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PORTLAND

FALL INTO THE ARTS

A RADIO FESTIVAL OF LOCAL PERFORMANCES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021 | 7:00 PM PT

Featuring **Portland Baroque Orchestra**

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Hosted by
Andrea Murray

Encore broadcast on
Sunday, October 10, 2021, at 4:00 PM PT

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All Classical Portland's ***Fall into the Arts: A Radio Festival of Local Performances*** proudly returns for a second season! This one-of-a-kind five-part broadcast series airs Thursdays at 7:00 PM PT, October 7 - November 4, 2021, on 89.9 FM in Portland and worldwide at allclassical.org. Each program will rebroadcast the following Sunday at 4:00 PM PT.

Fall into the Arts 2021 features performances by Portland Baroque Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, and more! Hosted by your favorite All Classical Portland radio personalities, the series culminates on November 4th with a broadcast of the Oregon Symphony's season opening concert, their first under the baton of new Music Director David Danzmayr. Learn more at allclassical.org.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021 | PORTLAND BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Piano Quartet in G Minor, KV 478

I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Rondeau

Greg Ewer, violin; Adam LaMotte, viola; Adaiha MacAdam-Somer, violoncello; Byron Schenkman, fortepiano and artistic consultant

Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, KV 493

I. Allegro

II. Larghetto

III. Allegretto

Toma Iliev, violin; Victoria Gunn, viola; Annabeth Shirley, violoncello; Jonathan Oddie, fortepiano

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NOTES

Myths and legends surround important figures and part of the intrigue and interest of performers and composers is tied to these legends and tall tales which seem to cement themselves in the cultural canon, retold so many times in so many sources that those myths and legends become believable as truth before too long. Perhaps it is a cult of celebrity and the human curiosity of the talented and famous, if not necessarily rich (in the case of most musical heroes), that drives this narrative.

While legend suggests the audience stands during Messiah's "Hallelujah Chorus" because King George II was so moved by the piece that he stood up to show his enthusiasm, and since if the king stands, everybody stands, we still do so today. It's a lovely story and allows audience members a sense of community and exclusive knowledge as insiders, but there actually is no contemporary evidence that he was even in attendance, with newspapers and eyewitness accounts failing to report his royal presence at all. Especially for these larger than life characters, it is sometimes difficult to know what is fact, what is fiction, and what is merely embellishment. Johann Sebastian Bach, in fact, actually walked the 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lubeck to meet and hear composer and organist Dietrich Buxtehude, but it is highly unlikely that Mozart perished from poison orchestrated by Antonio Salieri.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (born Salzburg, January 27, 1756; died Vienna, December 5, 1791), baptized as Johannes Chrysostomus (noting that January 27 was the feast day of St John Chrysostom) Wolfgangus (in honor of his

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maternal grandfather) Theophilus (in honor of his godfather) Mozart, is certainly a figure who inspired such mythology regarding his early life as a child prodigy, his compositions, and especially the circumstances surrounding his death. Perhaps a composer of such legendary output and performer of such legendary skill is expected to inspire myths of similar proportions because even the parts of his life that were true can seem somewhat unbelievable.

Although Amadè, as he often called himself as an adult, participated in a number of multi-year tours organized by his tour manager/promoter father Leopold beginning at the tender age of 7 years old, his first recorded public performance was actually as a dancer in a Salzburg University production when he was only five. Perhaps he was one of the earliest to claim the title of triple threat (dancer/composer/keyboardist)? Along with his older sister, Nannerl, the Mozart family covered vast territory and performed many concerts at courts as well as those offered to the public throughout these Grand Tours, playing practically everywhere between Salzburg and England, including much of Germany, France, the Low Countries, and Switzerland to the formidable likes of Maximilian III Joseph - Elector of Bavaria, Maria Theresa, King George III and Louis XV, all before the age of ten.

Arriving back in Salzburg after one of these tours, Beda Hübner, librarian at St Peter's, wrote in his diary (in Salzburg, Erzabtei St Peter, Musikarchiv A-Ssp):

“I cannot forbear to remark here also that today the world-famous Herr Leopold Mozart, deputy Kapellmeister here, with his wife and

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two children, a boy aged ten and his little daughter of 13, have arrived to the solace and joy of the whole town... the two children, the boy as well as the girl, both play the harpsichord, or the clavier, the girl, it is true, with more art and fluency than her little brother, but the boy with far more refinement and with more original ideas, and with the most beautiful harmonic inspirations... There is a strong rumour that the Mozart family will again not long remain here, but will soon visit the whole of Scandinavia and the whole of Russia, and perhaps even travel to China, which would be a far greater journey and bigger undertaking still: de facto, I believe it to be certain that nobody is more celebrated in Europe than Herr Mozart with his two children."

By age thirteen, he was appointed as an honorary Konzertmeister of the Salzburg court, which is true, but Mozart was a composer with various mythology surrounding him. An oft repeated larger than life tale about him writing the overture to Don Giovanni while in a carriage ride to the premiere is rooted in some truth, since even though rehearsals began in October for the February opening, he stayed up late the night before the premiere to write the overture. He fell asleep, waking up at 5:00 AM to finish at 7:00 AM, delivering the score to the copyists with just enough time for the fresh parts distributed with minutes to spare without rehearsal, leaving the orchestra to sight-read it. The excitement of the fresh reading led to great enthusiasm from the audience and sources say it inspired Mozart to offer a congratulatory "Bravo, bravo, that was excellent" to the members of the orchestra.

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Compared to the legends and myths of Mozart's compositional abilities, the stories surrounding his death are even more numerous. Yes, it's true that he died of a short illness at the young age of 35, but so many other details are likely speculation or exaggeration. After his death, Mozart's wife Constanze was in a tough spot financially and relied on benefit concerts and sales of some of Mozart's scores for some ready cash to help support herself and their two surviving children, the youngest just five months old. In 1797, six years after Mozart's death, Constanze met Danish diplomat Georg Nikolaus von Nissen, and they were eventually married in 1809. Together they worked on the publication of Mozart's biography, although it is known it was mostly written by Johann Heinrich Feuerstein based on notes, reminiscences, and other documents collected by Nissen before his death in 1826. Spurred on by a financial and personal interest in the biography's publication, especially in regards to inheritance for their sons, the publication was likely a rushed job. The widow was known to send material to Feuerstein and it is suggested that she 'did not really care if the book contained embellishments or suspect materials so long as it did not tell unsympathetic or prurient stories, or contradict the basic elements of the Mozart mythology which she herself had helped to crystallize'. Part of that mythology stems from her recollection of a conversation during a carriage ride when Mozart was near death. He said to her that he couldn't figure out why he was so ill, that it felt like someone was poisoning him, and that he was working on a Requiem for what he felt was his impending demise. Enter composer Antonio Salieri...

Certainly a rumor of a bitter rivalry between an older composer and a young

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wunderkind ending in a dramatic flourish of poisoning would fit a narrative of intrigue and might perhaps contribute to benefit concert revenue. Six years after Salieri's death, Pushkin wrote a play, *Mozart and Salieri*, exploring a cautionary tale regarding the danger of envy. Rimsky-Korsakov turned that play into an opera, and Peter Shaffer's 1979 hit play and subsequent film *Amadeus* fully cemented the idea of Salieri as a manipulating and bitter character. Various and numerous theories about his demise include malpractice on the part of his doctor, a discovered fracture after studying a skull from his grave, rheumatic fever, strep infection, vitamin D deficiency, or he might have gotten trichinosis from eating pork cutlets. Of course since there are assorted bits of intrigue surrounding his death, one can expect some mythology surrounding his funeral itself. The conventional narrative that Mozart was buried in a mass pauper's grave is largely fabricated and without evidence and likely a result of the use of 'common grave' as a description of the funeral, which at the time merely meant a grave used for people who weren't members of the aristocracy. Even the weather was embellished for dramatic effect given a description of the funeral published in a Vienna newspaper 65 years after his death:

"The night of Mozart's death was dark and stormy; at the funeral, too, it began to rage and storm. Rain and snow fell at the same time, as if Nature wanted to shew her anger with the great composer's contemporaries, who had turned out extremely sparsely for his burial. Only a few friends and three women accompanied the corpse. Mozart's wife was not present. These few people with their umbrellas stood round the bier, which then taken via the Grosse Schullerstrasse to the St. Marx Cemetery. As the storm grew ever more violent, even these few friends

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determined to turn back at the Stuben Gate, and they betook themselves to the “Silver Snake”.”

This tale was featured in future Mozart biographies even though the weather records for the day after the funeral were for December, a mild 38-39 degrees with a weak East wind at all times. But that isn't nearly as dramatic a tale, is it?

The repertoire for the current program, piano quartets KV 478 and KV 493 also have a history of embellished or exaggerated mythology connected to them. Mozart's Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, KV 478, scored for violin, viola, violoncello and keyboard was commissioned by publisher Franz Anton Hoffmeister in 1785 as part of a set. An oft-repeated legend features fears from Hoffmeister that this first quartet was too difficult and thus would not sell well among the public, so he released Mozart from his obligation of completing further pieces as part of the commission. The description of the piano quartets as being deemed too difficult for most musicians by the publisher would certainly serve as a nugget of information giving those pieces some sense of intrigue.

The truth is likely much less dramatic. Hoffmeister was indeed a publisher who created a subscription service in Vienna which was essentially a Netflix for chamber music of the time, including a list of dealers and agents in 66 towns across Europe for wide distribution. These subscription advertisements specifically touted that the musical offerings “clearly designed to be attractive both to beginners and to more technically advanced musicians”. Obviously, this doesn't square well with the notion

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that Hoffmeister declared KV 478 as far too difficult and thus set Mozart free from his obligation to write more such pieces. In fact Mozart composed a second piano quartet nine months later, KV 493 in E-flat Major and it is likely this second quartet described in an article in the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* published in Weimar in 1788:

“[as performed by amateurs] it could not please: everybody yawned with boredom over the incomprehensible tintamarre of 4 instruments which did not keep together for four bars on end, and whose senseless concertus never allowed any unity of feeling; but it had to please, it had to be praised! ... what a difference when this much-advertised work of art is performed with the highest degree of accuracy by four skilled musicians who have studied it carefully.”

**Program notes written by Kris Kwapis, courtesy of
Portland Baroque Orchestra**

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About Portland Baroque Orchestra

Founded in 1984, Portland Baroque Orchestra is the third-largest period performance orchestra in the United States. PBO specializes in works of the Baroque and Classical eras, but also explores the musical world outside of those time constraints, performing with period instruments or replicas of instruments that were available when the music was composed.

Learn more at pbo.org.

About Andrea Murray (in her own words)

I love playing music for people. I've been hosting and producing Classical radio shows for over 20 years now, and at All Classical Portland since 2007. I also spent several years working as a reporter and as a producer. I went to school to become a documentary filmmaker but changed plans after my first shift at a college radio station. I write poetry and make art and am grateful for the amazing listeners I've met – in the third dimension and otherwise - over the years.

Andrea hosts the overnight hours, 10:00 PM until 2:00 AM, most nights on All Classical Portland. She's also host of our contemporary music hour, Club Mod, Saturdays at 9:00 PM.

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About All Classical Portland

All Classical Portland is Portland, Oregon's classical radio station. Established in 1983, All Classical Portland's mission is to advance knowledge of and appreciation for classical music; to build and sustain culturally vibrant local and global communities around this art form; to reflect the spirit of the Pacific Northwest; and to foster integrity, quality, and innovation in all that we do.

The stations of All Classical Portland rebroadcast the KQAC signal from Portland. Classical music for the Hood River area became a reality with the launch of KQHR 90.1FM in November 2001. All Classical Portland added a new station in October 2008, KQDL 88.1 The Dalles. In May 2008, a long-time dream to have a classical station at the Oregon Coast became reality when KQOC 88.1 FM went on the air from Cape Foulweather. In March 2020, All Classical Portland integrated KSLC 90.3 FM into its radio network, in partnership with Linfield University, bringing classical music to Oregon's wine country.

For a full history of the station visit allclassical.org/about.

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