

MUSIC

A Schiller Setting for the Mozart Year

We publish here, for the first time since 1820, a solo song by the composer-son of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Franz Xaver Mozart was born two hundred years ago on July 29, 1791, six months before the untimely death of his father on Dec. 5, 1791. (For purposes of more closely following the German, we print here a literal English version.)

Besides marking the “Mozart Year,” another good reason to print this song is to testify to the powerful extension of Classical German culture throughout Central Europe. In particular, it is a fitting way to celebrate the independence of Ukraine, where the younger Mozart spent some 28 years of his musical career.

Franz Xaver Mozart, the sixth child of Wolfgang Amadeus and Constanze Mozart, and the younger of their two surviving sons, started to study piano in 1796. Among his teachers were Beethoven’s pupil Hummel and Antonio Salieri. His first compositions, including a piano quartet, appeared in 1802. In 1807 he went to Lemberg, now Lvov, in western Ukraine, where he worked first as a tutor, then as a music teacher, and became a freelance musician in 1813. It was during his extended concert tour throughout Western Europe in 1819-21, that he published “An Emma” in Hamburg. Afterward, he stayed in Lemberg (Lvov) until 1838, when he settled in Vienna. He died in 1844.

The more famous setting of this poem was composed by Franz Schubert in 1814, but not published until the 1820’s. It is unlikely that either composer knew the other’s version. The similarities are striking: Both used duple meter, and the key of F—

Schubert chose F major with a brief modulation into F minor and its relative major, A^b; F.X. Mozart chose F minor, modulating into F major to end in the same key as Schubert. Both composers began the song with a repeated low F in a dotted rhythm for the words, *Weit in*. Yet the versions are very different.

Schubert repeated the sad declaration that ends the second stanza (“Thou livest not of my love”) and ended, as Schiller did, with the query, “does it die like an earthly thing?” The voice’s last note hovers on the third, and the piano completes the piece wordlessly with the tonic, F, expressed as a long pedal-point in the bass, as if to imply that the answer is only in the depths of the soul. The song was printed as part of Op. 58 with “Hektors Abschied” and “Des Mädchens Klage,” settings of

two other Schiller poems.

Franz Xaver Mozart’s version, while not as brilliant as Schubert’s, has a rich, haunting quality. It is quite “operatic,” modulating through rapid key changes and mood changes (like the remarkable enharmonic shift to F^b on the word *Pracht*—splendor), to declaim the final words of the poem, “does it die like an earthly thing?” with a rising fifth—the inflection of a question. But Mozart adds a coda in a new key (F major), a new meter (triple), and a new tempo (*allegretto moderato*). The coda brings back the words of the second stanza, to end with the hope, “thou wouldst be alive in my heart.” The tenor soloist closes on the F of the top of the middle register, after a bravura cadenza up to a high B^b.

—Nora Hamerman

An Emma

Weit in nebelgrauer Ferne
Liegt mir das vergangne Glück,
Nur an *einem* schönen Sterne
Weilt mit Liebe noch der Blick.
Aber, wie des Sternes Pracht,
Ist es nur ein Schein der Nacht.

Deckte dir der lange Schlummer,
Dir der Tod die Augen zu,
Dich besäße doch mein Kummer,
Meinem Herzen lebstest du.
Aber ach! du lebst im Licht,
Meiner Liebe lebst du nicht.

Kann der Liebe süß Verlangen,
Emma, kann’s vergänglich sein?
Was dahin ist und vergangen,
Emma, kann’s die Liebe sein?
Ihrer Flamme Himmelsglut,
Stirbt sie wie ein irdisch Gut?

To Emma

Far in the misty-grey distance
Lies my past happiness;
Only on a beautiful star
Does my eye lovingly dwell;
But, just like the star’s splendor
It is but an apparition of the night.

If the long slumber of death
Ever covered thine eyes,
My cares would yet possess thee,
Thou wouldst be alive to my heart.
But oh! thou livest in the light,
Thou livest not of my love.

Can love’s sweet yearning, Emma,
Can it ever die?
What is gone and dead, Emma,
Can it really be love?
Its flame’s divine glow,
Does it die like an earthly thing?

An Emma

Friedrich Schiller

Franz Xaver Mozart
(c. 1820)

Andante con moto

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p Weit in ne - bel-grau - er *f* Fer - ne liegt mir das ver-gang-ne
Glück, nur an ei - nem schö - - nen Ster - ne weit mit Lie - be
noch mein Blick, a - ber wie des Ster - nes Pracht, ist es nur ein
Schein der Nacht. Deck - te dir der lan - ge Schlum - mer, dir der
Tod die Au - gen zu, dich be - sä - Be doch mein Kum - mer, mei - nem Her - zen leb - test du. A - ber

Allegretto non troppo

ach! du lebst im Licht, mei-ner Lie-be lebst du nicht. Kann der Lie-be süß ver-lan-gen, Em-ma,

Allegro agitato

accel - le - ran - do

kann's vergänglich sein? Was da - hin ist und ver - gangen, Emma, kann's die Lie-be sein? Ih-rer Flam - me Him - mels-

smor - zan - do

glut, stirbt sie, stirbt sie, wie ein ir - disch Gut? Deck-te

Allegretto moderato

dir der - lan - ge Schlum - mer, dir der Tod die Au - gen zu, dich be - sä - Be doch mein

Kum - mer, mei-nem Her - - zen leb - test du, mei - nem

rallentando a tempo

Andante

Her - zen leb - test du, leb - - - test - du, leb - - - test du.