

## **The sensation on Mozart's 265th birthday – An unknown Mozart piece is heard for the first time: 94 Seconds of New Mozart – The Allegro in D major for Piano, K. 626b/16**

**The Mozarteum Foundation Salzburg celebrates Mozart's birthday with the world premiere of the new Mozart piece on January from 6 to 7 p.m. – A wide range of additional offers make grant access to K. 626b/16 free of charge for Mozart fans from all over the world**

Despite the large number of compositions that Wolfgang Amadé Mozart wrote during his short lifetime, new discoveries are extremely rare. During the last decades, a few hitherto unknown original manuscripts by Mozart have come to light; these were, however, always incomplete pieces: sketches or drafts. It is more than 80 years ago that the re-discovery of an unknown complete composition in Mozart's own handwriting was announced.

The Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation has acquired an Allegro in D major for piano by the 17-year-old Mozart and will present it to the public at the occasion of the composer's 265th anniversary on January 27, 2021. The autograph manuscript had been in private possession since the late 1920s. After scrupulous internal examination by research fellows of the Mozarteum Foundation, four internationally renowned Mozart experts from the US and Germany were consulted, who likewise confirmed the authenticity of the sheet of music.

Dr. Johannes Honsig-Erlenburg, President of the Mozarteum Foundation, declares: "It was a stroke of luck that the autograph manuscript of the Allegro in D major, K. 626b/16 was brought to our attention shortly before the pandemic. Under current circumstances, that threaten Austria's cultural life in an unprecedented manner, the Salzburg Mozarteum Foundation would probably have to decline offers like this with a heavy heart. But today, on his 265th anniversary, we are able to share with Mozart admirers all over the world the unique experience of the rediscovery of a work that none of us has ever listened before."

This special event will be celebrated in many ways. Pianist Seong-Jin Cho from South Korea will perform the piece for the first time in a concert of the Mozart Week, which will be held online due to COVID restrictions; during this concert Rolando Villazón, artistic director of the Mozart Week, presents this discovery in a talk with Dr. Ulrich Leisinger, director of research of the Mozarteum Foundation, in the Grand Hall of the Mozarteum on January 27, 2021 at 6 p.m. On the program are additional compositions that help to understand better the newly discovered work. This extraordinary concert event will be broadcast exclusively on the fidelio and DG Stage streaming platforms at 6 p.m. and on medici.tv at 9 p.m. The first recording of the work in the Great Hall of the Mozarteum Foundation can also be followed free of charge in an exclusive premiere video at 7 p.m. on social media, including Deutsche Grammophon's YouTube channel and the social channels of the Mozarteum Foundation.

Deutsche Grammophon will release *Ninety-Four Seconds of New Mozart*, Cho's interpretation of this small, yet extraordinary work. The world premiere of this piece in Salzburg can also be watched in a shortened version on the YouTube channel of DG as well as on the social media platforms of the Mozarteum Foundation. Images of the original manuscript can be accessed via the digital *Bibliotheca Mozartiana* of the Mozarteum Foundation, and the *Digital Interactive Mozart-Edition (DIME)* will provide an edition of the work. Both online offerings are free of charge for personal study, research purposes, and educational use. In addition, the Mozarteum Foundation is publishing a facsimile edition of the new piece on Mozart's birthday, which can be obtained from the museum stores or from book and music traders. The original manuscript of the *Allegro in D KV 626b/16* is expected to be on display in the Mozart Residence from Easter.

Rolando Villazón, accentuates its importance: "94 seconds of new Mozart – that's perhaps not much, but 94 seconds by a master like Mozart can open up an entire musical cosmos."

The *Allegro in D major, K. 626b/16* fills the front and back of a single sheet of music paper in oblong format. The handwriting is hasty, but error-free. The undated composition stems in all likelihood from the first months 1773, according to the Mozarteum Foundation; it thus originated either during Mozart's third journey to Italy or immediately after his return to Salzburg. A trustworthy annotation of 1844 led to assume that the manuscript was once part of the estate of Mozart's son, Franz Xaver Wolfgang. Franz Xaver, however, did not inherit it from his father, but rather from his aunt Maria Anna, Mozart's sister, who apparently kept it as a memento. Peculiarities of style suggest that this three-part dance movement is not an original piano piece, but a keyboard arrangement in Mozart's own hand of an unknown orchestral work.

Although the composition was hitherto unpublished, it has been listed in the Köchel catalogue of Mozart's works, since the third edition of 1937, as K. 626b/16. (K. 626b is a collective entry for compositions about which nothing is known except an entry in an auction or sales catalogue.) Between 1900 and 1928 the manuscript was offered at auction several times, but the music could never be studied by scholars, and therefore, it has remained unknown. The original manuscript was acquired by a music-loving engineer in the late 1920s and remained for almost 90 years in this family's possession until it reached the Mozarteum Foundation by mediation of the London-based specialist for autograph music Dr. Stephen Roe.

Stephen Roe explains: "During the last forty years, I have come across a few new autographs of Mozart, which have all been fragments, never of complete works. It was immediately clear that the manuscript shown to me in a private home near Amsterdam was entirely in Mozart's own hand. I neither recognised the composition nor the paper on which it was written, which convinced me that this was an exciting discovery and full of research potential. The owners wished the manuscript to enter a major institution and we were in the very happy position of arranging the sale of the autograph manuscript to the Mozarteum Foundation, probably the best place in the world for it."

Dr. Ulrich Leisinger, director of research of the Mozarteum Foundation, points out: "The *Allegro in D major K. 626b/16* is a highly attractive and charming piano piece, that adds yet



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another facet to the affectionate relationship of Mozart to his sister. How wonderful, that we are now able to participate in this relationship after such a long period of time.”

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