

BRO MOZART

Two hundred years ago on 4 December, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart died. 1991 is a year when Mozart is being remembered, and his compositions are being performed throughout the world as a tribute to his memory, and an acknowledgement of his genius.

As Freemasons we should also remember our Brother. He was initiated into the Lodge of Charity in Vienna on 14 December 1784. We have details of this meeting, and many other Masonic meetings of this Lodge, and on at least fourteen occasions in as many months Mozart was present. Some minutes are missing so we do not have a complete record of his attendances, but we do have details of meetings of which he wrote special music, and we also know that he performed many of his new compositions at Lodge meetings and "benefit" concerts.

As a tribute to his memory we list the following compositions that he wrote for Masonic ceremonies, or for special Masonic occasions.

(1) K.468 "Gesellenreise" - (Fellow Craft's Journey). (1785). (A song for

tenor voice with organ or pianoforte accompaniment)

A three verse song thought to have been written on the occasion of

Mozart's father Leopold taking his second degree.

(2) K.471 "Die Maurefreude" ("The Masons' Rejoicing"). (1785)

(For solo tenor, male chorus and orchestra).

This cantata was composed for a meeting held on 24 April, 1785 in

honour of Ignaz von Born.

(3) K.477 "Maurerische Trauermusik" ("Masonic Funeral Music"). (1785).

(For strings, two oboes, one clarinet, three bass horns, two

horns, (tenor clarinet) and contra or double-bass (grand fagotto).

On 5 November, 1785 Bro. Major-General His Royal Highness, Duke George August of Mecklenburg-Stelitz and on 7 November, 1785, Prince Franz Esterhazy (two well known and loyal Freemasons) died. Mozart was deeply grieved by their deaths and composed for Lodge "Crowned Hope" this Funeral Music which was performed on 17 November 1785.

(4) K.483 "Zerfließet heut', geliebte Brüder" Opening Hymn. (1785).

(5) K. 484 "Ihr Unsre neuen Leiter" Closing Hymn. (1785). (For solo voice

with chorus and organ or pianoforte accompaniment). Both these songs

were composed for the first meeting of "The New Crowned Hope"

Lodge which was inaugurated on 14 January, 1786.

(6) K623 "Eine Kleine Freimaurer Cantate" ("A Short Masonic Cantata")

(1791).

(For two tenors, bass, chorus and orchestra).

On 15 November 1791, a new Masonic Temple was dedicated and Mozart composed this Cantata for his brethren to perform at the ceremony.

In addition to the above compositions, Mozart wrote two other cantatas K.429 and K. 619 and a song, K. 148 each with words containing a Masonic teaching.

K.410 and K.411 are Chamber Music thought by some biographers to have been written for Masonic ritual. The instrumentation is such that it could have been performed by members of Mozart's Lodge).

The year of Mozart's death he wrote the music for the Magic Flute opera (K 623) which, although not being Masonic Music, contains many ritualistic ideas.

In October 1946, the Austrian Government decided to change its National anthem from the Austrian Hymn, composed by Haydn in 1797, and the tune chosen was one which appears as an appendix to Mozart's "A Short Masonic Cantata" (K. 623) and is now known as "Osterreichische Bundeshymne" with words by Paula Preradovic.

Mozart's music will be remembered forever, and several of his Masonic compositions are rated among his greatest. It is with pride that we can say that "He was one of us".

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