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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – *Requiem in D minor* K. 626

Mozart’s Requiem in D minor has been shrouded in mystery for more than 220 years. In the past few decades, much research has been done to dispel some of the mystery and give relevance to the facts surrounding this wondrous work. The Requiem was commissioned anonymously through an intermediary by Count Franz von Walsegg.

It is important to note that, during the last 6 months of his life, Mozart devoted most of his time to Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute), La clemenza di Tito (completed in 18 days), the Little Masonic Cantata, and the Requiem in D minor. Due to time constraints, he was not able to work exclusively on the Requiem.

When Mozart passed away on December 5, 1791, the work lay unfinished. Of the 14 movements, only the Introit and the Kyrie were absolutely complete. We know that Mozart had completed all of the vocal parts and the continuo (figured bass) because on December 4, 1791 (the day before his death), he sang the parts together with his friends. Schack, Mozart’s first “Tamino,” sang the soprano part; Mozart sang the contralto part; Hofer, Mozart’s brother-in-law, sang the tenor part; and Gerl, Mozart’s first “Sarastro,” sang the bass part.

We owe the completion of the work to the efforts of Mozart’s wife, Constanze. After his death, it became her most pressing concern. Count Walsegg had paid half of the commission to Mozart in advance and had arranged for the second half to be paid upon completion of the work. Constanze Mozart was highly motivated to have the work completed and make it look as if Mozart, himself, had done so. She approached several of Mozart’s fellow composers, including first Joseph Eybler and then Franz Xaver Süßmayr. Eybler tried his hand at some of the score. Thankfully, there is clear and careful evidence in Mozart’s score that Eybler worked on the Dies Irae and the Lacrimosa and then gave up. Süßmayr was just 25 years old when he was approached by Constanze Mozart, and it is thought that he began working in earnest at the end of 1791 and completed the task during the first half of 1792. We are not sure how much verbal or written information Süßmayr received from Mozart. He prepared a new score for the Sequence section—Dies irae, Tuba mirum, Rex tremendae, Recordare, Confutatis, and Lacrimosa—and also the Offertorium section, consisting of the Domine Jesu and Hostias, from scratch because Eybler had already marked up Mozart’s original manuscript. We are fortunate that Süßmayr did this, because it allowed comparisons to be made between his work and Mozart’s. The Austrian National Library contains one separately published work that combines Mozart’s and Süßmayr’s work. This autograph is the authoritative source for the work.

We know that it was Count Franz von Walsegg who requested the mysterious “gray messenger” to commission the work. He commissioned the Requiem Mass to be performed in honor of his wife, Anna, who had died on February 14, 1791. Two copies of the authoritative manuscript held in the Austrian National Library were made; the original was given to Count Walsegg-Stuppach and the other two were given to Breitkopf & Härtel Publishers and the City of Vienna. These copies already contained mistakes and other mistakes began to creep in from others that were made from the Count’s score. There are also several other “completions” in existence, including, at the time of Mozart’s death, one dated in 1819, and several modern completions by Franz Beyer, Duncan Druce, C. Richard Maunder, H.C. Robbins Landon, Robert D. Levin, Simon Andrews, and Clemens Kemme. Each of these modern completions claims to have great authority and tries to make improvements on the Süßmayr completions. They deal mostly with orchestration and voice leading. Only Druce chose to completely rewrite a movement.

Süßmayr gave the first public performance of the Requiem on December 14, 1793 at the new monastery church at Wiener Neustadt in a solemn mass in memory of the count’s wife. Published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1799, the Requiem has been performed at the funeral services of Joseph Haydn, Frédéric Chopin, and President John F. Kennedy; the bicentenary of Mozart’s death on December 5, 1991; and for the victims of the Siege of Sarajevo in 1994.

The manuscript of the Requiem is preserved in the Austrian National Library and scraps of his sketches were discovered by Wolfgang Plath in the German State Library in Berlin.

About Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, baptised as Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart, was a prolific and influential composer of the Classical era. Mozart showed prodigious ability from his earliest childhood. [Wikipedia](#)

- **Born:** January 27, 1756, Salzburg, Austria
- **Died:** December 5, 1791, Vienna, Austria
- **Full Name:** Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart
- **Compositions:** 41 Symphonies, 27 Piano Concerti, 5 Violin Concerti, 4 Horn Concerti, Concerti for Bassoon, Clarinet, Flute, and Flute and Harp, numerous solo piano works, 9 works for piano four-hands, 36 violin sonatas, 6 strings duos/trios, 23 string quartets, 6 string quintets, 7 piano trios, numerous other chamber music including flute quartets, an oboe quartet, a horn quartet, 13 serenades, 17 divertimenti, numerous marches and dances for various instruments, 18 masses, 14 other pieces of sacred music, 17 church sonatas for organ as well as numerous other works for organ, 23 operas
- **Children:** Raimund Leopold (17 June – 19 August 1783), Karl Thomas Mozart (21 September 1784 – 31 October 1858), Johann Thomas Leopold (18 October – 15 November 1786), Theresia Constanzia Adelheid Friedericke Maria Anna (27 December 1787 – 29 June 1788), Anna Maria (died soon after birth, 25 December 1789), Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart (26 July 1791 – 29 July 1844)
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Instrumentation – soprano soloist, mezzo soprano soloist, tenor soloist, bass soloist, chorus, 2 bassett horns, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets in D, timpani, alto trombone, tenor trombone, bass trombone, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, bass, organ.

Mozart – *Requiem in D Minor* - Translation

Artifacts –

<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/08f96610-f316-48ea-a744-c28bbf9ce08a/fullview>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:K626_Requiem_Mozart.jpg

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Manuscript_of_the_last_page_of_Requiem.jpg


1. Mozart: Requiem - Berliner Philharmoniker & Herbert von Karajan
2. Mozart: Requiem - Berliner Philharmoniker, Bryn Terfel, Claudio Abbado, Karita Mattila, Michael Schade, Sara Minguardo & Schwedischer Rundfunkchor
3. Mozart: Requiem, K. 626 - Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Arnold Schoenberg Chor & Concentus Musicus Wien
4. Mozart: The Late Symphonies, Great Mass in C Minor, Requiem - Leonard Bernstein & Wiener Philharmoniker
5. Mozart: Requiem - Arleen Auger, Cecilia Bartoli, Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsopernchor, Peter Burian, René Pape, Sir Georg Solti, Vinson Cole & Wiener Philharmoniker

1. Mozart - Requiem & Mass in C Minor
2. Requiem
3. Mozart's Requiem: Historical and Analytical Studies, Documents, Score
4. Mozart - Requiem / Mattila, Mingardo, Schade, Terfel, Berlin Phil., Abbado
5. Requiem in Full Score (Latin Edition)
6. Requiem, K626, in Full Score (Dover Miniature Music Scores)
7. Mozart: Requiem [Blu-ray]
8. Mozart - Requiem
9. Mozart: Requiem (KV 626)