
Franz Peter Schubert

*"I have come into this world for no purpose but to compose."
~ Franz Peter Schubert*

On January 31, 1815, a young musician celebrated his eighteenth birthday and entered the world of adulthood, and serious composition. Within that year Franz Peter Schubert would complete two symphonies (the Second and the Third), four large dramatic works, a piano sonata, some short piano pieces and nearly 150 songs.

Schubert was living in Vienna at the same time as Beethoven and his very powerful symphonies, but did not seek to compete in musical styles. Rather Schubert's symphonies generally followed the classical styles he inherited from Haydn and Mozart. Schubert played violin and viola with an amateur orchestra at the *Stadtkonvikt* (a communal boarding school), where he likely gained the influence of these composers through playing their works. He applied some elements from these masters in his own early compositions. The *Second* and *Third symphonies* Schubert composed, were probably given their first readings at the Stadtkonvikt among music of Haydn and Mozart.

The orchestra in Schubert's *Third Symphony* is comprised of pairs of woodwinds, horns, trumpets and timpani; plus the usual amount of strings. The two violin sections are usually played in octaves and have most of the melody, especially in the *vivace* movements.

All of Schubert's completed symphonies consist of four movements in the orthodox order: *allegro* – (slow or *moderato*)- minuet and trio-finale. The first movement is preceded by a slow, stately introduction (found in all of Schubert's symphonies but the Fifth and the *Unfinished*), similar to that of Mozart's *Symphony No.39 in E-flat*.

Symphony No.3 displays a carefree delight and a spirit of Viennese cheerfulness. It opens with a slow introduction in which the main idea is an upward scale passage. The *Allegro* section is where Schubert becomes unique, with a charming and unassuming theme shared by solo clarinet and oboes/horns, one that could not be attributed to Haydn or Mozart. There is a dramatic silence before the start of the second subject (similar in character and mood to the first). This is again played by a solo wind instrument (oboe). The upward rising scale from the slow introduction returns again a few times, but with more energy.

Schubert originally intended the second movement to be an *Adagio*, but it turned out an *Allegretto* in a simple ABA form. The clarinet once again claims the main voice, suggesting that perhaps Schubert had a close friend

who played clarinet. The third movement *Menuetto-vivace*, has more a quality of a scherzo or a heavy-footed peasant dance with the emphasis on the upbeats. The *Trio*, another gem of Schubertian grace, features the oboe and bassoon; the *Menuetto* is then repeated.

The finale is light, fleeting and breathless, somewhat reflecting the Rossini craze that was sweeping Europe at the time. However there is a driving force here, and an obsession with a single rhythm, the beginning of a phase that appears in the finales of Schubert's later masterpieces.