

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart's Allegro and Andante ("Fantasy") in F Minor for Mechanical Organ, K. 608

Neal Zaslaw

Anyone visiting Europe's palaces, stately homes and museums is likely to notice the musical automata. These often exquisitely made creations range in size from costly toys that can be held in one hand to organs filling whole walls. But their most common manifestations are in the form of large tabletop clocks that contain small pipe organs, and the best of them are serious instruments, which served those who could afford them, just as electronic means of reproduction serve us, with music on demand. Automata were "programmed" by pinning a rotating barrel in such a way that the pins struck the teeth of a comb (as in today's children's music boxes) or opened the valves of organ pipes at precisely the right moments. The repertory usually comprised arrangements of popular songs and dances, although on larger instruments extended works were sometimes undertaken, and occasionally original compositions. C. P. E. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were among the composers who wrote for such instruments.

The earliest sign of Mozart's involvement with musical automata is found in his letter of October 3, 1790, written from Frankfurt to his wife, Constanze, in Vienna:

I have now made up my mind to compose at once the Adagio for the clockmaker and then to slip a few ducats into the hand of my dear wife. And this I have done; but as it is a kind of composition which I detest, I have unfortunately not been able to finish it. I compose a bit of it every day--but I have to break off now and then, as I get bored. And indeed I would give the whole thing up, if I had not such an important *reason to go on with it*. But I still hope that I shall be able to force myself gradually to finish it. If it were for a large clock and would sound like an organ, then I might get some fun out of it. But, as it is, the works [of the instrument] consist solely of shrill little pipes, which sound too high-pitched and too childish for my taste.

In the chronological thematic catalog of his works which Mozart kept from 1784 until his death (*Verzeichniß aller meiner Werke*), he entered three relevant items, the second of which is the work preserved in the manuscript under consideration:

1) "A piece for an organ in a clock" [musical incipit of the Adagio and Allegro in F Minor, K. 594 entered in Mozart's catalog under December 1790]

2) "An organ piece for a clock" [musical incipit of the Allegro and Andante in F Minor, K. 608, dated in the catalog March 3, 1791]

3) "Andante for a cylinder in a small organ" [musical incipit of the Andante in F Major, K. 616, dated in the catalog May 4, 1791].

We shall return to the question of which, if any, of these three works is the one with which Mozart was struggling in Frankfurt.



The identity of "the clockmaker" mentioned in Mozart's letter may have been clarified by Otto Biba, who discovered in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, of which he is the librarian, a letter dated January 18, 1813, from Ignaz von Seyfried to an unidentified "Hofrat" (privy councillor)--possibly Friedrich Rochlitz, editor of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (*AmZ*). Seyfried had recently completed an orchestration of K. 608, which was about to be published in Leipzig by Breitkopf & Härtel, whose publication the *AmZ* was. His letter contains the following remarks:

Mozart's Fantasy in F minor, composed here in Vienna for the late Father Primitiv, is (as far as I am aware) little known, and nevertheless deserves, I feel, one of the first places among the immortal's masterpieces. I still recall from my youth the lively sensation that repeated--oft repeated--hearings of this ingenious production ineradicably impressed upon my memory. A thousand varying emotions were aroused by that (I might almost call it) terrifying Allegro, with its artful fugue subject in the strict style. The listener is startled at the violent modulation to F sharp minor, and imagines the ground shaking beneath him. The lovely, so tenderly expressed Adagio [*recte* Andante] in A flat major is music of the spheres; it elicits tears--salutary tears of longing for heaven. The repeat of the opening Allegro catapults us back into troubled human existence. The two mutually belligerent fugue subjects impart a striking, serious, powerful image of the battle of the passions. Only at the end is there calm. Power is exhausted, human nature has died, and the soul escapes the body. The end signifies the life to come.

Father Primitivus Niemecz, librarian at Esterháza Palace, was a pupil and friend of Haydn's. He built several clock-organs which play music that Haydn wrote or arranged especially for them; some of these survive in working order and their eighteenth-century sounds may be heard on modern recordings. Wolfgang Plath doubted that Mozart would have referred to a learned man and priest like Niemecz by what he considers the disrespectful appellation "the clockmaker," yet readers of Mozart's correspondence will readily call to mind disrespectful remarks about various other persons.

In any case, although the nature of the relationship between Mozart and Niemecz is unknown, the commission that linked them was intended not for a palace or stately home but rather for a private Viennese art gallery and waxworks collection. This gallery was the creation of one Joseph Nepomuk Franz de Paula, Baron Deym von Stržitéž, who operated under the alias Müller after having had to flee from his post as an officer in the Austrian army following an illegal duel. Müller's Gallery, operated by Deym at various locations in Vienna between circa 1780 and 1804 and then by his widow until 1819, contained curious works of art, plaster-cast copies of ancient sculptures, and handsomely clad wax statues of famous living personages, among them the Austrian military hero, Field Marshal Ernst

Gideon, Baron von Laudon (or Loudon; he is the also man to whom Haydn dedicated his Symphony No. 69). After Laudon died on July 14, 1790, Deym decided to construct a monument in which the Field Marshal's effigy could be viewed in a glass coffin. This was announced in the *Wiener Zeitung* for March 26, 1791:

On March 23rd Herr Müller, who has become generally known through his art collection on the Stock-im-Eisen-Platz, No. 610, first floor, opened the Mausoleum erected by him, which he has at great expense created in memory of the unforgettable and world-famous Field Marshal Baron von Laudon, in the Himmelpfortgasse over against the Mint, in the house of Herr Gerl, master-builder (No. 1355). Here on the ground floor this remarkable monument may be seen in a setting especially designed for it, splendidly illuminated from 8 o'clock in the morning till 10 o'clock at night; access to it is by the large door up three steps of the main staircase. The distributed advertisements as well as the posters have given some description of it, but since to describe the whole with sufficient vividness is impossible, the sight of it will not fail to surprise everyone who visits this Mausoleum and thereby renews the memory of this great and meritorious man. Herr Müller has caused it to be engraved in copper, and colored prints will shortly be available at the entrance. The seats are arranged in the best possible way, and each person pays 1 fl. for a first place and 30 kr. for a second; upon the stroke of each hour a Funeral Musique will be heard, and will be different every week. This week the composition is by Herr Kapellmeister Mozart.

Perhaps as stated above, originally the music of different composers was heard weekly, but within months only Mozart's music was presented, according to two documents: a notice in the *Wiener Zeitung* of August 17, 1791 ("choice funeral music composed by the famous Herr Capellmeister Mozart, which is wholly appropriate to the purpose for which it has been written") and a descriptive guide published in 1797 ("Every hour a suitable funeral music, especially written for the purpose by the unforgettable composer Mozart, is to be heard, which lasts eight minutes and in precision and purity surpasses anything that was ever attempted to be suitably applied to this kind of artistic work.")

It has traditionally been supposed that the commission on which Mozart was working in Frankfurt in order to "slip a few ducats into the hand of [his] dear wife" was a piece for the mechanical organ hidden in Laudon's Mausoleum, but (as Ludwig Misch and Wolfgang Plath have pointed out) this must be wrong. In Frankfurt Mozart complained of the high pitch of the instrument for which he had to compose, so he must have been working on a piece like the delicate K. 616, notated in Mozart's autograph on three treble staves and with a range of only three octaves from the f a fifth below middle c.

K. 594 and 608, on the contrary, come down to us (in the Berlin and Vienna manuscripts

discussed below and the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* based on them) notated on three treble staves plus a bass staff and requiring an instrument with a range of three-and-a-half octaves extending a fourth lower in the bass than the instrument for which K. 616 was intended. K. 594 and 608--both in F Minor, in a heavy style, in A-B-A form, lasting eight or nine minutes, and entitled "Fantasy"--must have been written for the Mausoleum. Seyfried's overheated account of the music fits K. 608--the work found in the Library of Congress manuscript--which must have become permanently associated with the Mausoleum to the exclusion of K. 594.

Contrary to Seyfried's peculiar assertion that K. 608 was "little known," however, there is evidence of its dissemination in the half-century after Mozart's death in print and manuscript arrangements for piano two- or four-hands, flute duet, string quartet, and orchestra-- this at a time when K. 594 was virtually unknown. And a review of the first edition of K. 608 in the *AmZ* in September 1799 begins, "This Fantasy is the organ piece, well known in Vienna, . . . which Mozart composed for the mechanical instrument in the splendid Müller's Art Gallery in that very city." The anonymous reviewer (Friedrich Rochlitz?), who said he had "in front of him a manuscript copy of this Fantasy just as Mozart composed it for the organ," enumerated, with musical examples, some of the contradictions between the first edition and his manuscript. So even in its very early dissemination, the text of K. 608 had become confused. And the work's enthusiastic reception was accurately foretold by the *AmZ* reviewer, who found it to be "one of the most consummate works of [Mozart's] inexhaustible genius."

Of Mozart's three completed pieces for mechanical instruments, an autograph manuscript survives only for K. 616 (in the Mozarteum in Salzburg). Neither it nor the autographs of K. 594 and 608 were in Mozart's possession at his death, and when the publisher Johann Anton André, who bought most of Mozart's manuscripts from his widow Constanze in 1799, wrote to her asking about them, she replied on May 31, 1800, that "these belong to the Royal Imperial Chamberlain Count von Deym here in Vienna, who is the proprietor of the Art Gallery formerly called by him Müller's Art Gallery." As there is no autograph extant for K. 608, to establish its text we are dependent on early copies of various provenance.

This brings us to the manuscript of K. 608 found at the Library of Congress. It is written on six pages or three leaves. Two of these leaves form a single bifolium (a folio folded once to make four pages) on which is written an Allegro, comprising a prelude in the style of a French overture plus a massive fugue, along with the reworked reprise of both. Inserted into the bifolium is the third leaf, of a different type of paper, slightly smaller than the bifolium; the separate leaf contains on its two pages the Andante ("that in every regard deserves to be called *heavenly*"--*AmZ*), which forms the central section of the



composition. Both papers are types commonly found in Viennese musical manuscripts: the bifolium has a watermark with the extremely common three-crescent-moon pattern on one half and a helmet device with the initials "AM" on the other. This is similar to, but not identical with, Alan Tyson's watermark 86, a kind of paper that Mozart used in the years 1786-1791. The bifolium is in oblong format and ruled with fourteen staves per page, with a "total span" (the distance from the top line of the top staff to the bottom line of the bottom staff) of approximately 183 mm. The inserted leaf reveals only a bit of its watermark, which is similar to the chevron pattern seen in Tyson's watermark 106A, quadrant 3a, briefly used by Mozart in 1791. It is also in oblong format, but with only eight staves per page and a total span of approximately 175 mm. Unfortunately, in our current state of knowledge this information is insufficient to date the manuscript.

The hand of the Library of Congress manuscript's copyist and its paper types suggest possible Viennese origins, but Dexter Edge, an expert on Viennese manuscripts of the period, has not been able to associate the hand with any known copyist from Mozart's or his widow's circle (personal communication). The copyist was an experienced musician (his hand is fluent and legible even though crowded) but probably not a professional copyist, who most likely would have spread the music out to occupy more space and give the work a heading. The manuscript is, in any case, not a fair copy but a working document, with a number of corrections and the occasional passage that seems not entirely complete.

As already mentioned, the two principal manuscript copies of K. 608 are on four staves; one is in the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, the other in the library of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna. The four-staff version of the work in both manuscripts and in the *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* can without further ado be played four-hands, even though it has not been specifically arranged for that purpose, which would have involved at the very least extending the mock-tutti chords of the opening and similar passages to exploit the full five-octave range of Mozart's fortepiano. A version arranged for piano four-hands did appear in the first edition (Vienna: Johann Traeg, 1799), in the so-called *Oeuvres complètes* (1800), as well as in the old complete edition of Mozart's works (1883); it can also be found in most practical editions of Mozart's four-hand music.

The Library of Congress manuscript, however, contains neither of these but rather an unpublished version on two staves, which appears to be for a single player. This version, while keeping the top note at d''' and thus never reaching up the additional minor third to top f''' on the fortepiano of Mozart's day, does extend in the bass to make use of the available notes down to the bottom F1. The tutti chords of the four-staff version are densely packed with notes in all octaves, presumably as a result of the relatively limited range of Deym's automaton and Mozart's judgment about effective voicing of chords on

that instrument. The Library of Congress's two-staff version displays spacing more normal for piano writing, with larger intervals in the bass and smaller ones in the treble.

The spacing is more normal perhaps, but not entirely normal, for if one sits down to play this two-hand version of K. 608, some surprises are in store. To be sure, the rapid turns in thirds, which are such a prominent feature of the beginning of the Allegro and are entirely manageable for four hands, have been simplified in the two-staff version by removing the lower voice. But aside from this simple acknowledgment of human limitations, in other passages this two-staff transcription is patently awkward, often requiring reaching for notes in a way never expected in even the most brilliant eighteenth-century keyboard music. The problems of reaching grow sporadically worse as the piece progresses until, beginning in measure 118, one finds passages that cannot be played by two hands. This must mean either that the Library of Congress version was scored on two staves for purposes of study rather than performance, or that it was intended for an instrument with a pedal board--that is, if not an organ, a fortepiano such as the one Mozart owned, which, in addition to its normal five-octave range, had some number of additional bass notes (the precise details are unknown) in a second instrument with a pedal board on the floor, upon which the fortepiano stood. The presence of the indications *fp* in the Allegro and crescendo and diminuendo in the Andante means that the arranger had a fortepiano with a pedal in mind, not an organ. With a pedal for the lowest line, the work becomes playable by a single player, even though a few passages remain unidiomatically conceived for a keyboard instrument of any kind. (It should also be mentioned that in the Andante between measures 137 and 138 and again between measures 158 and 159 there is an extra measure of music not found in published versions of this piece.)

This two-staff version brings to mind an account by Johann Wenzel Tomaschek of a visit to Prague by the pianist Joseph Wölffl in March 1799, in which we read:

Wölffl played a concerto of his own composition with unparalleled clarity and precision, which--on account of the immense stretch of his hands--no one else could perform. Then he played Mozart's *Fantasia in F minor* published in Breitkopf's edition for four hands, exactly as it is printed without leaving out a single note. Nor in any way, in his execution, did he shorten the value of the notes as the so-called romantics of our times love to do, who then imagine that they can smooth everything out again by making an appalling confusion of sounds by raising the dampers. As I said, he played this piece of music without any mishaps.

And Constanze Mozart mentioned in a letter of February 27, 1800, that "A fantasia for fortepiano in F minor should be in the hands of a certain Mr. [Franz] Leitl in Prague,"

referring to a flutist and oboist who played in the first performance of *Don Giovanni* and was a collector of Mozart's music. (Of course, Leidl may have had K. 594 rather than K. 608.) Hence versions of K. 608 for one player were circulating in manuscript before 1805, when Clementi published a two-hand arrangement (Vienna: Artaria).

The question naturally arises whether Mozart himself may have had a hand in the creation of the two-staff version of K. 608 found in the Library of Congress manuscript. On the basis of the unidiomatic solo keyboard writing, we should very much doubt it. When Mozart made keyboard versions of larger scorings, for instance in his marvelous rendering of the overture for *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, he did not try to crowd in all possible notes but instead rewrote the piece to invent effects analogous to, but different from, the orchestral effects they replaced.

The early history of the manuscript of K. 608 found at the Library of Congress cannot be traced. Its first recorded appearance occurred when Johannes Wolf, music librarian of the Prussian State Library, examined it in 1928; comparing it to that Library's manuscript of K. 608, which had once belonged to Beethoven and was erroneously considered an autograph, he thought the two manuscripts were written in "obviously the same hand." In 1936 the Library of Congress manuscript was at the H. Hinterberger Antiquariat (Vienna), where it was examined by Alfred Einstein as he prepared the third edition of the Köchel Catalog. In 1951 it was sold by Hinterberger to the Otto Haas Antiquariat (London) and then to the musicologist Paul Nettl, from whom it was later acquired by Hans Moldenhauer.

An expert evaluation by the Viennese musicologist Robert Haas for the Hinterberger firm opined that the manuscript may have stemmed from Maximilian Stadler or Franz Xaver Süßmayr working under Mozart's supervision and may contain corrections in the composer's hand. (In 1791 Süßmayr acted as Mozart's amanuensis for *Die Zauberflöte* and *La clemenza di Tito* and after Mozart's death completed the Requiem and the D-Major horn concerto, K. 412; Stadler helped Constanze to inventory her husband's musical estate and completed some keyboard pieces that Mozart had left incomplete.) Haas's suggestion was, however, merely wishful thinking intended to place the manuscript's origins closer to Mozart and his circle, increasing its putative authenticity and, not incidentally, its musical and commercial value. The manuscript cannot be convincingly identified as in Stadler's or Süßmayr's hand, and the corrections appear to be in the same ink and same hand as the rest.

Since we have neither Mozart's score of K. 608 nor the mechanical instrument that played it, we must rely on manuscripts and early editions preserving conflicting versions made for reasons, under circumstances, and by persons unknown. That being so, we cannot assume

prima facie that unique readings in the Library of Congress manuscript necessarily represent mistakes or high-handed alterations. As long as the autograph manuscript remains missing, the Library of Congress manuscript must be taken into account in any conscientious attempt to study, edit, or perform this extraordinary piece of music.

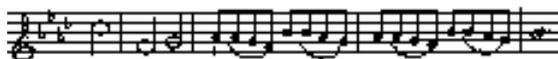
As Wolfgang Plath has pointed out, the influence of Mozart's Fantasy in F minor, K. 608 was considerable in the nineteenth century. Aside from the editions, manuscripts, and arrangements already mentioned, many public performances can be documented. Beethoven owned the work and made his own arrangement of the fugue. Schubert's F Minor Fantasy for piano four-hands, op. 103 (D. 940, 1828), suggests his reaction to the whole of Mozart's piece, whereas Franz Lachner's Wind Octet in B flat, op. 156 (1859) demonstrates his reception of the Andante. Given the loss of the mechanical instrument for which K. 608 was intended, we should probably join the musicians of the first half of the nineteenth century in accepting a wide variety of performance possibilities ranging from a single keyboard player to a full classical orchestra, in order to restore Mozart's inspired mourning music to a sounding condition.

The full text of the review referred to above

[*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, I (Sept. 1799), cols. 876-79:]

Fantaisie à quatre mains pour le Pianoforte, composée par W. A. Mozart. à Vienne, chez Jean Traeg dans la Singerstrasse. (22 Gr.)

This Fantasy is the organ piece, well-known in Vienna, for two keyboard instruments, which Mozart composed for the mechanical instrument in the splendid Müller's Art Gallery in that very city. Accordingly, the title should more correctly read: *Fantaisie etc. composée par W. A. Mozart, arrangée pour le Pianoforte, etc.* As short as this piece is--it consists of a brief Allegro in F Minor, an Andante in A-flat major and a concluding tempo primo again in F Minor, which together last hardly nine minutes--that is how rich it is in intrinsic merit. Right in the first movement, following a few admittedly rather small ideas, which however in power and expression are so much the more copious and great and which serve as [twelve] measures of (as it were) prophetic introduction, the work begins with the following very beautiful, tasteful, and gently melancholic, elevated theme, which seems even more so after the power and (one might almost say) degree of stridency of the introduction:



After an extremely diligent contrapuntal elaboration of this theme, artful but at the same time always very pleasing to the ear, it moves suddenly and unexpectedly from C Minor [really E-flat major] to F-sharp Minor. The reviewer, who has in front of him a manuscript copy of this Fantasy just as Mozart originally composed it for the [mechanical] organ, finds, through comparison with this manuscript, that this abrupt transition must, like the [title at the] beginning [of the edition

under review], be an incidental printing error. Unfortunately, a couple of wrong notes are also found in the manuscript in exactly this spot. The reviewer can affirm with certainty at least this much, that the passage must be altered either like this:



or even more probably like this:



After a formal close in F-sharp Minor there occurs a passage, which is similar to the beginning but which owing to the felicitously daring and rapid modulation is even incomparably stronger; this passage modulates back to F Minor and to its major dominant chord and then breaks off abruptly. Now the Andante in A-flat Major begins--an Andante that in every regard deserves to be called *heavenly*. It is impossible to name a *single* beauty because it is *all* beauty--and all equally beautiful. Here the reviewer cannot refrain from communicating to his readers at least the beginning of this masterpiece:



By way of a conclusion the work sinks back to a tempo primo parallel to the first Allegro, in which the theme quoted at the beginning of the review is combined with this counter subject



and worked out contrapuntally in a manner worthy of J. S. Bach, whom the reviewer holds in the very highest regard.

In this last movement too is once more found, right at the beginning in the third measure, a difference with the manuscript, which reads:



The reviewer, who (parenthetically speaking) cherishes absolutely the ability to be uncommonly concise, considers this (alas!) only too brief product of the Mozartian spirit to be one of the most consummate works of his inexhaustible genius. Since to play this piece on one instrument with two hands is in some passages extraordinarily difficult, in other passages only possible with very long fingers and despite this, however, a few passages must be altered; since for many who perhaps might like to hear it, traveling to Vienna to have it played there may really not be easily practicable; finally, since it is also not very common to find two keyboard instruments tuned perfectly purely and exactly the same, which would allow this work to be conveniently played; so this very successful arrangement for four hands on one instrument must be a very agreeable publication for every admirer of Mozart and of excellent music. Now and then, for example at the end of page 2 and page 10 from the 14th measure, it would be a rather good idea to add a sort of basso continuo. Also, in consideration of the impenetrability of bodies and likewise of hands, a few passages have to be altered. (In the original version for organ this piece did not go above [d-flat] or below [c].) The reviewer can only disapprove of the unnecessary dismemberment of a principal idea, for instance on page 14, measures 4 and 5.

May a great many things of this and similar sorts by Mozart continue to appear.