

# The Place of Piano and Clarinet in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Solo and Chamber Music Pieces

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## Abstract

This study aims to gather information about piano and clarinet in the Classical Period and to show the importance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's piano and clarinet music styles in solo and chamber music works. Classical Era takes place in the music history in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a period starting from 1750, which is accepted as J. S. Bach's date of death to 1827, which was L. von Beethoven's date of death. In this era, which lasted about 80 years, clarinet and piano played an important role in Mozart's works. The study will explain clarinet and piano works of W. A. Mozart, who was a unique composer of the 18th century classical music and whose mastery has been unquestionable for ages, and discuss the style and characteristics of the era about the contributions he made both to that period and to the following periods. Mozart, who crammed more than 600 works into his short life, is a composer who has been an example for all generations and the music history. Starting from this point of view, the study will explain and exemplify the outlines related to solo and chamber musical repertoire of Mozart's clarinet and piano music.

**Keywords:** Mozart, Piano, Clarinet, Classical Period, Solo, Chamber Music.

## 1. Introduction

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg on 27 January 1756. Mozart was born as the 7<sup>th</sup> child of his family. The baby, who was baptized on 28 January 1756, the day after his birth in the city cathedral, was given the forenames of "Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus". The first two names were recorded as the first name of Saint Johann Chrysostom because the birth coincided with 27 January, which was the feast day of Saint Johann Chrysostom. Later the name "Theophilus" was changed to its equivalent "Gottlieb" (God's love), and then it was changed to its French word "Amadé", but the music history has remembered this baby as "Wolfgangus Amadeus Mozart" since XIX century (Büke, 2006: p. 21). His mother's name was Anna Mari Pertl, whereas the name of his father was Leopold Mozart (1719-1787), who was one of the outstanding musicians of the era. Leopold Mozart was an exemplary musician of the Age of Enlightenment. He was a musician who always liked investigation and who followed the latest developments in science and art. Maria Anna was the first child of the family and she was four years older than Mozart. After having discovered that both of his children had extraordinary abilities, Leopold gave up his own career and dealt with their education personally. The fact that Mozart's father was both a good teacher and an enlightened person had an enormous effect on Mozart's greatest talent. Because of a strong education he took from his father, his prodigy never left him until his death. When he was young, Mozart visited many European cities with his father and composed 4 minuets and a sonata in these cities when he was very young. First he went to Munich and Vienna, and then to France, England, Nederland and Italy. In all these cities, he met various new people and became acquainted with many composers, and listened to their music.

When Mozart went to England, he met two famous composers. These were Charles-Frederic Abel (1723-1787) and Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782). Mozart not only learnt classical symphony form from Bach (son) but he was also affected by his notation styles in all genres. Mozart arranged Johann Christian Bach's three sonatas for harpsichord as concertos (Selanik, 2010: p. 154).

Mozart went on a tour to Germany and France with his mother in 1777. They first visited Mannheim, where he fell in love with Aloysia Weber, who was the daughter of one of Mannheim orchestra members. However, upon instruction of his father, Mozart had to return to Paris. When his mother died there, he suffered a lot. He composed Paris symphony and some of his compositions in that period. Having returned to Salzburg after his mother's death, Mozart was appointed to be a court organist. However, he couldn't get on well with the new patriarch Colloredo and as a result he was dismissed from his position. After this incident, Mozart settled in Vienna. He earned his livelihood by teaching and composing. In the meantime, Weber family moved to Vienna too (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 64).

When Mozart arrived in Vienna, he started to stay as a lodger with Weber family, whom he knew from Mannheim. After he had to leave Mannheim and go to Paris unwillingly upon his father's intense request, Mozart was very upset because Aloysia got married to a theater player, Joseph Lange (1751-1830) (Büke, 2000: p. 33). Later Mozart married to Aloysia Weber's sister, Contanze Weber. Mozart composed the Abduction from the Seraglio opera before his marriage. Mozart now became a recognized composer and musical artist whose concerts aroused great interest (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 64).

Mozart is a composer who entirely influenced the art of music, its stance and its pace. It is not right to see

or define Mozart as just the best opera composer or a good symphony composer. He had unique qualities that cannot put his composition into a category. As well as he knew about the music well, he combined events, people, experiences, and the creativity of the period with his spirit and reflected them. He was a composer who preferred to be free in an understanding that did not fit the facts of that period. It should not be forgotten that besides his being a composer, Mozart was a superior interpreter of his time on piano, violin, viola and organ. After his early life, he played viola in chamber music he made with his friends.

In addition to his being a composer, Mozart was a master violinist and an important pianist. The greatest success of Mozart during these periods was the opera of *the Marriage of Figaro* (K492) (1786), which he wrote for the Vienna opera. In 1787, Mozart went to Prague to conduct *the Abduction from the Seraglio* (K384) (1782) and *the Marriage of Figaro* and he was met with great enthusiasm there. He took the commission of *Don Giovanni* opera (K527) from the Prague opera. Unfortunately Mozart's reputation diminished after Figaro. Nobles and people around the court complained that Mozart had revolutionary thoughts in his music. Mozart, who was hopeful for the future after Don Giovanni, gradually began to lose hope. After he returned from a trip to Dresden, his hopes were revived when he received an opera commission from the emperor. He spent the first half of 1791 composing *the Magic Flute Opera* (K620). He composed this opera in cooperation with his mason friend Schikaneder. Mozart was asked to compose a requiem when he was composing this opera, and he agreed to compose *the requiem* (K626) for a great fee. While he was composing the Requiem, Mozart completed two more operas. One of these operas was *La Clemenza di Tito* (K621), and the other was the Magic Flute opera. Mozart's weakening body completely deteriorated, but nevertheless he continued to compose the Requiem at his deathbed (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 64-65).

From this patient bed, bright and mature, extraordinary music pages were opened. He was working on his Requiem when his weakening strength allowed him. In the same days, Mozart wrote to his best Librettist Lorenzo da Ponte as follows:

"I would like to follow your suggestions. But how do I get there? I am out of my mind. I have come to the end of my strength. And I cannot get rid of the image of this mystery out of my sight. I see him constantly asking, insisting, and forcing me to work impatiently. I keep going. Because composing tires me less than resting. Besides, I no longer want to get anything else into my heart. I feel there's something that makes me perceive the clock's striking. I have finished my talent without using it. However, life has been so beautiful and how fortunate the profession that develops under protection ... But it is unlikely that man will change his own fortune. No one can determine their days. It is necessary to accept the destiny. God will be pleased with this ... I am finishing. This is my requiem and I have to leave it unfinished" (Stafford, 1991: p. 5).

He must have meant the famous Requiem (Messe des Morts) that Count Walsegg had commissioned in memory of his wife. Mozart, who was on his deathbed, died on December 5, 1791 without completing his work. His wife, his sister-in-law Sophie, and his student Süsmayer were right beside him. He wanted Sophie to take care of his wife Canstanze, and Süsmayer to complete the Requiem (Selanik, 2010: p. 159).

Mozart expressed sorrow in many of his works, but he did not tell it by beating his chest or tearing his hair. Although a romantic tendency can be seen in all artists, using this term for Mozart is thought-provoking. Mozart is one of the least national but the most universal ones among composers. Accordingly, Mozart did not search only the music of his surroundings, but he also adopted the movements created by the music of three main countries. This led him to a combination of effects. These three influences were German, French and Italian influences. In Mozart's music, German influence was low, but Italian influence was high (Mimaroglu, 2006: p. 71-73). Mozart was not in pursuit of inspiration unlike some composers. Mozart's endowment was evident in the compositions he made at his young age. The music he made was fluent, soft, amazing, fascinating and natural. Mozart preserved the balance of the essence and style of the classic form with care.

Schopenhauer, who was one of the important thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century said, "Mozart is said to have always been a child in his life. The statement "although Mozart reached manhood at a very early age, all of his other aspects were left to be children" is a pertinent sentence in Mozart's biographies. Each genius is in a sense a child. He looks at the world in the eyes of a stranger. He watches the events from an objective point of view as if he was watching a theater work from outside. Like a child, he is not interested in arid and serious things of life. And only this point of view provides the real objective view that is necessary for the world. A serious, dignified, vigilant and consistent personality that cannot be a child throughout his life can be a helpful, responsible, and hard-working bourgeois, but he cannot be a genius" (Pamir, 1989: p. 34).

An outstanding composer Beethoven, who took Mozart as an example, also said: "Throughout my life, I have seen myself as one of Mozart's greatest fans, and I will remain so until my last breath" (Pamir, 1989: p. 34).

Mozart composed 22 operas. According to Sachs, the most important ones are the Abduction from the Seraglio, the Marriage of Figaro, Don Juan and the Magic Flute. These operas, dating back to 18<sup>th</sup> century, are timeless. Mozart operas which have been frequently performed in Turkey are as follows: Bastien and Bastienne, All Women Do That, Don Juan, the Abduction from the Seraglio, the Marriage of Figaro, and the Magic Flute (Say, 1994: p. 305).

All of Mozart's works were listed and catalogued chronologically by famous music expert Dr. Ludwig Köchel. Köchel used "K. V." letters (Yener, 1976: p. 194).

## **2. Mozart and Piano**

When Mozart's instrumental music is evaluated, it is seen that he gave most of his effort to his piano pieces. 102 of the 626 Köchel sequences belong to the piano. 25 of them are piano sonatas, 23 are piano concertos and the others are fugues, rondos, fantasies and variations, as well as various small individual pieces. Mozart, whom we know to have been a master of improvisation in his youth, was interested in concertos in Vienna and because he was a teacher, he composed piano sonatas to teach. We also know that he composed sonatas for a painting or for a momentary feeling.

As a pianist, he especially influenced his contemporaries with his improvisation. The fact that his careful, soft, light and regular fingers having a meticulous touch created an atmosphere in the composition as if he had been singing and that they flowed like pearl drops of a fast passage determine that he was a very good pianist. The music historian Niemetsceke said, 'All I want in life is to see Mozart improvising at the piano' (Say, 1994: p. 309).

It is not easy to describe the elements that make up Mozart's prodigy and ingenuity: the natural ease that is nourished by impeccable craftsmanship that internalised its time very well and beauty and elegance that reflect its time and clear personality... (Selanik, 2010: p. 160).

The fact that harpsichord and clavichord used in that period sprouted up as pianoforte and that today's modern piano emerged only with "repetition mechanism" of Erard from Paris in 1720 made it even more difficult to get the expression with intense feelings and elegant touch technique in Mozart's interpretation, and with the difficulties caused by using pedals, the real Mozart interpretation became a value, a criterion that is hard to find (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1468).

Mozart devoted much of his life and creativity to piano. It would be helpful to define and express Mozart's examples of works in order to convey his music, soul, language and feelings.

Although his first piano compositions were under the influence of Johann Christian and Carl Philipp Emanuel, two sons of Bach the great, and he even composed his first piano concertos by arranging their compositions, it was Haydn who were influential in his first sonatas. Mozart was inspired in his first piano sonatas by six piano sonatas that Haydn composed in 1773 and preserved his three-part form and composed his first six piano sonatas between 1773-75 (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1468). If we give examples from these six piano sonatas:

### **2.1. Piano Sonata, E flat Major (KV282)**

It's a simple narrative sonata. The first movement is different from the sonata form and it has Adagio and 4/4 scale and a two-themed movement. The first theme sounds serious, sedate and powerful; and contrary to the first theme, the second theme is in arioso form with a joyful and plain accompaniment. The second movement is in Minuet I and Minuet II form and of 3/4 measure. We can think of Minuet II as the Trio of the movement. The third movement is Allegro and of 2/4 measure. It is in Haydn style and a short movement. The movement that starts naively gets more serious and ends up.

### **2.2. Piano Sonata, G Major (KV283)**

This sonata is the most recognizable sonata that fully reflects Haydn. It is assumed that Mozart composed it at the age of 18. The first movement is Allegro and of 3/4 measure. It is a beautiful exposition which is mellifluous and lyrical, and consists of three different thematic divisions. The second movement is Andante and of 4/4 measure. This movement which appears to be serious is decorated with modulations and lyrical and gentle passages. The third movement is Presto and of 4/4 measure. Trills and fast passages are important. It ends with a bright, amusing and cheerful final chapter.

Mozart has 27 piano concertos, but he exactly owns 23 of them. His concerto examples are as follows:

### **2.3. Piano Concerto No: 9 E flat Major (KV271)**

This concerto is his first important work in this area. It was composed in 1777. The first movement is Allegro and of 4/4 measure. The first theme is displayed by piano and orchestra together. The second theme continues with a playful and unexpected surprise entry. We hear totally six themes, and we see these themes clearly in cadence. The second movement is Andantino and of 3/4 measure. It is like a rather long and tragic song and a cry. This movement resembles an opera scene and ends in an emotional and intensively sentimental way. The third movement is in Presto tempo and of 3/4 measure.

The third movement, which begins with the influence of the tone of the second movement, continues with a long solo. Then it continues with a surprising minuet and variation. The transition music is followed by presto, and making a surprise again, it flies off with a piano nuance.

#### **2.4. Piano Concerto No: 14 E flat Major (KV449)**

This concerto is the first of 12 piano concertos to be composed between 1784-86 and to bring Mozart into prominence. The first movement is Allegro Vivace and of 3/4 measure. It starts with a strong chord and have many ideas connected with each other. The small cadence of the part ends with a common movement. The second movement is Andantino and of 2/4 measure. It is a simple but intensively sad part. The first theme is performed by the piano and the second theme is played and ended by the orchestra. The third movement is Allegro ma non troppo and of 4/4 measure. It is very different from the other parts. It is more different and brilliant than all of his concertos symphonically and contrapuntally.

#### **2.5. 12 Variations on the French Song "Ah, vous dirai-je maman (Ah Mother If I could tell you)", C Major (KV265)**

This variation sonata, which Mozart wrote upon his mother's death, is known to be his first dramatic and tragic sonata. 12 variations were arranged on the anonymous song, which is known with its lyrics "daha dün annemizin kollarında" in Turkish. In each variation, we can hear this melody clearly and distinctly. Though it seems like a joyful melody, when the variations start to flow, the feelings of pain, longing, sadness, tension and this dark death are felt in the following variations of minor tone.

### **3. Mozart and Clarinet**

After his first encounter with clarinet, Mozart gave place to clarinet in his many chamber music compositions and operas. Mozart first used clarinet in Divertimento (K.113), which he composed for a private orchestra in Milan. He first used clarinet as a solo instrument in 1788 for E major symphony, which he composed for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, and bowed string instruments. After that time, he started using clarinet more frequently in his compositions. Beginning from his opera called *Idomeneo* (KV366), he gave place to clarinet in all of his operas. Although Mozart frequently used clarinet in his operas and serenades, he did not give it much place in his symphonies (Ak, 2004: p. 24-25).

Mozart's chamber music compositions with clarinet are 5 divertimentos (K.439b) composed for two clarinets or a basset-horn and a bassoon (K.439b); the composition called '*Kegelstatt Trio*' (KV.498) for clarinet, viola and piano in 1786; Quintet A major (KV.581), which he composed for clarinet, two violins, viola and violoncello in 1789, Quintet E flat major (KV. 452), which he composed for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon in 1784. In addition, Mozart also composed small duos for two basset-horns (Ak, 2004: p. 24-25). In 1781, Mozart also composed a serenade (KV370a) with two clarinets, four horns, two bassoons and a contrabass, including a bassethorn, which he first heard from the Stadler brothers. According to expert Roger Hellyer, he presented this serenade to Constanze at the wedding ceremony on 4 August 1782 (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1562-1563).

#### **3.1. Clarinet Concerto, A Major (KV622)**

Mozart designed Clarinet Concerto, A Major (KV622), which he composed in the year he died, for basset-horn and composed it for his friend virtuoso Anton Stadler (1753-1812). It is not known when the composer started the concerto, which he dedicated to Anton Stadler. This is the only concerto in which the composer used clarinet as a solo instrument.

Mozart composed many of his concertos for different instruments and chose these instruments for various reasons. He composed his piano concertos often for himself and for his female students. He composed his flute concertos for Dutch De Jean, whom he met in Mannheim and his oboe concerto for Italian Giuseppe Ferlendis, who played in Salzburg. Stadler brothers made it possible to play clarinet, which was invented by Johann Christoph Denner from Nurnberg (1655-1707) and which was later developed by his son, more effectively after a few innovations. Mozart decided to compose for his friend Stadler's fascinating instrument which has this unusual tone width such as touching tone colour at low tones and coloratura at high tones and utilized this instrument in his concerto like a sentimental human voice (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1562-1563).

Herman Albert wrote, "contrasts created with clarinet at various heights reaching at virtuosity, emotional songs in low tones, characteristic effects that Mozart used for the first time in accompaniment themes, solo instrument's utilizing every feature in the entire concerto prove how close he felt to this instrument" (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1564).

The concerto consists of 3 movements. The first movement is composed in 4/4 measure, Allegro (fast) tempo and A major tone. The second movement is one of the movements containing Mozart's most emotional pages. The second movement is composed in 3/4 measure, D major tone and Adagio tempo. The third movement is a rondo with a 6/8 measure, A major tone and Allegro.

This concerto composed for basset-horn is one of the most important solo pieces of clarinet literature. Even if it is not always possible in the orchestra accompaniment in the education repertoire, it is a unique piece that we make our students play accompanied by piano and by which we instilled Mozart's music style in our students, which is not extremely difficult from a technical aspect but which makes students well equipped in terms of its

reflecting the music style of the classical period. This piece, which is usually played with basset-horn today, is among the indispensable pieces when it is evaluated in terms of education and solo repertoire.

### **3.2. Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, A Major (KV581) (Stadler Quintet)**

Mozart also dedicated Quintet A Major (KV581), which he composed for clarinet, two violins, viola and cello, to his friend Anton Stadler. The piece, which Mozart defined as Stadler Quintet, was first performed on 27 December 1789 in Vienna. Mozart did not hesitate to show his favour to Stadler, who had a soft tone in clarinet, with his chamber music. Although Mozart gave priority to clarinet in this piece, he never allowed it to take precedence of other instruments. The quintet has a mood of a real chamber music (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1502). The piece is composed of four movements.

The first movement of the piece is in Allegro (Fast) tempo, 4/4 measure, A major tone and sonata form. The second movement is composed in *larghetto* (slow) tempo, 3/4 measure, and D major tone. The third movement, which has A major tone, starts with a traditional minuet in 3/4 measure. In the second trio section of this movement, clarinet shows its perfection like a folk instrument *chalméau*. The fourth movement is composed in A major tone. The movement, which is composed in 4/4 unit of measure, contains variations at faster pace as *alla breve* (*Allegretto con variazioni*).

## **4. W. A. Mozart's Chamber Music Pieces with Piano and Clarinet**

### **4.1. The Trio for Clarinet, Piano and Viola, E Flat Major (Kegelstatt, KV498)**

Mozart completed his trio for clarinet, piano and viola (E flat major) in August 1786 in Vienna. Mozart's piece has had an important place both among piano trios and in clarinet repertoire and has made clarinet popularized in symphonic music.

“According to a rumor originated from Karoline von Pichler, because Mozart composed this trio while he was playing the game *Kegel*, which resembles today's bowling and whose aim is to knock down the nine pins arranged in three rows with a ball connected by a string, Mozart composed this trio, which is also called *Kegelstatt-Trio*, for his friend Baron Gottfried Von Jacquin and did not forget the clarinetist Anton Stadler, who was also in the same group. The trio is said to have been played by Stadler on clarinet, Franziska on piano and Mozart on viola ...” (Aktüze, 2007: p. 1488).

The piece, which won the people's affection in a short time, consists of three movements. The first movement which is composed in E major tone, is in 6/8 measure and in *Andante* (slow) pace. The mordent motive (ornament), which piano plays in the first movement prevails the entire movement. This motive is displayed differently on each instrument, so each time this motive sounds, something new is heard. While this motive appears to be harder on viola, it appears in a consistent style on clarinet. The second theme, which corresponds to the first motive, springs from this motive and is performed at a changing rhythmic structure. It appears to be the main theme in the scales of the second theme and later in the final movement. The second movement, which is composed in B Flat major tone, is a minuetto in 3/4 measure. There are two musical ideas in this part. The first is a short minuet and the second is a rather long trio. These two ideas are like in a quarrel. As opposed to clarinet's *legato* and emotional phrases, viola's tense and aggressive response are like a quarrel. The third movement, which is composed in E flat major tone, is a Rondo in 4/4 measure and *Allegretto* tempo. This movement meets us with the first theme of the rondo. The first and the second themes are played by clarinet. Unlike the first and the second movements, viola undertakes the flat and minor and sad theme in the middle of the movement. When we come to the end of the rondo, this melancholy disappears. The second theme of the first movement appears to be the main theme, and these three themes finish the piece brilliantly like in a concerto.

### **4.2. Quintet for Piano, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon, E Flat Major (KV452)**

Mozart completed his quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon on 30 March 1784. The quintet was performed with the title of “A brand new, big quintet”, with a piano concerto and three symphonies defined as “completely new”. In his letter to his father, Mozart said: “I composed two great concertos and a quintet which received unusually great applause; I see it as the best thing I have written in my life ... I would like you to have listened to it, additionally it was so beautifully interpreted!” (Aktüze, 2007: p 1500-1501).

The first movement of the piece is in E flat major tone and 4/4 measure. The piece which starts in *Largo* (slow and wide) tempo shifts to *Allegro-moderato* tempo in the same tonality and measure after a fancy entry. This entry belongs to piano and then piano switches to the main movement. Then the wind instruments emphasizes the characteristic of the music as if they were doing the same thing with the piano. Throughout this entire movement, two sets of music follow each other. The second movement is composed in B Flat major tone, 3/8 measure and *Larghetto* (Low) tempo. This movement consists of long and romantically resonant phrases with fluctuations. In the movement, we observe the oboe and bassoon with a lyric duet. The modulation fluctuations in the movement are an important detail of the movement. The final with Rondo title starts in E flat major tone, 4/4 measure and *Allegretto* tempo. This is a movement which is difficult for piano and which

requires a virtuoso feature. With the cadence following the intense piano party, it is switched to the wind instruments. It is a long movement, but it keeps its vitality thanks to mastery of the piano party.

## 5. Conclusion

Mozart, who has been considered to be a building stone especially in the classical period music, is one of the most important musicians of the period as both an instrumentalist and a composer. Mozart is one of the important composers who left works for piano and clarinet in solo and education repertoire, which have never lost its significance even today. The pieces he composed inspired both his contemporaries and composers of the next generations. Mozart's life and compositions have never lost their reputation in the world music history since his era. On the contrary, as well as they have maintained their popularity in solo and chamber music repertoire day by day, they have also provided an insight for many composers and performers. He especially has provided an insight for Haydn's mature period music, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and many other composers, music interpreters and thinkers until today.

Mozart made important touches to the repertoire of piano and clarinet with the works he composed. The role of Mozart, who composed many pieces for clarinet and piano, is indisputable in education. Mozart is just one of a few composers who have contributed to the classical period repertory with his pieces he composed for piano and clarinet. The pieces composed for piano and clarinet by him are seen as important pieces used both in education repertoire and stage performance.

This study aimed to focus on the life of Mozart, who was one of the famous composers of the time, and his solo and chamber music pieces for piano and clarinet. It is believed that the article published in accordance with this purpose will help today's and the next generation's piano and clarinet instrumentalists recognize Mozart and Mozart's solo and chamber music repertoire composed for piano and clarinet and provide a clearer view on the subject.

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