to form an opinion on them. The main architect of this good fortune was his father, eager to show his child prodigy to the world, and the world to his child prodigy. Wolfgang Amadeus, for his part, observed, listened and committed to memory all he could; yet, even when he composed in the style of the country where he found himself at the moment, his music was always entirely his. Though he wrote some of his greatest operatic masterpieces in Italian, and though in his three trips to Italy he composed numerous works, his operas are nothing like those of the authors who lived and worked in the Peninsula. In Mozart's compositions there is always something different, something more, a sometimes almost imponderable *quid* that distinguishes them from those of others. He is never entirely Italian, or entirely Austrian. His music is European in the purest meaning of the word, because it belongs to all the nations and at the same time to none; and anyone, listening to it, can feel at home.

Mozart's fruitful dialectical relationship with the Italian – and specifically Milanese – instrumental music of the day clearly shows in three delightful short compositions for solo strings, the *Divertimenti* K136, K137 and K138 (now 125a, 125b e 125c), which he wrote in Salzburg in February 1722, back from his second trip to Italy. In Italy, Mozart had arrived in August 1771 with the task of composing the serenade *Ascanio in Alba*, on a libretto by Giuseppe Parini,

first performed in Milan on 17th October of that year to celebrate the marriage of Archduke Ferdinand. Milan was then the capital of Italian instrumental music and one of the most important European centres for symphonic production. It was, indeed, the home of one of the fathers of symphony, the elderly Giovanni Battista Sammartini (1700 ca. - 1775), whose works had long been a model of inspiration for most symphonic composers. Back in his Salzburg, the sixteen-year-old Mozart did not forget what he had seen and heard in Italy but made it a matter of meditation and experimentation for his new works. The three *Divertimenti* K136, K137 and K138, as well as the 27 Symphonies he wrote between 1770 and 1774 are, undeniably, the result of that experience.

The title of *Divertimenti* added to the score is not autograph, and for a long time it puzzled Mozart's scholars. According to some of them, these three works would be Italian-style symphonies, in three movements like those by Sammartini and by the composers of the Milan milieu; others, instead, considered them chamber works in taste and character, to be performed by a string quartet and not by a small orchestra. Actually, these works' blend of typical elements of symphonic writing alongside traits that seem, instead, to relate to chamber music, stems for the simple reason that the modern distinction between "chamber" and "symphonic" music, in late 18th-century Europe was still extremely fluid, and music was performed with the forces at one's disposal: therefore even a symphony could be played

by a string quartet without this causing a sensation, for the listeners happily ignored today's philological scruples.

The *Divertimento in D major* K136 consists of three movements. The first one, *Allegro*, undoubtedly owes, under many aspects, to Mozart's Milan experience, as does – though a lot less so – the delicate central *Andante*; however, the *Finale, Presto*, with its elaborate counterpoint writing, could never have been part of a symphony composed by an Italian author of that day. The *Divertimento in B flat major* K137 has a different structure from the others. It opens with a broad and well-developed *Andante* rich in operatic inflections and definitely non-Italian in taste. This is followed by a spirited *Allegro di molto* that has all the sweeping liveliness of an operatic overture. The third and last movement, *Allegro assai*, in 3/8, is the movement that most recalls the finale of an Italian symphony of the time. The first movement of the *Divertimento in F major* K138 is an *Allegro* of symphonic taste conceived in sonata form, with the exposition of two contrasting themes, a very short development section, and the exposition's almost textual reprise with the second theme at the tonic. There follows an *Andante* in C major in the purest Italian style, in a sonata form reduced to the essential. The composition ends with a *Presto* rondo, formally speaking, is a rather elaborate rondo with four distinct episodes framed by five repeats. In spite of its formal simplicity, this is already an extremely personal Mozart: coming into contact with the Italian milieu had

proved a very positive experience, and his language had already acquired its own originality, fluency and naturalness, preluding to the masterpieces of maturity.

Danilo Prefumo

(Translated by Daniela Pilarz)

I Solisti Aquilani formed in 1968 under the guidance of Vittorio Antonellini. Their repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary music. The ensemble has toured the world, from Africa to America, from Europe to the Middle and Far East, invited by the most prestigious music institutions and venues (among them Berlin's Philharmonie, Milan's Teatro alla Scala, Vienna's Musikverein, Paris's Salle Gaveau, London's Wigmore Hall, Madrid's Teatro Real, New York's Carnegie Hall, Buenos Aires's Teatro Coliseo, the Festivals of Bern, Bratislava, Ljubljana, Stresa, the Venice Biennale). They have worked with great artists, such as Maurice André, Felix Ayo, Paul Badura Skoda, Hermann Baumann, Michele Campanella, Severino Gazzelloni, Jean Pierre Rampal, Angela Hewitt, Krzysztof Penderecki, Massimo Mercelli, Salvatore Accardo, Luis Bacalov, Andrea Griminelli, Giovanni Sollima, Mischa Maisky, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Mario Brunello, Shlomo Mintz, Richard Galliano, Gerard Korsten, Manuel Barrueco, Marco Rizzi, Andrea Lucchesini, Giuliano Carmignola, Peter Eöt-vös, and John Malkovich. I Solisti Aquilani have performed repeatedly at the Quirinale Palace

– in live TV broadcast on Rai Uno, and on Radio 3 Rai – on occasions such as the Republic Day and the visit of foreign heads of state, in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic and of the highest representatives of the state. In 2019, in Brussels, at the European Parliament, and in Rome, at the Montecitorio Palace, they presented the project “Una nuova stagione” (“A New Season”), a manifesto to defend nature, interpreting in an environmental key Antonio Vivaldi’s Four Seasons.

Over the years, the ensemble has premiered works by important Italian composers, among them Alessandro Solbiati, Ennio Morricone, Marco Tutino, Marcello Panni, Fabio Vacchi, Ivan Fedele, Nicola Campogrande, Silvia Colasanti, Carlo Boccadoro, Fabio Massimo Capogrosso, Carlo Galante, Roberta Vacca, Mauro Cardi, Francesco Antonioni, Filippo Del Corno, Gianvincenzo Cresta, and Federico Maria Sardelli.

Since 2013 Maurizio Cocciolito has been their artistic director. Daniele Orlando is their first violin.





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