

Sinfonia in C major

MARIANNE VON MARTÍNEZ (MARIANNA MARTINES) ^N 1744-1770

Friend of Mozart, Haydn and Metastasio; amateur composer who established an international reputation without ever leaving her native Vienna; gifted singer and harpsichordist who played her own works at court; author of the only symphony written by a woman during the late 18th century; fluent in four languages and superbly educated; hostess of one of the city's most fashionable musical salons; bachelorette at a time when a woman's life was defined by her marriage.

Marianne von Martínez was one of the most talented and anomalous figures of Viennese Classicism. (She was born Anna Katharina Martínez, but took the name Marianna and preferred the surname "Martines" because it softened the German pronunciation to something closer to that of her Spanish heritage. She is known equally as Marianne Martínez.)

Martínez was the daughter of a Neapolitan who was secretary to the papal *nuncio* (ambassador) to the Habsburg court. Before he left Naples, her father, Nicolo, had befriended the poet Pietro Trapassi, who was named Poet Laureate to the court in Vienna in 1730 and became celebrated across Europe for his opera librettos under the pen name Pietro Metastasio. He moved in with Nicolo when he arrived in Vienna and spent the rest of his life as a virtual member of the Martínez family. Metastasio, who never married, oversaw the general and musical education of the ten Martínez children with the best available teachers, and found a special protégé with Marianne, born in 1744. There was hardly a better place in Europe for her to learn about music. Also living in their large apartment building, directly across a plaza from the Hofburg, the seat of Habsburg power, was the greatly admired voice teacher Nicolò Porpora and, in a cold and drafty attic, an impoverished young musician named Joseph Haydn. When Marianna showed remarkable musical abilities, Metastasio engaged Porpora to give her voice lessons and Haydn to accompany them and instruct her on keyboard; she studied composition with the Imperial court composer Giuseppe Bonno and Johann Adolph Hasse, then the leading composer of *opera seria* in Europe, who set more than forty of Metastasio's texts.

When Martínez was sixteen, her first Mass was performed at the court chapel. She was summoned by Empress Maria Theresa a year later to appear as a singer and keyboardist and was frequently invited to return throughout her life, often performing her own compositions, whose virtuosity attests to her vocal skills. Martínez continued to compose and perform steadily and enjoyed numerous public and private performances of her compositions, but she never considered doing either professionally, something that would have been frowned upon by her noble class. In 1773, Metastasio sent several of her scores to his friend Padre Giovanni Battista Martini, that era's most famous teacher of composition, who proposed her for membership in the Bologna Accademia Filarmonico; she was the first woman ever inducted into that venerable society. (Three years earlier, Mozart, then fourteen, studied with Martini on his third Italian tour and also became a member of the Accademia.) When Metastasio died, in 1782, he left Marianna 20,000 florins (several million dollars today), his harpsichord and music library, and in subsequent years she hosted weekly musical soirées attended by Haydn, Mozart and other notables; in the 1790s, she started a successful singing school. Her last public appearance was on March 27, 1808 at a performance of Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* in honor of his 76th birthday. In a biographical symmetry that would have pleased the rationalism of that humanistic era, that event was also the last public appearance of Joseph Haydn, Marianna's first teacher, when he was lionized by nobility, music lovers and another of his students, Ludwig van Beethoven. Marianna Martínez died in Vienna of tuberculosis on December 13, 1812.

Martínez is thought to have composed some 200 works, though many of her manuscripts were destroyed in a fire in 1927. Her extant compositions include four Masses, sacred works for chorus and for solo voice, Italian arias (all on texts of Metastasio), secular solo cantatas, four harpsichord concertos, three harpsichord sonatas and one symphony. Other than two keyboard sonatas, none of these works was published during Martínez' lifetime. Despite the skill with which they were created and the acceptance they received, her works faded quickly from notice after her death, when her conservative idiom was superseded by the heightened expression of the Romantic Age. She was rediscovered by scholars in the 1990s, and in recent years many of her works have been published, several have been recorded, and a full-length study by Indiana University of Pennsylvania professor Irving Godt was published in 2010.

Martínez's Sinfonia in C major (1770) is modeled on the compact fast-slow-fast form of the Italian opera overture. The first movement is in a sonata form modified in that the vigorous main theme is omitted from the recapitulation, which includes just the delicate, trilling second subject from the exposition; a brief developmental episode using both ideas occupies the middle of the movement. The *Andante*, lyrical and graceful, returns the opening strains to close the movement. The finale is in two parts, each repeated. The second part recalls the spirited opening theme but with a darker expressive character.

Lux Aeterna for Chorus and Orchestra (1997)

MORTEN LAURIDSEN ^N BORN 1943

Morten Lauridsen, born in Colfax, Washington in 1943 and raised in Portland, Oregon, attended Whitman College in Walla Walla and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, where his principal composition teachers were Ingolf Dahl, Halsey Stevens and Robert Linn. Lauridsen taught at USC from 1967 to 2019, serving as Chair of the Composition Department from 1990 to 2002; among his significant accomplishments at the school was the foundation of the advanced studies program in scoring for motion pictures and television. He has been recognized by the university with the Phi Kappa Phi Creative Writing Prize, Thornton School of Music Outstanding Alumnus Award, Ramo Award and Alpha Lambda Delta Citation for Teaching Excellence. In November 2007, he was presented with the National Medal of Arts at a ceremony at the White House, and in 2016, he received the ASCAP Foundation “Life in Music” award. Lauridsen is most noted for his many art songs and choral works, which have been performed throughout the world and recorded on more than 200 CDs, five of which have received Grammy nominations.

Of his 1997 *Lux Aeterna*, Lauridsen wrote, “Each of the five connected movements in this cycle contains references to Light assembled from various sacred Latin texts. The piece opens and closes with the beginning and ending of the *Requiem Mass*, with the central three movements drawn respectively from the *Te Deum* (including a line from the *Beatus Vir*), *O Nata Lux* and *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*. The instrumental introduction to the *Introitus* softly recalls motivic fragments from two pieces especially close to my heart (my settings of Rilke’s *Contre Que, Rose* from *Les Chansons des Roses* and *O Magnum Mysterium*) which recur throughout the work in various forms. Several new themes in the *Introitus* are then introduced by the chorus, including an extended canon on *et lux perpetua*. In *Te, Domine, Speravi* contains, among other musical elements, the cantus firmus *Herzliebster Jesu* [‘Dearly Loved Jesus,’ a German chorale] and a lengthy inverted canon [voices in exact but contrary-motion imitation] on *fiat misericordia*. *O Nata Lux* and *Veni Sancte Spiritus* are paired songs, the former a central *a cappella* motet and the latter a spirited, jubilant canticle. A quiet setting of the *Agnus Dei* precedes the final *Lux Aeterna*, which reprises the opening section of the *Introitus* and concludes with a joyful *Alleluia*.”

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 (1788) **WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART ^N 1756-1791)**

At no time was the separation between Mozart’s personal life and his transcendent music more apparent than in the summer of 1788, when, at the age of 32, he had only three years to live. His wife was ill and his own health was beginning to fail; his six-month-old daughter died on July 29th; *Don Giovanni* received a disappointing reception at its Viennese premiere on May 7th; he had small prospect of participating in any important concerts; and he was so impoverished and indebted that he would not answer a knock on the door for fear of finding a creditor there. Yet, amid all these difficulties, he produced, in less than two months, the three crowning jewels of his orchestral output, the Symphonies Nos. 39, 40 and 41. The G minor alone of the last three symphonies may reflect the composer’s distressed emotional state at the time, looking forward to the passionately charged music of the 19th century while epitomizing the structural elegance of the waning Classical era.

The Symphony’s pervading mood of tragic restlessness is established immediately at the outset by the agitated main theme; a stormy transition leads to the quieter second theme. The development section gives prominence to the fragmented main theme. The recapitulation returns the earlier themes in heightened settings. The *Andante* creates a mood of brooding intensity and portentous asceticism. The *Minuet* was judged by Arturo Toscanini to be one of the most darkly tragic pieces ever written, a quality contrasted by the central trio, the only untroubled portion of the work. The finale revives the rhythmic energy of the first movement. The gentler second theme slows the motion only briefly. The development section exhibits a contrapuntal ingenuity that few late-18th-century composers could match in technique and none surpass in musicianship. The recapitulation maintains the Symphony’s tragic mood to the close.

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