

"What's my percentage?" - Mozart



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: The Flute Quartets (complete)

Quartet in D major, K.285

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Rondeau: Allegretto

Quartet in G major, K.285a

4. Andante
5. Tempo di Menuetto

Quartet in C Major, K.285b

6. Allegro
7. Tema con variazioni
8. Tema con variazioni
9. Menuetto
10. Rondieoux: Allegretto grazioso, ma non troppo

Michala Petri, Recorder

Carolin Widmann, Violin • Ula Ulijona, Viola • Marta Sudraba, Cello

Catalogue Number: OUR Recordings 6.220570 (SACD)

By the end of the eighteenth century the *transverse* flute had gained the same popularity among amateur musicians as the guitar would 200 years later. A flute was easy to transport, it was inexpensive to buy and relatively easy to play. When Mozart wrote his first flute works in the 1760s, the flute was mainly used as a solo or chamber music instrument. When he wrote his last music in 1791, it had become a permanent member of the modern symphony orchestra. The classical *transverse* flute had also completely ousted the old recorders as an amateur instrument. Eighteenth-century students, officers, intellectuals, aristocrats, royalty and professional virtuosi now played the *transverse* flute, and the composers therefore supplied them with modern chamber music works at all levels of difficulty. The music publishers sold reams of flute music. Many of the works can be found preserved in private and public libraries all over Europe.

The great age of the recorder was coming to an end in the middle of the 1700s. It had seen a last flourishing with Bach, Vivaldi and Telemann, but after that it was very quickly outstripped by the more flexible modern transverse flutes, which better suited the aesthetic of Classical music. Yet the recorder family was not completely forgotten in Mozart's time. One of the finest portraits of a recorder player was painted in Budapest in 1778, the year Mozart composed his first two flute quartets. The last recorder tutor of the Classical period appeared in London in 1780, the year before Mozart wrote his third quartet.

The leap from a recorder to a transverse flute of the eighteenth century was considerable, but not huge. Mozart would have composed his quartets for a soft-sounding, slender flute of wood, with just two keys – a sound much closer to that of a recorder than that of today's powerful orchestral flute of silver. In the 1700s, instrumentation was not taken as seriously as today. At lightning speed Mozart himself arranged his opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for wind octet – quite simply because he could sell the music and earn money! We do not know what Mozart would have replied if we had asked him for permission to perform his flute quartets on the recorder. But since he was always aware of the mundane necessities of the marketplace, a likely answer would have been: "What's my percentage?"

Michala Petri made her debut as a concert soloist in 1969 at the Tivoli Concert Hall in Copenhagen. Since then she has toured every continent and has appeared in concerts and festivals all over the world. Her mastery of her instruments – as well as the musicality she communicates – have been devoted to works ranging from the Baroque to the contemporary; many composers have dedicated works to Michala Petri and have written specifically for her.

It has been Michala's goal to challenge the common perceptions and expand the musical limits of the recorder in every way possible – whether through historically-informed performances of period repertoire, creative and idiomatic arrangements of works originally written for other instruments or creating a new literature from our own time. It will come as no surprise that her performances of the Mozart Flute Quartets (performed on a trio of the best modern recorders*), accompanied by three gifted soloists from Germany, Lithuania and Latvia provide a listening experience of the highest artistic standards. What is more important is that these new recordings are incredibly beautiful and entertaining as well!

**Michala Petri performs on the Mollenhauer Modern Alto recorder and the Moeck Rottenburgh Soprano and Sopranino recorders*

OUR Recordings

c/o Joshua Cheek

364 Rolling Meadows • Ann Arbor, MI 48103

email: blue_sky_music@comcast.net

Ph. 734-769-1676

FAX: 734-769-1680