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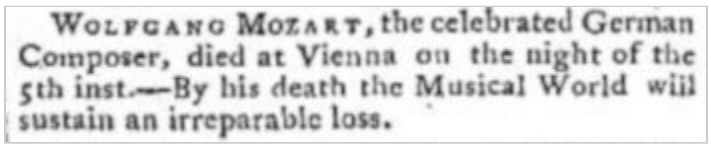
Notices of Mozart's death in various English periodicals (Dec 1791)

David Black and Dexter Edge

None

***The World*, 21 Dec 1791 (Nr. 1552)**

Wolfgang Mozart, the celebrated German Composer, died at Vienna on the night of the 5th inst. – By his death the Musical World will sustain an irreparable loss.


WOLFGANG MOZART, the celebrated German Composer, died at Vienna on the night of the 5th inst.—By his death the Musical World will sustain an irreparable loss.

***Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 24 Dec 1791 (Nr. 5815)**

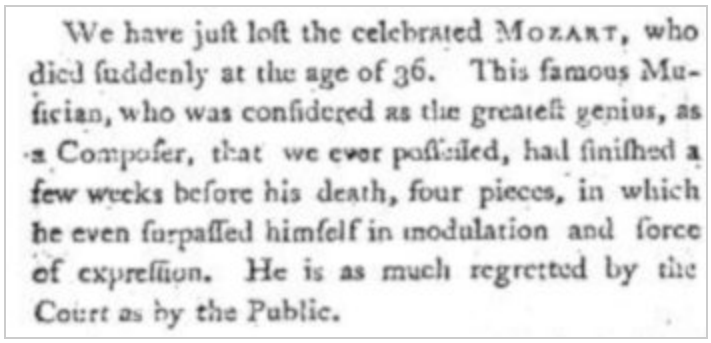
VIENNA.
December 7.


VIENNA.
DECEMBER 7.

[...]

We have just lost the celebrated Mozart, who died suddenly at the age of 36. This famous Musician, who was considered as the greatest genius, as a Composer, that we ever possessed, had finished a few weeks before his death, four pieces, in which he even surpassed himself in modulation and force of expression. He is as much regretted by the Court as by the Public.

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We have juſt loſt the celebrated MOZART, who died ſuddenly at the age of 36. This famous Muſician, who was conſidered as the greateſt genius, as a Compoſer, that we ever poſſeſſed, had finiſhed a few weeks before his death, four pieces, in which he even ſurpaſſed himſelf in modulation and force of expreſſion. He is as much regretted by the Court as by the Public.

Commentary

News of Mozart's death reached London by 20 Dec 1791, when Haydn wrote his famous evaluation of the late composer's talent (*Dokumente,* 375). The earliest printed reference in an English source is apparently the above notice in *The World* of 21 Dec (first cited in Jones 2009, 155). Very similar or identical reports appeared over the next few days in the following papers:

22 Dec

> *London Chronicle* (Nr. 5512); *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (Nr. 19668); *Whitehall Evening Post* (Nr. 6763)

23 Dec

> *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Nr. 5380), *Public Advertiser* (Nr. 17930)

24 Dec

> *Times* (*Neue Folge,* 76); *Morning Chronicle* (Nr. 7034, with Mozart's death "on the 15th")

The report was also picked up in:

> *Gentleman's Magazine* 61 (1791): 1165; *Annual Register or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1791,* 48; *Literary Magazine and British Review* 8 (Jan 1792): 77; and *European Magazine and London Review* 21 (Jan 1792): 78.

Thus the news of Mozart's death received a very wide distribution in the British press. The idea of an "irreplaceable loss" may derive ultimately from a similar phrase in the announcement of Mozart's death in the *Wiener Zeitung* (*Dokumente*, 369).

The notice in the *Morning Post* (first cited in Jenkins 1998, 142) appears as part of general news from Vienna. It seems to be related to similar reports in the German press (see *Neue Folge,* 76). The "four pieces" ("four quartets" in the German sources) is probably a garbled reference to the three "Prussian" quartets, K. 575, K. 589, and K. 590. The report also appeared on 26 Dec in *The Star* (Nr. 1144) but with a later byline of 10 Dec.

Bibliography (⇧)

Jenkins, John. 1998. *Mozart and the English Connection.* London: Cygnus Arts.

Jones, David Wyn. 2009. *The Life of Haydn*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Credit: David Wyn Jones

Authors: David Black, Dexter Edge

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