“Great” Mass in C

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756—1791)

K 427 (417a)
Composed 1782–83 in Vienna and Salzburg

Instrumentation: Solo flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns (in C, F, and G), 2 trumpets (in C and G), 3 trombones (ATB), timpani, strings (2.2.1.1), and organ

Voicing: 4 soloists (2 sopranos, tenor, bass) and double SATB chorus

Duration: 60’


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(from Missa aulica, K 337)

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Please send comments, suggestions, or emendations by electronic mail to philip AT netscape DOT net
Comment on this draft: An edition of this size and complexity is necessarily a work in progress, and I am grateful that the musical public has by and large expressed patience and understanding with a seemingly slow rate of progress. Recently I have been able to optimise the generation of PDF documents from my music notation software, so this latest revision takes account of both some corrections in the Kyrie and Gloria; the piano accompaniment has been further fleshed out in the earlier movements, and a preliminary piano reduction (consisting of just the continuo line and one or other of the prominent treble lines) in the later ones. The vocal parts are complete in all 12 extant movements from the Mass; of the appendices, only the conclusion to the Credo requires completion, so for the time being I am withholding the final pages of the vocal score, comprising both this, and the Agnus Dei.

[Philip Legge, 8 April 2006]
Editor’s notes: Mozart composed the Great Mass in C in 1782 and 1783 as a thanks offering after his marriage to Constanze Weber. A letter written to his father Leopold on 4 January 1783 mentions the score of half a mass lying on his desk bearing witness to the promise. The completed sections of the mass were performed later that year in St Peter’s, Salzburg on 26 October; the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, and Benedictus had been completed, but the Credo was not set in full, and scored in Mozart’s usual draft, and the Agnus Dei not even begun. One of the florid solo soprano parts was undoubtedly sung by Constanze.

At the time of composition during the reign of the Emperor Joseph II, orchestral masses had fallen out of favour in Austria; Joseph Haydn composed none at all between 1782 and 1796. Rather than completing the mass subsequently, Mozart set it aside until 1785 when he re-used the Kyrie and Gloria, with the addition of two new arias, as an oratorio, Davide penitente (K 469). Of the remainder of the mass, the Credo was never completed, and the two surviving movements remained incomplete in draft form; the Sanctus and Benedictus, although complete, subsequently became partially lost; and the Agnus Dei had never been contemplated by Mozart beyond some sketches he made for the Dona nobis pacem, probably committed to paper after the performance.

The work is a solemn mass written on the grandest scale, with the Gloria and Credo treated like a cantata in being divided into a succession of individual arias and choruses. Mozart’s interest in the works of Handel is reflected in the baroque textures of several of the choral movements, which are unlike anything in his previous sacred music written for Salzburg, and echoed in parts of the Requiem nearly a decade later. The orchestral forces are the largest Mozart employed in sacred music, apart from the Kyrie in D minor (K 341 (368a)) with its double wind including clarinets.

The surviving parts of the 1783 performance lack a Credo and Agnus Dei, so it is unlikely although not impossible that Mozart may have substituted movements from one of his older masses for these movements. While there are strong arguments for only including the movements known to be complete and authentic, in a performing edition it is stylistically permissible to attempt completion by drawing on the incomplete and slightly less authentic, as well as to draw on other of Mozart’s completed masses to shape the unfinished work into something more resembling what the finished mass may have been like.

Thus the first problem in completing the mass is the Credo, of which Mozart composed two movements in draft, with the musical substance complete enough for him to be able to fill in the parts from memory; the editor is faced with the task of composing the missing parts in Mozart’s style. In the Credo in unum Deum the chorus, Violin I and Bassi continuo parts are complete, and the remaining parts are in various stages of completion; there are explicit parts for oboes, bassoons, horns, second violin and violas. It is furthermore assumed that in keeping with both the festal nature of the mass and the quasi-Handelian scoring of the movement, Mozart would probably have specified trombones mostly doubling the alto, tenor, and bass chorus parts, and written these parts in addition to those for trumpets and timpani in a separate particella, so all these parts have also been composed by the editor.

In the Et incarnatus est only the solo soprano part and Basso continuo are assumed to be complete as they stand; there are incomplete parts for solo flute, oboe, and bassoon, violins and violas. Mozart also allowed two blank staves in the particella which may have been intended for horns.

The remainder of the Credo after the Et incarnatus est is taken from one of his sixteen earlier completed masses, the Missa longa in C (K 262 (246a)) which features a cantata-style Credo. The Crucifixus comprises the second half of a movement already incorporating the text of the foregoing Et incarnatus est, so the first half of the movement has been omitted. The subsequent Et resurrexit has a fine closing section which suggested employing the antiphonally divided choir. The other gap to be filled is the unwritten Agnus Dei and Dona nobis pacem, which have been taken from the Missa aulica in C (K 337). This is one of the solemn coronation masses that Mozart conducted in Prague in 1791, which gives us a reliable guide to the composer’s estimation of it, and features a fine soprano solo in the Agnus Dei accompanied by an organ obbligato.

The second problem in completing the mass is that Mozart’s autograph of the Sanctus and Benedictus is mostly missing. Although these movements were once complete, the only surviving authentic material consists of Mozart’s separate particella for the wind and timpani parts of the Sanctus; the Benedictus is wholly missing. Of the original instrumental parts used in the Salzburg performance, only the trombone and organ parts survive. Fortunately a copy of the mass was made by P.M. Fischer from the instrumental parts, before they became lost. In the absence of Mozart’s score, this was the source used by J.A. André for the latter movements when he edited the mass for publication in 1840. Unfortunately Fischer did not have enough staves on the pages of his score to include all eight voices of the double chorus in the Osanna, and H.C. Robbins Landon demonstrated that the Sanctus and Benedictus suffered from the same problem; it is evident from the amount of fugal material in the Osanna that almost half of the chorus parts are missing from these movements.

In the Sanctus and Osanna the chorus parts are written in Fischer’s score in four or sometimes five parts, with two soprano parts which are occasionally marked as 1° and 2°. In the section Dominus Deus… pleni… the text is laid out antiphonally between the soprano parts, with different combinations of alto, tenor, and bass accompanying each soprano, which suggest one four-part choir answering the other. Following this assumption, it turns out there are mostly one or two voices missing from each choir, usually an alto, tenor, or bass, which can be supplied by reference to the accompanying harmony. In the Osanna fugue there is a good deal of extra fugal material in the instrumental parts to supply music for the missing second choir, except perhaps for the Bass II; thus it doubles the existing choral bass most of the time. The final perorations of osanna in excelsis at bar 57 ff. can clearly be overlapped to provide a portion of the missing choir parts. The choral contribution to the Benedictus consists of a direct repetition of the latter part of the Osanna fugue from bar 47 onward.
»Great« Mass in C, K.427 (417a)

Andante moderato

[1] Kyrie

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

Soprano I solo

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Andante moderato

Piano

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rev. 2005-03-19 philip@netscape.net
Soprano I solo

Solo: Sängerin [Mozart]

NB Dieses solo singt die Erste
[3] Laudamus te

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Laudamus

Adoramus te.

Bene

diciamus te.

glorificamus te.

fp

Laudamus te.

Adoramus te.
Gratias, gratias a-gimusti-bi pro-pter

Soprano I

Soprano II

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

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Largo

Soprano I

Alto I

Tenor I

Bass I

Soprano II

Alto II

Tenor II

Bass II

Piano

[6] Qui tollis

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lis pec-cata mundi,
tol-lis pec-cata mundi,
tol-lis pec-cata mundi,
tol-lis pec-cata mundi,
Qui tol-

Qui tol-
Qui tol-
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 Qui tol-
qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta, qui
qui tol - lis, qui tol -
pec - ca - ta mun - di, qui
lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, qui
tol - lis, qui tol -
lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, qui
tol - lis, qui tol -
lis pec - ca - ta mun - di, qui
ta mundi, misere-re-
-lis pec-ca-ta mundi,
-lis pec-ca-ta mundi,
ca-ta mundi,
ca-ta mundi,
ap-pec-ca-ta mundi,
ap-pec-ca-ta mundi,
ap-pec-ca-ta mundi,
ap-pec-ca-ta mundi,
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
mi - se - re - re - re - no - bis. Qui tol -
tol·lis, qui tol·lis,
qui tol·lis pec·ca·ta,
qui tol·lis pec·ca·ta mun·di,
pec·ca·ta mun·di,
lis pec-cata mun-di, sus-ci-pe, su-
di, pec-cata mun-di,
cata mun-di,
ca-ta mun-di,
lis pec-cata mun-di,
cata mun-di,
tol-lis pec-cata mun-di,
cata mun-di,
tris, qui sedes, qui sedes, qui
tris, qui sedes, qui sedes ad dexteram,
tris, qui sedes, qui sedes, qui
tris, qui sedes ad dexteram Pater
tris, qui sedes, qui sedes, qui
tris, qui sedes ad dexteram Pater
no-bis, mi-se-re-re, mi-se-re-re,
Allegro

[7] Quoniam

Soprano I solo

Soprano II solo

Tenor solo

Allegro

Piano

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[8] Jesu Christe — Cum sancto spiritu

Soprano
Adagio

Je - su, Je - su Chris - te, Je-su Chris-te, Je-su

Alto

Je - su, Je - su Chris-te, Je-su Chris-te, Je-su

Tenor

Je - su, Je-su Chris-te, Je-su Chris-te, Je-su

Bass

Adagio

Je - su, Je - su Chris-te, Je-su Chris-te, Je-su

Piano

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Cum sancto spiritu in gloria Dei Patris, amen.
tu, cum sancto spiritu,

santo spirito,

men.

Cum sancto spirito.

a sancto spiritu,

in greg.

santo spiritu
[9] Credo in unum Deum
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,
cre do in u num De um, Pa tremo mni po ten tem,

fac to rem coe li et ter ra, fac to rem coe li et ter ra,
fac to rem coe li et ter ra, fac to rem coe li et ter ra,
fac to rem coe li et ter ra, fac to rem coe li et ter ra,
fac to rem coe li et ter ra, fac to rem coe li et ter ra,
fac to rem coe li et ter ra, fac to rem coe li et ter ra,
visibilium omnium, et invisibilium omnium,
lumen de lumine, De um verum de Deo
lumen de lumine, De um verum de Deo
lumen de lumine, De um verum de Deo
lumen de lumine, De um verum de Deo
Deum
Deum
Deum
Deum
Deum
vevero, genitum, non factum,
vevero, genitum, non factum,
vevero, genitum, non factum,
vevero, genitum, non factum,
ve vero de Deo vero, genitum, non factum,
ve vero de Deo vero, genitum, non factum,
ge - ni-tum, non fac - tum, con - sub -

geni-tum, non fac - tum, con -
geni-tum, non fac - tum, con -
geni-tum, non fac - tum, con - sub - stan - ti - a-lem

geni-tum, non fac - tum, con - sub-stan-ti-a-lem

stan - ti-a-lem Pa - tri, per quem o -

sub - stan - ti-a-lem Patri, per quem o -
sub - stan - ti-a-lem Patri, per quem o -
sub-stan-ti-a-lem Patri, per quem o -
sub - stan - ti-a-lem Patri, per quem o -

Pa - tri, per quem o -

Pa - tri, per quem o -

Pa - tri, per quem o -
[10] Et incarnatus est

Andante

Soprano I solo

Piano

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ctus est, et homo factus est,

Et incarnatus est de spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine et homo factus est, et homo
actus est,

Soprano I

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Soprano II

Alto II

Tenor II

Bass II

Piano

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rev. 2006-01-02 philip@netscape.net
Do - mi - nus De - us Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus De - us

Do - mi - nus De - us Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus De - us

Do - mi - nus De - us Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus De - us

Do - mi - nus De - us Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus De - us

Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi - nus De - us

Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi - nus De - us

Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi - nus De - us

Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi - nus De - us

Sa - ba - oth, Do - mi - nus, Do - mi - nus De - us
ple ni sunt cœli et terra

ple ni sunt cœli et terra

ple ni sunt cœli et terra

ple ni sunt cœli et terra

sunt cœli et terra,

sunt cœli et terra,

sunt cœli et terra,

sunt cœli et terra,
Osanna

[Allegro]

gloria, gloria tua.

gloria tua.

gloria tua.

in excelsis, osanna.

terra gloria tua.

terra gloria tua.

terra gloria tua.

[Allegro]
[12] Benedictus

Soprano I solo
Soprano II solo
Tenor solo
Bass solo
Piano

\[\textbf{Allegro comodo}\]

\[\textbf{Allegro comodo}\]
[A1] Crucifixus — Et resurrexit

Adagio ma non troppo

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

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Et resurrexit est, sepul tus est.
Et resurrexit ter ti a di e, ter ti a est, sepul tus est.
Et resurrexit ter ti a di e, ter ti a est, sepul tus est.
Et resurrexit ter ti a di e, ter ti a est, sepul tus est.
Et resurrexit ter ti a di e, ter ti a est,

Die secundum, secundum scripturas, et ascendit, ascendit in
Die secundum, secundum scripturas, et ascendit, ascendit in
Die secundum, secundum scripturas, et ascendit, ascendit in
Die secundum, secundum scripturas, et ascendit, ascendit in
cœlum, sedet, sedet ad dexteram Patris; et iterum ven
regnī non e-rīt finis, cu-jus regnī non e-rīt
regnī non e-rīt finis, cu-jus regnī non e-rīt
regnī non e-rīt finis, cu-jus regnī non e-rīt
regnī non e-rīt finis, cu-jus regnī non e-rīt
regnī non e-rīt finis, cu-jus regnī non e-rīt