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A memorial concert for Mozart in Hamburg (19 Feb 1792)

Dexter Edge

***Staats- und Gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten*, no. 30, 22 Feb 1792**

Am Sonntag ward hier im Concertsaal im West=
phalschen Concert **Mozarts** Andenken gefeyert. Alle
aufgeführte Stücke waren von der Composition des
verstorbenen großen Tonkünstlers. Eine vortreffliche
Sinfonie machte den Anfang. Hierauf folgte ein hier
noch unbekanntes Clavierconcert, das trefflichste, was
wir je gehört haben, und welches der Sohn des Herrn
Westphal mit großer Richtigkeit spielte. Madame
Langerhans sang alsdenn die berühmte Italienische
Arie mit eben so viel Geschmack und Ausdruck und
auch mit eben dem allgemeinen Beyfall, womit diese
einnehmende Sängerinn selbige schon ehedem in diesem
Concerte gesungen hat, und Herr **Hönecke** spielte die
obligate Begleitung des Fortepiano zu selbiger meister=
haft. Nun folgte abermals eine Sinfonie und eine
Cantate. Den Schluß machte die große Sinfonie aus
Es dur, die erste aller Sinfonien, deren Composition
Mozarten schon zu dem Rang eines der ersten Ton=
künstler würde erhoben haben, wenn er auch sonst nichts
gesetzt hätte. Das ganze Orchester spielte *con amore*
und schien sich selbst zu übertreffen, so rasch auch die
Tempi von dem einsichtsvollen Anführer desselben,
dem eben so geschickten als bescheidenen Violinspieler
und Sänger, Herrn **Hoffmann**, genommen wurden.

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Am Sonntag ward hier im Concertſaal im Weſtphaliſchen Concert Mozarts Andenken gefeyert. Alle aufgeführte Stücke waren von der Compoſition des verſtorbenen großen Tonkünſtlers. Eine vortreffliche Sinfonie machte den Anfang. Hierauf folgte ein hier noch unbekanntes Clavierconcert, das trefflichſte, was wir je gehört haben, und welches der Sohn des Herrn Weſtphal mit großer Richtigkeit ſpielte. Madame Langerhans ſang alsdenn die berühmte Italieniſche Arie mit eben ſo viel Geſchmack und Ausdruck und auch mit eben dem allgemeinen Beyfall, womit dieſe einnehmende Sängerinn ſelbige ſchon ehedem in dieſem Concerte geſungen hat, und Herr Hönecke ſpielte die obligate Begleitung des Fortepiano zu ſelbiger meiſterhaft. Nun folgte abermals eine Sinfonie und eine Cantate. Den Schluß machte die große Sinfonie aus Es dur, die erſte aller Sinfonien, deren Compoſition Mozarten ſchon zu dem Rang eines der erſten Tonkünſtler würde erhoben haben, wenn er auch ſonſt nichts geſetzt hätte. Das ganze Orcheſter ſpielte con amore und ſchien ſich ſelbſt zu übertreffen, ſo raſch auch die Tempi von dem einſichtsvollen Anführer deſſelben, dem eben ſo geſchickten als beſcheidenen Violinſpieler und Sänger, Herrn Hoffmann, genommen wurden.

[translation:]

On Sunday Mozart's memory was celebrated here in the concert hall, in the Westphal concert series. All of the pieces performed were compositions by the great deceased musician. The opening was an excellent symphony. This was followed by a keyboard concerto that was still unknown here, the most splendid we have ever heard, which the son of Herr Westphal played with great accuracy. Madame Langerhans then sang the famous Italian aria with just as much taste and expression, and also with the same unanimous acclaim with which this captivating singer had already sung the same aria in these concerts; and Herr Hönicke's performance of the obbligato accompaniment on the fortepiano of the aria was masterly. Another symphony followed, and a cantata. The close was the grand symphony in E-flat major, the first among all symphonies, a composition that would have raised Mozart to a rank among the leading composers, even had he written nothing else. The entire orchestra played *con amore*, and seemed to outdo itself, no matter how fast the tempi taken by its discerning leader,

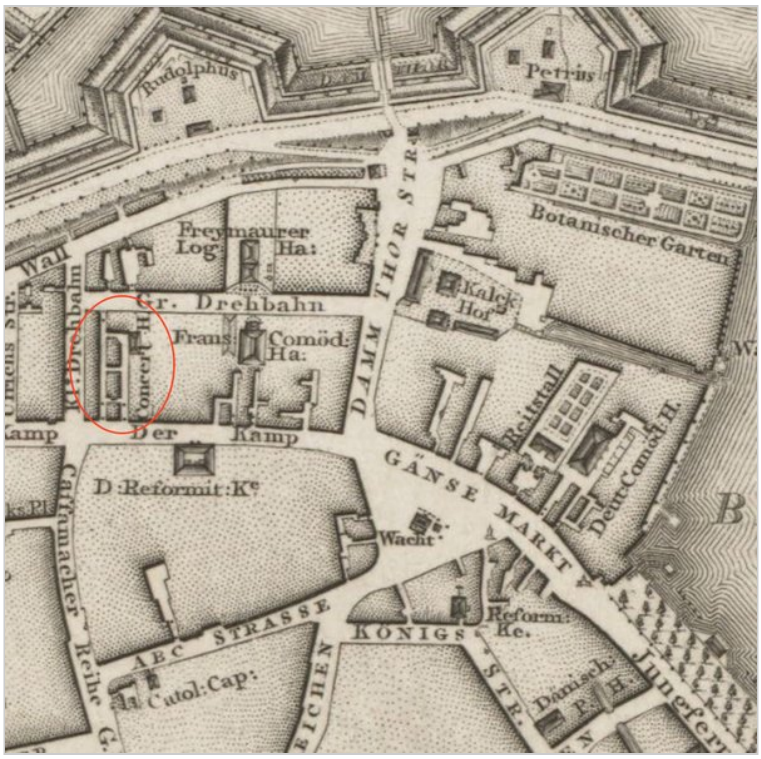
the violinist and singer Herr Hoffmann, who is as skillful
as he modest.

Commentary

It has been known since at least 1890, when Josef Sittard published a history of musical life in Hamburg, that a memorial concert for Mozart was given in that city in Feb 1792; in fact, Sittard quotes nearly the entire text of this report from the *Staats- und Gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten* (Sittard 1890, 116). The concert took place on Sun, 19 Feb (Sittard incorrectly places it a week later, on 26 Feb). It is one of several such memorial concerts and services for Mozart now known to have taken place during the first few months after Mozart's death (others were in Vienna, Prague, Kassel, and Berlin). The Hamburg concert consisted entirely of works by Mozart and much of its program can be reconstructed. The concert closed with Mozart's Symphony in E-flat, K. 543, currently the earliest documented performance of that work. Although the Hamburg concert has been known for over a century, the report transcribed here is absent from *Dokumente*, *Addenda*, and *Neue Folge*; also missing from those collections is a second description (also mentioned by Sittard) of the same concert, published the following month in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* by "Iwan Anderwitsch," who gives a moving personal account of his awe on first hearing the Symphony in E-flat (see our separate entry for Anderwitsch's report and a discussion of the writer's identity).

News of Mozart's death had reached Hamburg by 16 Dec 1791 (see the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* transcribed in *Neue Folge*, 76). Thus the participants in the Hamburg memorial had two months to plan the concert, gather repertoire, and rehearse. The concert was part of a private winter amateur series organized by Hamburg music dealer Johann Christoph Westphal (1727–1799). Anderwitsch tells us that the original plan had been to repeat the Mozart program at the final concert in Westphal's series that season; but the repetition was cancelled when news reached Hamburg of the unexpected death of Emperor Leopold II on 1 Mar 1792, leading to a ban on musical performances in the city for four weeks during the period of mourning.

The memorial concert for Mozart was held in the so-called "Concertsaal auf dem Kamp"; this hall was built in 1760 as part of a larger complex of buildings called the "Concerthof," located between what today is Valentinskamp and Drehbahn ("Große Drehbahn" in the late eighteenth century. The Concertsaal auf dem Kamp is often said to have been the first hall in Germany built specifically for concerts (see, for example, Gimpel 2008, 3; on the construction of the hall, see also 30–33). No interior or exterior image of the Concertsaal is known to survive, but its general location can be inferred from a map of Hamburg published in 1803 by Mirbeck that includes the label "Concert H.", which may refer either to the Concerthof complex as a whole, or to the "Concerthaus," as the particular building was sometimes called.



C. Lorenz B. Mirbeck, Map of Hamburg (London, 1803), detail
Harvard Map Collection (digital image)

The shaded areas on Mirbeck's map show the buildings and the unshaded ones show streets and passageways. It can be seen that a passageway connected Der Kamp with Große Drehbahn, and that three separate smaller buildings were set within that passage. It seems likely that one of these was the Concertsaal, or perhaps the darker rectangle between the 't' and 'H' of "Concert H." Although used frequently for concerts from its opening in 1761 until at least 1792, the Concertsaal began to fall out of use as a concert venue in the 1790s. A French theater company used it briefly from around the end of 1794 while awaiting the completion of its new theater on the Große Drehbahn (also marked on Mirbeck's map) and at some point the Concertsaal began to be used as a warehouse; in 1813 the Concerthof as a whole was used as a hospital, and from 1815 as an artillery and cavalry barracks (Neddermeyer 1832, 221). The Concerthof complex was torn down in the nineteenth century. The location today is shown below.



(Google Maps)

The first concert in the Concertsaal was given on 14 Jan 1761 by Friedrich Hartmann Graf; an announcement of Graf's concert in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* pointed out that the new hall was heated, an important consideration for Hamburg musicians and concert-goers in winter:

> Denen Liebhabern der Tonkunst wird hierdurch bekannt gemacht, daß am bevorstehenden Mittewochen als am 14ten dieses Monats in einem zur Musick neuerbauten, auch zur erforderlichen Wärme bequem eingerichteten geräumigen Saale, belegen auf dem Kampe, in der Mitte der daselbst neu erbauten Häuser, ein vollstimmiges Concert mit Instrumental- und Vocal-Musik aufgeführet werden.... [*Staats- und Gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten*, no. 6, 10 Jan 1761; quoted in Gimpel 2008, 11]
>
> It is hereby made known to lovers of the art of music that on this coming Wednesday, the 14th of this month, in a hall newly built for music and comfortably equipped for necessary warmth, located on Der Kamp in the middle of the newly built houses, a full-voiced concert of instrumental and vocal music will be given....

Jonas Ludwig von Heß gives a brief description of the Concertsaal in his *Topographisch-politisch-historische Beschreibung der Stadt Hamburg* from 1796:

> Das Concerthaus besteht aus einem proportionierten Saal, der ohne alle Verzierungen gebaut und schön acroamatisch gewölbt ist. Hier werden im Winter besonders zur Fastenzeit, Abends Concerte gegeben.

> Vor einigen Jahren mußte es noch in Ermangelung des Gebrauchs zu einem Kupfermagazine dienen. [von Heß, 270; quoted in Gimpel 2008, 33]
>
> The concert house consists of a well-proportioned hall, built without any ornamentation, and with fine acroamatic arches. Evening concerts are given here in the winter, particularly during Lent. Some years ago, because of lack of use, it had to serve as a copper warehouse.

By the unusual word "acroamatic" (from the Greek *ἀκροαματικός*, "for hearing"), von Heß probably means that the arches in the Concertsaal contributed to its good musical acoustics.

Anderwitsch, in the same article on musical life in Hamburg in which he writes of the memorial concert, gives us some idea of the characteristics of the hall as a venue for orchestral performance:

> Dieser Saal ist so gut angeleget, und klingt die Musik darinn ganz vortreflich, und können 20 Instrumentalisten da mehr ausrichten, wie an= derswo vielleicht nicht 30.
> [*Musikalische Korrespondenz*, no. 13, 28 Mar 1792, col. 99]
>
> This hall is very well laid out, and the music in it sounds quite splendid, and 20 instrumentalists can achieve more here than perhaps not even 30 could elsewhere.
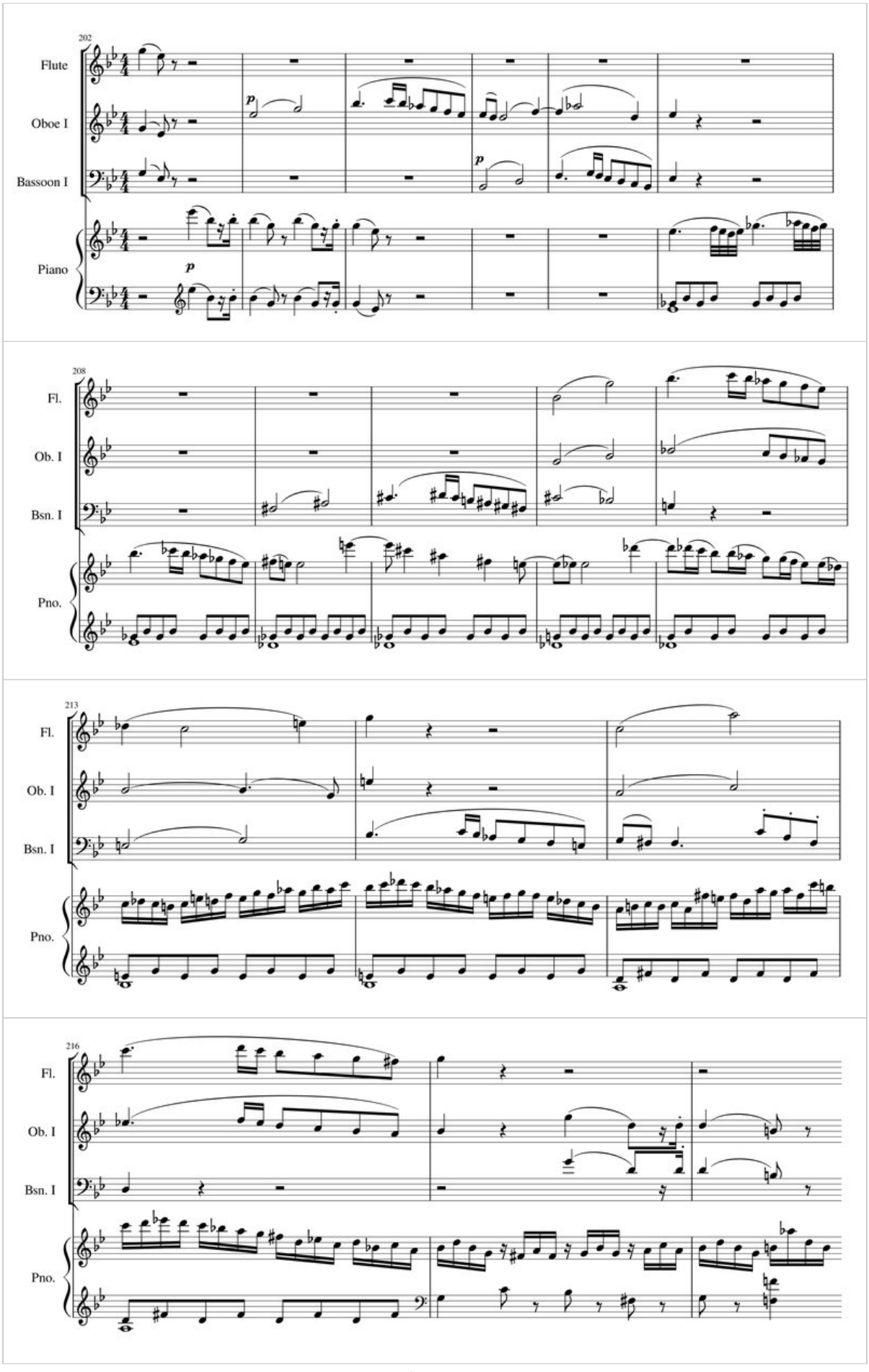
Anderwitsch's comment probably also implies that the Concertsaal was relatively small. (Anderwitsch goes on to mention Mozart's symphonies in this passage, which is quoted at greater length in the commentary to our separate entry on his report.) Because the Concertsaal could be rented, many local and visiting musicians gave concerts there over the three decades that it was in regular use. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach occasionally gave concerts there, including, on 17 Aug 1776, the first performance of four new large symphonies, Wq 183, today sometimes called the "Hamburg" symphonies (Sittard 1890, 107; Kidger 2005, xii).

Much of the program of the Mozart memorial concert in Hamburg in 1792 can be reconstructed with varying degrees of certainty from the information in the report transcribed here, supplemented by details from Anderwitsch. The *Hamburgischer Correspondent* does not name the key of the piano concerto, but Anderwitsch mentions that it was in B-flat and adds that "[it] has enchanting passages in the accompanying parts, of which, among others, the bassoon, performed with such mastery by the excellent Herr Schwenke, was so lovely to hear" ("[das Konzert hat] bezaubernde Stellen in den begleitenden Stimmen..., wobei unter andern das Fagot sich so allerliebst, von dem vortrefflichen Hrn. Schwenke so meisterhaft vorgetragen, hören lässet").
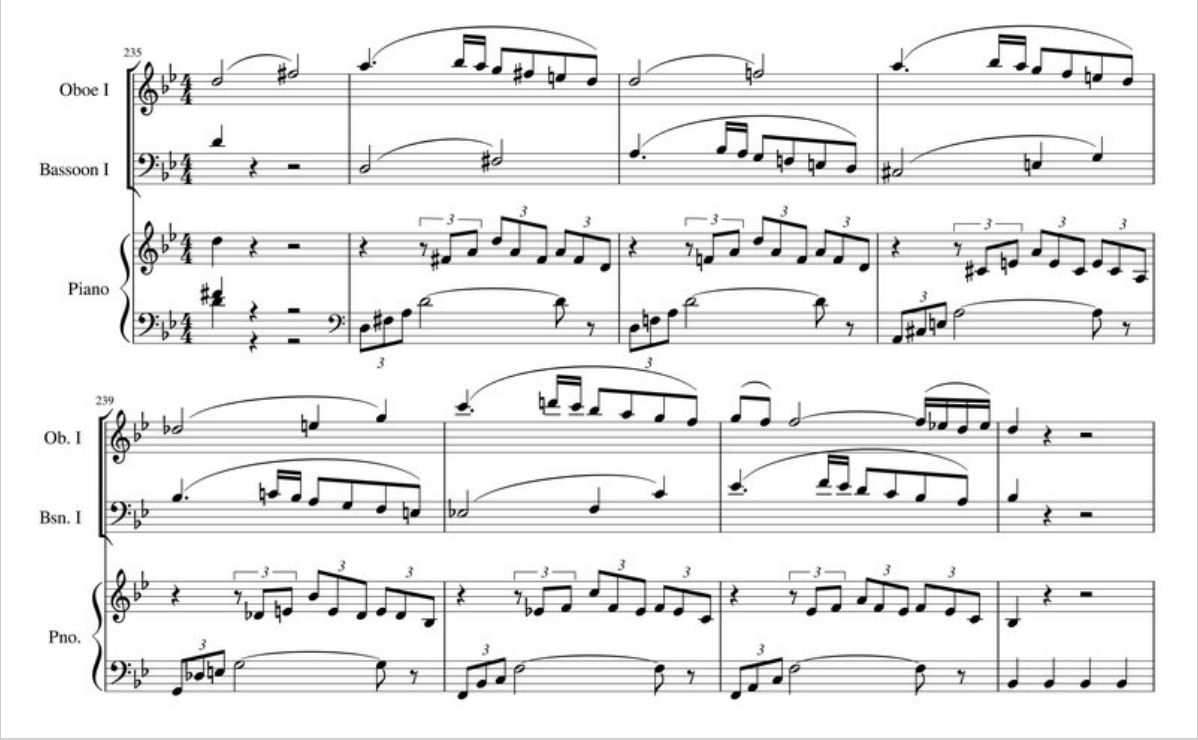
Mozart composed four piano concertos in B-flat: K. 238, K. 450, K. 456, and K. 595 (omitting from consideration the early concerto K. 39, which was certainly not meant here). K. 238 is not scored for bassoons, so it is unlikely to have been the concerto performed in 1792. Each of the

other three includes bassoons, but K. 450, although it is the first of Mozart's concertos to make full use of the winds as an independent section, has few passages in which the bassoons particularly stand out. In any case, that concerto seems not to have been circulated during Mozart's lifetime, so it was probably not the one played in Hamburg.

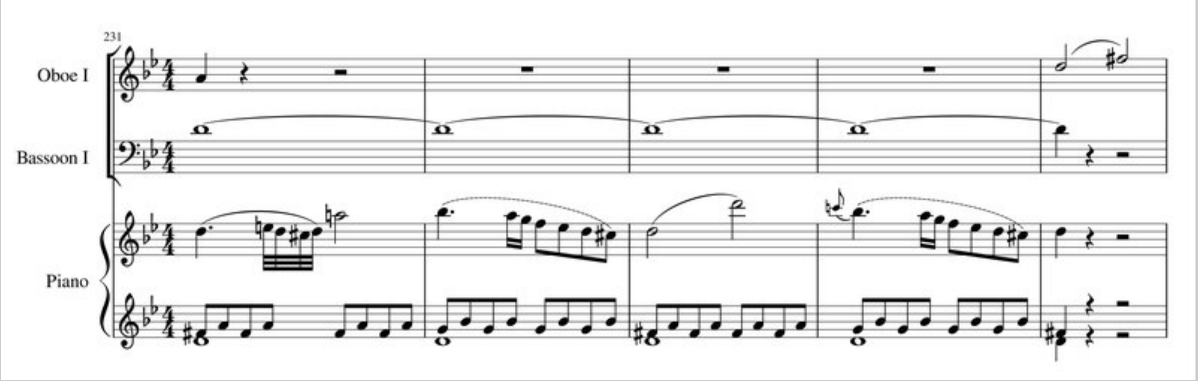
Both K. 456 and K. 595, on the other hand, have several passages in which the first bassoon (Herr Schwenke's part in the memorial concert, it is safe to assume) stands out or plays a prominent role in combination with other instruments. For example, in the development section of the first movement of K. 595, in mm. 202–18, the first bassoon, first oboe, and the right hand of the piano exchange a variant of the movement's opening motive through an extraordinary modulatory passage.


202
Flute
Oboe I
Bassoon I
Piano
p
208
Fl.
Ob. I
Bsn. I
Pno.
213
Fl.
Ob. I
Bsn. I
Pno.
216
Fl.
Ob. I
Bsn. I
Pno.

The first oboe and first bassoon again exchange this motive at the end of the retransition, this time against arpeggiated triplet chords in the piano (mm. 235–42).
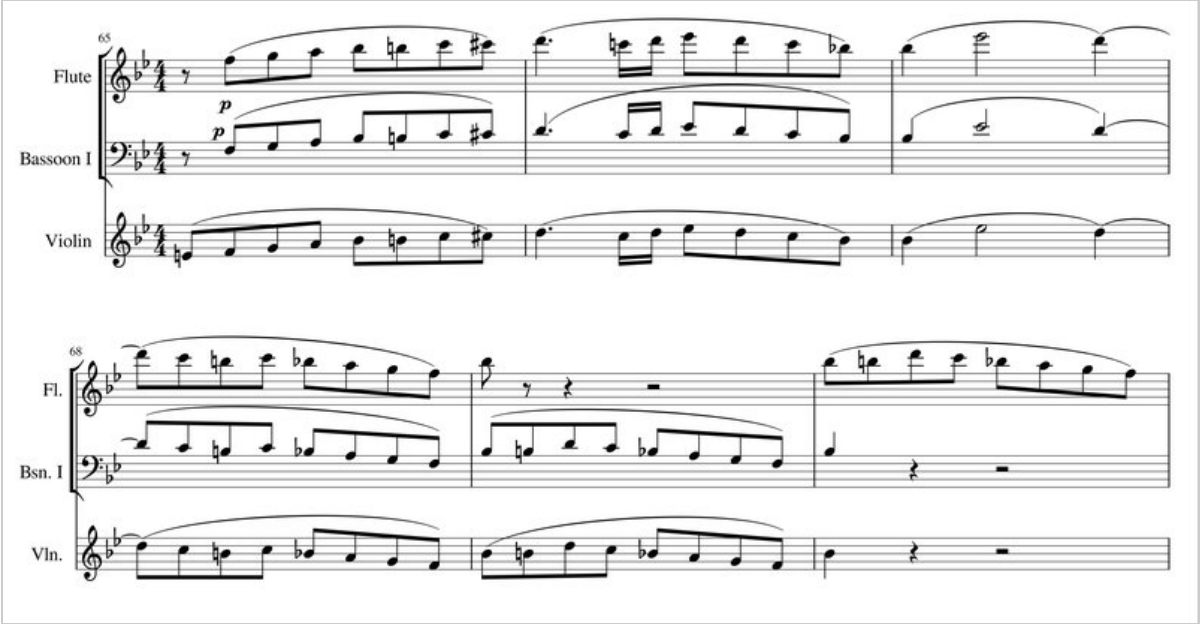


In the four measures preceding this passage, the first bassoon plays a long held note as the only accompaniment to the solo piano (mm. 231–35), a novel bit of orchestration that might well have stood out to a listener of the time because of its ingenious simplicity.
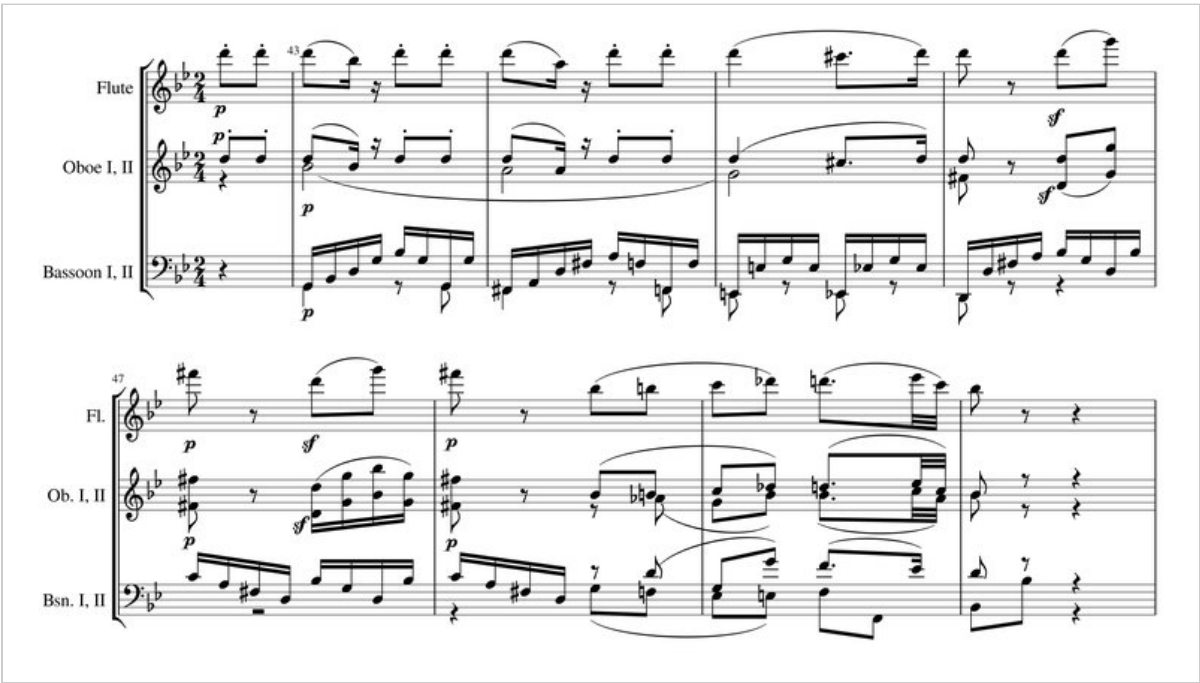


The first bassoon is used in the same way in the recapitulation (mm. 341–43).

One of Mozart's signature orchestral sounds is to have the flute and first bassoon double a melodic line at the upper and lower octave, as in mm. 65–69 in the first movement of K. 595.



This bracketing effect is also used in the second movement (mm. 124–26), and in all three movements of K. 456 (i:29–37 and 275–83, ii:157–59, and iii:128–36).

None of these passages is virtuosic for the bassoon, but Anderwitsch's words "bezaubernd" (enchanting) and "allerliebst" (lovely) suggest he may have been more impressed by the beauty of Schwenke's tone than by his virtuosity. However, the second movement of K. 456 includes a technically rather more impressive passage for first bassoon: a leaping arpeggiated line in sixteenths in the second variation (mm. 43–50 and 59–64), perhaps the most soloistic passages for the instrument in either concerto.



K. 595 was first published by Artaria in Vienna at the end of Aug 1791, and—given Westphal's evident access to music issued by Viennese publishers and copyists—it would probably have been available in Hamburg by the time of the memorial concert in Feb 1792. K. 456 did not appear in a printed edition until Aug 1792 (from André), but manuscript copies of the concerto may have been in circulation earlier (see Edge 2001, esp. 578–80, and Table 7.2, 795–97). Because, however, K. 595 had been published several months before the Hamburg concert, it is arguably most likely to have been the concerto performed, even if K. 456 cannot be ruled out. Keeping in mind that Anderwitsch may have identified the key by ear (and given the vagaries of eighteenth-century tuning), we can perhaps not entirely rule out K. 488 in A-major, which, like K. 456 and K. 595, has passages in which the first bassoon is prominent; however, there seems to be no clear evidence that K. 488 was in circulation at this time, so this option is unlikely.

The reference to "obligate Begleitung des Fortepiano" (obbligato accompaniment of the fortepiano) in the aria sung by Madame Langerhans strongly suggests K. 505, "Ch'io mi scordi di te … Non temer, amato bene," which Mozart composed at the end of 1786 for Nancy Storace to sing at her going-away concert in Vienna on 23 Feb 1787, with Mozart himself playing the piano solo. Anderwitsch refers to the aria sung by Langerhans as a "herrliche[s] Rondo" (magnificent *rondò*); K. 505 is, in fact, a *rondò*, so that would seem to clinch the identification. The early history of the performance and distribution of K. 505 has not been thoroughly investigated, but Mozart is thought (on the basis of an anecdote published by Rochlitz in 1798) also to have performed the aria with Josepha Duschek at a concert in Leipzig on 12 May 1789. The aria was not published until 1795, but several manuscript sources survive, although for the most part these have not yet been precisely dated. (On some early Viennese manuscript copies of K. 505, see Edge 2001, Table 6.1, 561–62, and 717–23; however, these copies all appear to date from no earlier than the mid 1790s.) The wording of the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* suggests that Langerhans had already sung the aria at an earlier concert on Westphal's series, and it refers to the aria as "berühmt" (famous). So assuming that K. 505 was the aria performed in Hamburg, it may be that it was more widely distributed and performed by this time than has previously been realized.

The report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* mentions an otherwise unspecified "cantata" on the program of the memorial concert, but Anderwitsch describes it as the "klein[e], aber allerliebst[e] Kantate, darinn Hr. Pleisner die Tenorstimme mit Beifall sang" (the short but lovely cantata in which Herr Pleisner sang the tenor part with acclaim). A strong possibility here is Mozart's Masonic cantata *Die Maurerfreude*, K. 471, scored for tenor solo, chorus (TTB) and orchestra. K. 471 was first published by Artaria in Vienna in Aug 1785, and Westphal in Hamburg listed it among the manuscript scores that he had on offer in his catalog for Jul 1786 (*Neue Folge* 47–48). Since K. 471 had been available in Hamburg since at least 1786, it seems a good candidate for the work sung at the memorial concert in 1792. However, we should probably not rule out K. 619, "Die ihr des unermeßlichen Weltalls Schöpfer ehrt," for high voice and piano, which was first published in Hamburg in 1792 as a fold-out at the end of Franz Heinrich Ziegenhagen's *Lehre vom richtigen Verhältnisse zu den Schöpfungswerken* (for an image of the *recto* of the unfolded page, see Giesing et al. 2006, 89, Abb. 33); Ziegenhagen was living in

Hamburg at the time, had written the text, and had evidently commissioned Mozart's setting. Mozart entered this "kleine teutsche kantata" (his description) into his catalog of his own works under the month of July 1791, so Ziegenhagen would surely have had Mozart's manuscript in Hamburg before the end of the year, and it would at least theoretically have been available to the organizers of the memorial concert, even if Ziegenhagen's book had not yet been published by that point.

The program of the memorial concert included three symphonies: one to open the concert, one in the middle, between the aria and the cantata, and one in E-flat to close. Neither the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* nor Anderwitsch's in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* provide any details that would help identify the first two symphonies. Westphal's catalogs, however, give us some idea which Mozart symphonies were available in Hamburg by that time. His catalog of Apr 1790 lists eight symphonies by Mozart among the "Neue eingekommene Musikalien" (newly arrived music):

Mozart, I [Sinfonie] a 8. A dur	5 = 8
————, I [Sinfonie] a 9. B dur	4 = 8
————, I [Sinfonie] a 14. C dur, No. 2 mit Pauck. u. Tromp.	10 = 8
————, I [Sinfonie] a 12. C dur, No. 3. desgl.	6 =
————, I [Sinfonie] a 16. Es dur, desgl.	10 =
————, I [Sinfonie] a 11. D dur, No. 6	6 =
————, I [Sinfonie] a 18. D dur, No. 7. desgl.	10 =
————, I [Sinfonie] a 19. G dur, dsgl.	5 = 4

(The transcription is from Eisen 1986, 628; the document does not appear in *Neue Folge*. Numbers in the columns at right are prices, probably in marks and schillings, although Eisen omits the column headings.)

As Eisen points out, some of these works are difficult to identify. But the symphony "a 16. Es dur" (in 16 parts in E-flat) was probably K. 543 (Anderwitsch mentions that the symphony performed at the memorial concert was in 16 parts). K. 543 is the only symphony by Mozart in that key after K. 184, composed in 1773, and it is the only one in that key on such a large scale (as suggested by the price). In any case, Anderwitsch's awed response to the symphony strongly suggests that he had heard something far beyond the ordinary experience of a late-eighteenth-century concert-goer, and K. 543 is undeniably that. It seems certain, then, that K. 543 was the closing symphony on the Hamburg program.

The other two symphonies on the program cannot be identified, but it is possible they were selected from among those that Westphal had advertised in 1790 or in his earlier catalogs of the 1780s. Eisen (1986, 629) suggests that the other two "large, expensive symphonies" in C and D in Westphal's catalog of Apr 1790 may have been K. 425 or K. 551, and K. 504. The other symphonies attributed to Mozart in that catalog are difficult to identify (particularly if we take seriously Westphal's claim that they were all "new" to his stock), but Eisen suggests the symphony in A♭major could have been K. 201 or K. 134. It seems unlikely that a performance of the massive

and extraordinary K. 551 would have passed without special comment in 1792, so it was probably not part of the memorial concert. More than that, we cannot say, but the other symphonies in the 1790 catalog, whatever they may have been, are plausible candidates for having been played at the memorial concert.

Westphal had previously advertised Mozart symphonies in 1785, Jul 1786, and Mar 1787 (see *Neue Folge*, 105–6, 47–48, and 113 respectively). Most of these symphonies are difficult to identify from Westphal's terse descriptions, but it is evident that some of those in D major were arrangements from serenades (possibilities are K. 203, 204, 250, 320, and 385), and a symphony in C major advertised in 1786 might have been K. 200, 338, or 425. Other symphonies attributed to Mozart in Westphal's catalogs of the 1780s seem to have been works that are now regarded as doubtful (K. 16a in A minor) or spurious (K. C 11.08 in F major). Authentic or not, however, all of these remain possibilities for the Hamburg memorial concert.

The concerto on the program was performed by Westphal's son, Johann Christian (sometimes also called Johann Christoph Jr.). According to Gerber (*Neues Lexikon*, iv, cols. 559–60), the younger Westphal was born on 1 Apr 1773, so he would still have been just 18 at the time of the memorial concert. The bassoonist praised by Anderwitsch was Johann Gottlieb Schwenke (1744–1823), father of Christian Friedrich Gottlieb Schwenke (1767–1822), C. P. E. Bach's successor as director of music for Hamburg's five churches, who was appointed to that position in 1789. Schwenke père had been a military musician before settling in Hamburg in 1776. Gerber (*Lexikon*, ii, col. 487) describes him as a "vorzüglicher Meister auf dem Fagott" (first-rate master on the bassoon).

The "Madame Langerhans" who sang the aria at the memorial concert in 1792 (probably K. 505) was Johanna Langerhans (1769–1810), second wife of actor Karl Daniel Langerhans, also a member of the German theater company in Hamburg at that time. Joseph Kürschner, in his article on the couple in the *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, writes of Johanna:

> Ihre beste Zeit war das Hamburger Engagement, in dem sie ihre Anlage zu zärtlichen, launigen und naiven Mädchenrollen zu voller Höhe brachte. Ihr Spiel war lebhaft und ungezwungen, ihre auch für den Gesang sehr geeignete Stimme höchst angenehm. Man rühmt u. A. ihre "Rosalie" (Doctor und Apotheker), "Emilia Galotti", "Franziska" (Minna v. Barnhelm), "Bertha" (Lilla), "Donna Elvira" (Don Juan), "Gurli" (Indianer in England), "Papagena" (Zauberflöte). [ADB, vol. 17, 681]

> Her best period was the Hamburg engagement, during which she brought to full flower her aptitude for the roles of endearing, humorous, and naive girls. Her acting was lively and unforced, her voice, which was very suited to singing, most pleasant. Praised among others were her Rosalie (*Doktor und Apotheker* [Dittersdorf]), Emilia Galotti [in Lessing's play of the same name], Franziska (*Minna von Barnhelm* [Lessing]), Bertha (*Lilla* [a singspiel adaptation of Martín y Soler's *Una cosa rara*), Donna Elvira (*Don Juan*), Gurli (*Die Indianer in England* [Kotzebue]), Papagena (*Die Zauberflöte*).

Her name appears on the poster for the Hamburg premiere of Mozart's "*Dom Juan*" (as the German adaptation of *Don Giovanni* was billed there) on 27 Oct 1789, in the role of Donna Elvira (see the facsimile in Giesing et al. 2006, 25). She also sang the role of Papagena in the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* in Hamburg on 15 Nov 1793 (Schütze 1794, 687).

The "Herr Hönecke" who played the obbligato piano in the aria was Johann Friedrich Hönicke (1755–1809), music director of the German theater in Hamburg. Hönicke was also a composer, whose works included a singspiel, *Heirath und Liebe*, and a symphony in E-flat. "Herr Pleisner," the tenor soloist in the cantata, was Heinrich Christian Pleisner (1756–1830; also Pleissner, Plaisner, Plasner). According to Schütze (1794, 637), Pleisner had formerly been with the company of Gustav Friedrich Wilhelm Großmann, and he made his debut as a member of the German company in Hamburg on 1 Nov 1790 (on Pleisner, see also Wolter 1901, xciii). The violinist and singer "Herr Hoffmann," who led the orchestra at the memorial concert was Johann Andreas Hoffmann (1752–1832; on Hoffmann, see Neubacher 2009, 429).

To summarize, the program of the memorial concert in Hamburg on 19 Feb 1792 was:

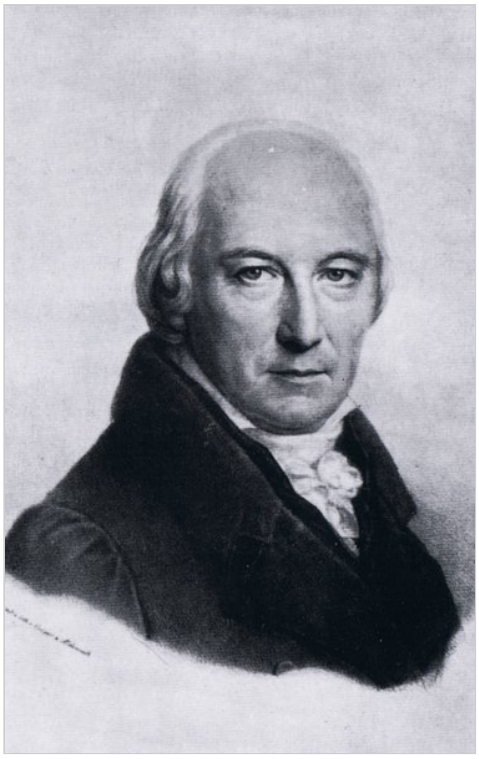
A symphony by Mozart
Piano Concerto in B-flat Major (K. 595 or K. 456)
    Johann Christian Westphal, piano
"Ch'io mi scordi di te ... Non temer, amato bene," K. 505
    Johanna Langerhans, soprano
    Johann Friedrich Hönicke, piano
A symphony by Mozart
A short cantata (K. 471 or K. 619)
    Heinrich Christian Pleisner, tenor
Symphony in E-flat Major K. 543

Mozart in Hamburg

How did it come to pass that just over two months after Mozart's death in Vienna, a memorial concert for him took place in distant Hamburg, a city that he never visited, 750 kilometers from Vienna as the crow flies, and staunchly Lutheran since 1529?

An important factor is the political context: in spite of its distance from Vienna, Hamburg had long been a "free imperial city," subject only to the Holy Roman Emperor. This helps explain the city's reaction to the death of Leopold II, and the subsequent four-week period of mourning mentioned by Anderwitsch. Hamburg also had a network of theatrical ties with Vienna. One prominent example is the actor Franz Brockmann (1745–1812), born in Graz, who had been a member of the German theater in Hamburg in the 1770s; in 1778, he accepted an engagement at the court theater in Vienna, where he became a member of the theater's directorial board, and from 1789 to 1792 its first individual director.

But the most important link between the theaters in the two cities was actor, director, and playwright Friedrich Ludwig Schröder (1744–1816). Schöder came to Hamburg in 1764, and from 1771 was co-director of the German theater in that city along with his mother Charlotte Ackermann. After a successful guest residency at the Burgtheater in Vienna in the spring of 1780, Schröder accepted an engagement there, remaining for four seasons: he made his debut as a member of the court theater ensemble on 16 Apr 1781, just one month after Mozart's arrival in Vienna, and remained through Feb 1785. Schröder is one of the most important links between Mozart's music and Hamburg during the composer's lifetime.



Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, lithograph by Friedrich Carl Gröger and Heinrich Jacob Aldenrath, ca. 1810. (Wikimedia Commons)

Mozart first mentions Schröder in a letter to his father on 9 Jun 1781:

> ...der kayser ist nicht hier. graf Rosenberg ist nicht hier. letzterer hat dem schröder |: den vornehmen Acteur :| Commißion gegeben, um ein gutes Oper buch umzusehen, und mir es zu schreiben zu geben. [*Briefe*, iii:127]
>
> ...The emperor is not here. Count Rosenberg is not here. The latter commissioned Schröder (the distinguished actor) to look around for a good libretto, and to give it to me to compose.

A week later Mozart writes that Schröder has found a four-act libretto, one that Mozart thinks would need considerable revision to be usable (*Briefe*, iii:131). He never mentions that libretto again, going on instead to set Bretzner's *Belmont und Constanze*, as revised by Gottlieb Stephanie Jr. Although Mozart gives no other clues to the identity of the libretto that Schröder found for

him, Thomas Bauman points out that four-act German libretti were rare at that time (Bauman 1987, 10–11 and note 7); one of the small handful of possibilities is Großmann's *Adelheit von Veltheim*. In fact, just a few months after assuming sole direction of the German theater in Hamburg in Apr 1786, Schröder staged Christian Gottlob Neefe's 1780 setting of *Adelheit*, perhaps suggesting that he had a particular liking for the libretto. Thus it is arguably the strongest candidate for the one he offered Mozart in 1781.

Mozart mentions Schröder only once more, in a letter of 10 Dec 1783 (*Briefe*, iii:296), but it is clear that the two men were acquainted, and Schröder would certainly have come to know *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* quite well. Schröder's friend and biographer Friedrich Ludwig Wilhelm Meyer writes that Schröder himself was passionate about music (Meyer 1819, ii/1, 355): the actor had a background in dance from his early years in the theater, and he is said to have played violin and been able to compose simple dances and songs (see Claudia Maurer Zenck, in Giesing et al. 2006, 8). It is likely that during his four years in Vienna, Schröder would have had ample opportunity to hear Mozart perform and experience a variety of his music. While in Vienna, Schröder also became acquainted with Joseph and Aloysia Lange, who appeared as guest performers in Hamburg in 1784, perhaps at Schröder's recommendation (according to Meyer, 1819, ii/1, 43, Lange was Schröder's "Lieblingssängerin").

The first opera performed under Schröder's direction in Hamburg was *Der Deserteur*, a German adaptation of an original by Sedaine and Monsigny, which premiered on 10 Oct 1786. Neefe's setting of *Adelheit von Veltheim* followed on 4 Dec 1786, quickly becoming a substantial hit. The following June saw the Hamburg premieres of Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker* and Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, both of which also became local favorites. During his tenure as director in Hamburg, Schröder continued to draw on repertoire from Vienna, programming works by Ignaz Umlauf, Benedikt Schack, and Paul Wranitzky, as well as German adaptations of Italian operas that had been given in Vienna (Zenck, in Giesing et al. 2006, 7). In 1789, Schröder brought writer Johann Friedrich Schink (1755–1835) to Hamburg as Theaterdichter; Schink had previously been active in Austria, first in Vienna (from 1780) and then Graz. To Mozart scholars, Schink is known for his long review of the first production of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, published in 1782 (extracts in *Dokumente*, 185–87), and his review of Anton Stadler's benefit concert in Vienna on 23 Mar 1784, a concert that included a performance of four movements from Mozart's serenade K. 361 (*Dokumente*, 206–7; see also our main entry on Schink).

Schröder visited Vienna again from 20 to 30 May 1791 (Meyer 1819, ii/1, 83–90), attending a performance of Paul Wranitzky's *Oberon* on 23 May at Schikaneder's Theater auf der Wieden. One result of Schröder's Viennese visit that year was the Hamburg engagement of Jacob Herzfeld, an actor in Schikaneder's company; Herzfeld may subsequently have played a role in bringing Viennese scores to Hamburg (see Jürgen Neubacher's commentary to item 3 in Giesing et al. 2006, 12, Schröder's letter of invitation to Herzfeld). However, Schröder is not known to have met with Mozart during his visit in 1791, which may suggest that the two had remained merely acquaintances rather than friends.

Little is known about the performance and reception of Mozart's music in Hamburg prior to Schröder's return in 1786. Sittard (1890, 90) gives the program of a concert in Hamburg on 27 Apr 1782 that included a "Clavier-Trio von Mozart" (not in *Dokumente* or its supplements); if Sittard's report is accurate, the work performed (assuming that it was not one of the early trios K. 10–15) must have been K. 254, the Divertimento in B-flat, which was published that year in Paris by Heina, and was listed on 15 Jan 1783 in Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* (a journal published in Hamburg). Aloysia Lange visited Hamburg with her husband in 1784, making guest appearances in the theater and giving a concert there on 20 Jul 1784. She is not documented as having performed works by Mozart during this visit to Hamburg, but it would not be surprising if she had included one or more Mozart arias on her concert program: Mozart had composed six concert or insertion arias for her by that point (K. 294, 316, 383, 416, 418, and 419), and she might also have performed arias from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, which was in her repertoire by the time of her tour in 1784. (For an announcement of her 1784 concert in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, see Neubacher, in Giesing et al. 2006, 58; the announcement does not mention any composers or specific repertoire.)

Entführung was the first of Mozart's operas staged in Hamburg, premiering on 18 Jun 1787 (for a facsimile of the poster for the premiere, see Giesing et al. 2006, 20, Abb. 6). The opera was performed in Hamburg at least nine times during Mozart's lifetime: following its premiere, it was performed again on 16 Nov 1787; then twice in 1788, on 23 Jan and 2 Jun; three times in 1789, on 7, 10, and 24 Jul, all with the visiting Aloysia Lange in the role of Konstanze (Meyer 1819, ii/1, 43–44); and on 3 Jan and 4 May 1791. Lange also gave a concert in the theater during her second visit to Hamburg, on 1 Aug 1789: an announcement in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* the day before the concert stated that she would sing "einig[e] Italienischen von dem berühmten Mozart unter andern Meistern componirten Arien" (several Italian arias composed by the famous Mozart among other masters; see our entry for 1 Aug 1789).

Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was first given in Hamburg on 27 Oct 1789, and became by far the most popular opera in Hamburg over the next three decades (von Zahn 1991, 61, and Till Reininghaus, in Giesing et al. 2006, 21–23). The opera was given in Hamburg in German under the title "*Dom Juan*," in a four-act adaptation by Schröder, with some alterations (for example, Don Giovanni's "Fin ch'an dal vino" was sung by Leporello). *Dom Juan* was performed nineteen times by the end of 1791, and seven more in 1792. (On *Don Giovanni* in Hamburg, see Reininghaus, in Giesing et al. 2006, 21–25; a facsimile of the poster for the premiere is on p. 25, Abb. 8).

Le nozze di Figaro was the last of Mozart's operas to be staged in Hamburg during the composer's lifetime: it was first performed there on 4 Apr 1791 in the German translation of Adolph Freiherr Knigge and his daughter Philippine (for more on the Knigges, see our entry for 18 May 1792). Unlike *Entführung* and *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro* seems not to have been an immediate success with the Hamburg public (Reininghaus, in Giesing et al. 2006, 26–30). However, Schröder seems to have had a special affection for the opera, keeping it in the theater's repertoire in spite of weak

attendance: the opera was performed nine times in Hamburg by the end of 1791. Meyer writes that *Figaro*:

> … unter allen Singspielen des großen Meisters, Schrödern immer das liebste war, und nach seinen Grundsätzen seyn mußte, weil es Wahrheit des Ausdrucks mit Schönheit verbindet, und seine treffliche Kunst nicht verschwendet, einen unwürdigen Stoff zu bemänteln. [Meyer 1819, ii/1, 55]

> … was Schröder's favorite among all the singspiels by the great master, as it had to be according to his principles, because it combined truth of expression with beauty, and did not squander its splendid art in prettifying an unworthy subject.

Thus Schröder seems to have played a key role in bringing Mozart's stage works to Hamburg, with *Don Giovanni* in particular becoming a great local favorite during the composer's lifetime. The Hamburg public's exposure to Mozart's operas may have helped spark interest in his other music.

We have already seen that Hamburg music dealer Johann Christoph Westphal offered a substantial selection of Mozart's music, and his selection may have been even greater than Mozart scholars have realized: in the exhibition catalog *Mozart und Hamburg*, Jürgen Köchel writes that Westphal's catalog of 1790 (from which the symphony listings have been cited above) includes 55 works by Mozart, most of them vocal (Köchel, in Giesing et al. 2006, 87; no listings from this catalog are included in *Dokumente* or its supplements). Mozart's works also appeared on other Hamburg concert programs during his lifetime. Mozart's student, the child prodigy Johann Nepomuk Hummel, gave a concert in Hamburg on 9 Jan 1790 that included two Mozart concertos and the A-major Sonata, K. 331 (see Sittard 1890, 183–84), and the local child prodigy Henriette Grund made her concert debut in Hamburg on 17 Dec 1791 (according to Sittard) with a program that included concertos by Mozart and Hoffmeister, and a sonata by Kozeluch (Sittard 1890, 136). In the preface to his *Drey Sonaten für das Klavier*, published in 1789, Christian Friedrich Schwenke cited Mozart as one of his models (along with C. P. E. Bach and Joseph Haydn; see *Neue Folge*, 118). Schwenke went on to become a devoted student of Mozart's music and an advocate for it: among other things, he organized the first performance of *Idomeneo* in Hamburg in 1804, and prepared the keyboard score of Mozart's Requiem published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1818. He also made a large number of copies and arrangements of Mozart's works (see Neubacher, in Giesing et al. 2006, 65)

These diverse strands of evidence show that the cultivation of Mozart's music was unusually strong in Hamburg during the last five years of the composer's life. The high regard for his music in that city may have been motivated in part by the advocacy of Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, who had become acquainted with Mozart and his music during his engagement at the court theater in Vienna from 1781 to 1785, and who brought three of Mozart's operas to the stage in Hamburg between 1787 and 1791. In this context, the occurrence of the memorial concert for Mozart in Hamburg on 19 Feb 1792 is less surprising. Nor was that concert the only Mozart memorial in Hamburg that year: on 17 Nov, the city saw a performance of Bernhard Wessely's memorial

cantata *Mozarts Urne*, which had first been performed in Berlin on 18 Mar 1792 (on the Hamburg performance, see von Zahn 1991, 52).

Notes (⇧)

A facsimile of the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* on the Mozart memorial concert is included in the exhibition catalog *Mozart und Hamburg* (Giesing et al. 2006, 97, Abb. 36); this facsimile (reproduced above) is based on the exemplar in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky, shelfmark X / 7569 (the catalog does not give a page number). This volume of the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* is apparently not yet available online in digital form. Till Reininghaus's brief discussion of the memorial concert (Giesing et al. 2006, 94) includes a few short quotes from this report and from the one by Anderwitsch.

Roughly two-thirds of the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* is transcribed by Sittard (1890, 116), who gives the phrase "noch unbekanntes Klavierkonzert" (*sic*, actually "Clavierconcert"), followed by the complete text from "die berühmte italienische Arie ..." to the end, with just a few other minor discrepancies of transcription:

Original	**Sittard**
auch mit eben dem allgemeinen Beyfall	auch eben mit dem allgemeinen Beyfall
Sängerinn	Sängerin
Herr Hönecke	Herr Hönicke
Es dur	*Es-Dur*
die erste aller Sinfonien,	[omitted from Sittard's transcription]
dem eben so geschickten	dem ebenso geschickten

Sittard also incorrectly places the concert on 26 Feb 1792, instead of 19 Feb. The report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* appeared in the issue of Wed, 22 Feb 1792, and refers (in the past tense) to the concert "Am Sonntag," namely 19 Feb; thus there is no question about the date.

Von Zahn (1991, 43) cites the report in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* and quotes one phrase from it ("Das ganze Orchester spielte con amore und schien sich selbst zu übertreffen"); he also lists the items on the program, but does not attempt to identify them, apart from the closing symphony, which he identifies as K. 543.

The Mozart memorial concert in Hamburg is briefly mentioned in the *Fortgesetzte Schubart'sche Chronik*, in the issue of 13 Mar 1792:

> Skizzen.
>
> 1. Zu Hamburg wurde neulich das Andenken des großen Tonkünstlers **Mozart** auf eine rührende

Art gefeiert.
*) Alle Stücke in dem deshalb veranstalteten Konzert waren von ihm. Gesang und Spiel wurden meister= lich ausgeführet, und besonders die große Sinfonie aus *es dur* von dem begeisterten Orchester mit einem Feuer und einem Einklange durchgeführt, daß der Geist des Entschlafenen hätte frohloken sollen.
[*Chronik*, 13 Mar 1792, 168]

Sketches.
1. In Hamburg the memory of the great composer Mozart was recently celebrated in a touching manner.
*) All pieces in the concert held on this account were by him. The singing and playing were masterly, and especially the grand symphony in E-flat was performed by the enthusiastic orchestra with a fire and concord that would have delighted the spirit of the departed.

This brief report is very likely based on the one in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent*. (On the various incarnations of the *Chronik*, see the Notes to our entry for 23 Dec 1791.)

To the best of our knowledge, the performance of K. 543 in Hamburg on 19 Feb 1792 is at present the earliest documented performance of that work. It is possible or even likely that K. 543 had been performed while Mozart was still alive (see, for example, the discussion in Zaslaw 1989, 421–31; see also our entry for 23 Apr 1789), but no such performance during his lifetime has been documented as of this writing. In the 1808 revised edition of his biography of Mozart, Niemetschek seems to imply that symphonies in D and E-flat by Mozart were performed at the composer's concert in Prague in Jan 1787 (Niemetschek 1808, 41). However, K. 543 was completed in Jun 1788 (Mozart entered the work into his *Verzeichnüß* under the date 26 Jun), so it cannot have been performed in Prague in 1787. In any case, the reference to a symphony in E-flat appears only in the second edition of Niemetschek's biography: in the original 1798 edition, he mentions only a symphony in D (generally held to be K. 504; see Niemetscheck 1798, 27).

The description of the Concertsaal in the 1796 edition of *Topographisch-politisch-historische Beschreibung der Stadt Hamburg* by Jonas Ludwig von Heß (cited above from the transcription in Gimpel 2008, 33) also appears in the second edition of 1810 (440–41). For general background on Westphal's concert series, see principally Sittard (1890, 113–17) and von Zahn (1991, 42–43).

In addition to the Mozart performances in Hamburg mentioned in the commentary above, Sittard (1890, 147–48) refers to a concert in the German theater in Hamburg on Sat, 10 Mar 1792, that began with a "Sinfonie von Mozart." This would seem possibly to be at odds with Anderwitsch's claim that all musical performance had been forbidden in Hamburg during the four-week period of mourning after the death of Leopold II on 1 Mar. We have not so far been able to determine precisely when news of Leopold's death reached Hamburg. News of Mozart's death was published in Hamburg on 16 Dec 1791, eleven days after the event, so it is possible that news of Leopold's death on 1 Mar 1792 had not yet been published in

Hamburg by the time of the concert on 10 Mar. In any case, the alleged ban on musical performances and its precise dates remain to be verified, as does the occurrence of the concert on 10 Mar.

The dates given above for performances of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Hamburg are derived mainly from Schütze (1794); his listings are limited mainly to premieres and performances with notable debuts or guest appearances. The performances on 23 Jan and 2 Jun 1788 are not in Schütze, but are attested in *Annalen des Theaters*, in two articles on theater in Hamburg in 1788 (Heft 1, 71 and Heft 3, 122).

Our thanks to Steven Whiting for his comments on a draft of this entry, and to David Buch for clarifying details of Schröder's trip to Vienna in 1791. The musical examples in this commentary are adapted from the editions of the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* (V/15/5 and V/15/8).

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