

Mozart

From Child Prodigy to Tragic Hero



MOZART

FROM CHILD PRODIGY TO TRAGIC HERO

Michel Parouty



DISCOVERIES

HARRY N. ABRAMS, INC., PUBLISHERS

Michel Parouty, born in 1945, has an arts degree and further qualifications in philosophy and musicology from the universities of Poitiers and Bordeaux, in France.

After spending some time as a teacher, he turned to journalism in 1979, joining the staff of the magazine *Opera International*. He is now joint chief editor of the French classical music publication *Diapason*, and has been a contributor to many other international publications on the arts. In 1986 he coauthored a guide to symphonic music, and he has just published an edition of *La Traviata* in France.

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Night, Leporello, Don Giovanni, Figaro, Susanna—here they all are, where light and shadow meet. Mozart opera in shadowgraph. The finely detailed silhouettes do more than sketch the outline of the plots—they conjure up the music itself.

On the following pages, in the order of their appearance on stage, are some dramatic moments from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così Fan Tutte*, and *The Magic Flute*.





LA VENDETTA, OH LA VENDETTA!
(REVENGE, YES, REVENGE!)



NON SO PIU COSA SON, COSA FACCIO...
(I NO LONGER KNOW WHAT I AM, WHAT I'M DOING...)



SUSANNA, IL CIEL VI SALVI...
(SUSANNA, HEAVEN BE WITH YOU...)



FERMATEVI...
(NO, STOP...)



SENTITE...
(LISTEN...)



SOPRA ELLA NON PUO.
(SHE CAN'T COME OUT.)



CHE SOAVE ZEFFIRETTO QUESTA SERA SPIRERA...
(HOW SWEET THE BREEZE WILL BE THIS EVENING...)





SUSANNA, TU MI SEMBRI AGITATA E CONFUSA.
(SUSANNA, YOU SEEM TO BE AGITATED AND CONFUSED.)



VOI CHE SAPETE CHE COSA E AMOR...
(YOU LADIES, YOU KNOW WHAT LOVE IS...)

VENITE, INGINOCCHIATEVI...RESTATE FERMO LI.
(COME, KNEEL DOWN...STAY STILL HERE.)



VEDRO MENTRIO IO SOSPIRO, FELICE UN SERVO MIO?
(MUST I SEE A SERF OF MINE MADE HAPPY, WHILE I AM LEFT TO SIGH?)



IL BIGLIETTO...
(THE TICKET...)

ECCOMI A' VOSTRI PIEDI...
(HERE I KNEEL AT YOUR FEET...)



AH... SOCCORSO!...
(AH! HELP!...)



SON TRADITO!...
(I AM UNDONE!...)



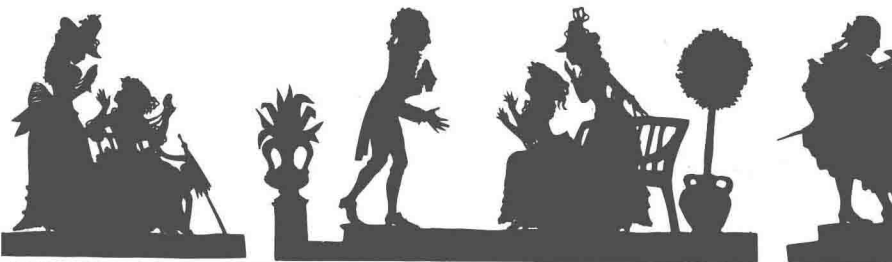
LA CI DAREM LA MANO, LA MI DIRAI DI "SÌ."
(THERE WE'LL TAKE HANDS, AND YOU WILL SAY "YES.")



DEH VIENI ALLA FINESTRA, O MIO TESORO...
(O COME TO YOUR WINDOW, MY TREASURE...)



NON MI DIR, BELL'IDOL MIO, CHE SON IO CRUEL CON TE...
(SAY NOT, MY BELOVED, THAT I AM CRUEL TO YOU...)



AH GUARDA, SORELLA, SE BOCCA PIU BELLA...
(AH, TELL ME SISTER, IF ONE COULD EVER FIND A SWEETER MOUTH...)



DI PASTA SIMILE SON TUTTI QUANTI...
(ALL OF THEM ARE MADE OF THE SAME STUFF...)



AH, CHE TUTTO IN UN MOMENTO SI CANGIO LA SORTE MIA!
(AH, HOW MY LOT HAS CHANGED ALL IN A MOMENT!)



UN CONTRATTO NUZIALE!
(A MARRIAGE CONTRACT!)

AH SIGNOR, SON REA DI MORTE...
(AH, MY LOVE, MY SIN IS MORTAL...)



AH CHI MI DICE MAI QUEL BARBARO DOV'E?
(OH, WHO CAN TELL ME NOW WHERE IS THE KNAVE?)

MADAMINA, IL CATALOGO E QUESTO..
(LITTLE LADY, THIS IS THE LIST...)



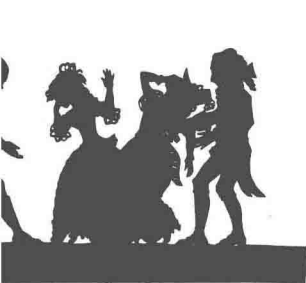
BATTI, BATTI, O BEL MASETTO, LA TUA POVERA ZERLINA...
(BEAT ME, DEAR MASETTO, BEAT YOUR POOR ZERLINA...)



MI TRADI QUELL'ALMA INGRATA...
(THAT UNGRATEFUL MAN BETRAYED ME...)



PENTITI, CANGIA VITA: E L'ULTIMO MOMENTO!
(REPENT, CHANGE YOUR WAY OF LIFE: YOUR HOUR OF DOOM IS NEAR!)



SMANIE IMPLACABILI CHE M'AGITATE...
(IMPLACABLE PANGS, WHICH TORMENT ME...)



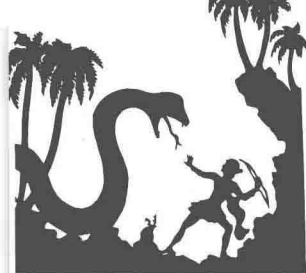
ALLA BELLA DESPINETTA VI PRESENTO, AMICI MIEI...
(I PRESENT YOU, MY FRIENDS, TO PRETTY MISS DESPINA...)



E NEL TUO, NEL MIO BICCHIERO SI SOMMERGA...
(IN YOUR GLASS AND MINE...)



TE LO CREDO, GIOIA BELLA, MA LA PROVA FAR NON VO'.
(I BELIEVE YOU, MY FAIR ONE, BUT I WON'T PUT IT TO THE TEST)



ZU HILFE! ZU HILFE!...
(HELP! HELP!...)



SONST BIN ICH VERLOREN...
(FOR I AM LOST...)



HE SKLAVEN! LEGT IHR FESSELN AN!
(HERE, SLAVES! CHAIN HER UP!)



ALLES FÜHLT DER LIEBE FREUDEN...
(EVERYONE FEELS THE JOY OF LOVE...)



ACH, ICH FÜHL'S, ES IST VERSCHWUNDEN!
(AH, I SENSE IT HAS VANISHED!)



EIN MÄDCHEN ODER WEIBCHEN WÜNSCHT PAPAGENO SICH!
(A GIRL OR A LITTLE WIFE IS WHAT PAPAGENO DESIRES!)



ICH KANN NICHTS TUN, ALS DICH BEKLAGEN...
(I CAN DO NOTHING EXCEPT PITY YOU...)



ER IST'S. SIE IST'S! ICH GLAUB ES KAUM!
(IT IS HE! IT IS SHE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!)



EWIG HIN DER LIEBE GLÜCK!
(THE JOY OF LOVE GONE FOREVER!)



PA-PA-PA-PAPAGENO! PA-PA-PA-PAPAGENA!
(PA-PA-PA-PAPAGENO! PA-PA-PA-PAPAGENA!)

CONTENTS

I A CHILD PRODIGY AT THE COURTS OF EUROPE

13

II FROM CHILD PRODIGY TO COMPOSER

35

III MUSICIAN AND SERVANT

51

IV DISILLUSIONMENT

67

V "MY HAPPINESS IS JUST BEGINNING"

83

VI LIGHT AND DARKNESS

107

DOCUMENTS

129

Chronology

182

Further Reading

184

Discography

185

List of Illustrations

186

Index

189

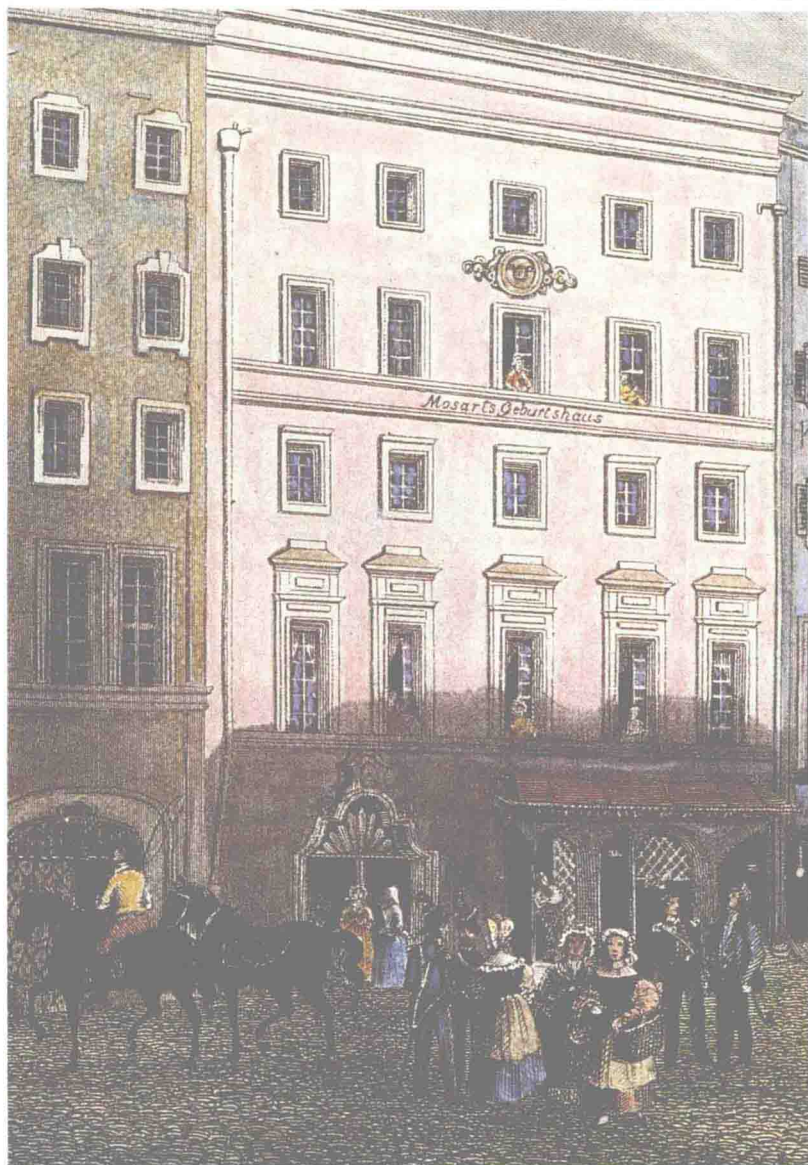
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On 27 January 1756 a powdery snow was steadily falling on the town of Salzburg, in Bavaria. In No. 9 Getreidegasse, Leopold Mozart was pacing up and down like a caged animal. From the next room he could hear muffled sounds of footsteps and whispering: His beloved wife, Anna Maria, was about to give birth to their seventh child. It was a boy. They called him Wolfgang.

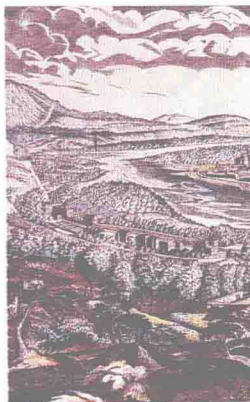
CHAPTER I A CHILD PRODIGY AT THE COURTS OF EUROPE

The Mozart family occupied one floor of a large house on the Getreidegasse, seen here (left) in an engraving from the 19th century, when it had already become a place of pilgrimage for music lovers. Right: Mozart sentimentalized in porcelain.





Leopold Mozart was thirty-seven when Wolfgang was born. He had grown up in a family of bookbinders in Augsburg, Germany, but he had chosen a career in music. At the age of twenty-four, he was a violinist in the orchestra of the archbishop of Salzburg, Prince Siegmund von Schrattenbach, later becoming court composer and finally vice Kapellmeister (assistant music director). He was a prolific writer of compositions that were functional, well crafted, and easy on the ear but not distinguished enough to bring him fame, although a certain renown came his way with the publication in 1756 (the year of Wolfgang's birth) of his *Violin Method*, still a valued reference work for violinists. For forty years, Leopold faithfully



Salzburg in Mozart's time (above): A principality with about 10,000 inhabitants.

“Leopold [opposite] was quite an average person, devoid of genius. But he possessed talent, and his treatise on violin playing and some of his church sonatas amply demonstrate the strong pedagogical influences that were to mark Wolfgang's early studies. Wolfgang's mother [left], though lively, even-tempered, and imaginative, appears to have been somewhat passive and superficial, and we get no clear picture of her even from the later references by her children.”

Mozart biographer
Emmanuel Buezod
1930