

## KÖCHEL AND MOZART

*How Austrian lawyer, historian, botanist, poet (and musician) Ludwig von Köchel searched for, organized and catalogued Mozart's 600+ compositions.*

An illustrated lecture presented by Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

Beethoven struggled to write music, but for Mozart - his one-time teacher - composing was as easy and natural as breathing. Considered one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time, not only was Mozart a child prodigy, by 6 years old he was already composing works of major proportions. There is also an anecdotal account of teenage Mozart attending a performance of Allegri's *Misere* at the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, copies of which music were not allowed out of the building. Mozart later wrote out the music from memory...

Mozart's manuscripts are almost correction-free, suggesting that he first 'heard' the complete music in his head, then effortlessly wrote out the complete score - as if pressing a 'Print' button - sometimes as he also played skittles!

But his non-musical life was a train-wreck. Lacking basic social skills, Mozart spoke without thinking, had few manners and was not a good family man. Poor money-management meant living with continual debt, so he was obliged to compose - often at great haste - simply to keep his creditors at bay.

Upon his untimely death (aged 36 in 1791), Mozart's hundreds of music manuscripts were a chronological and bibliographical shambles, many of which were then stolen and/or illicitly copied.

That is until fellow Austrian Dr. Ludwig von Köchel began a decade-long quest to seek out and organize Mozart's music into a semblance of order according to date of composition. So 'K1' is his earliest composition (a 1761 Minuet for Piano, written at 5 years old) and 'K626' is the Requiem of 1791, which was left unfinished at Mozart's death but completed (almost imperceptibly) by a student.

Many famous composers, such as Beethoven, have *Opus* (meaning 'work') and a number after a music title, depending on when the work was published. J.S. Bach's music titles are followed by 'BWV', Schubert has 'D[deutsch]' and Haydn has 'H[oboken]'. If you have ever seen or performed Mozart's music and wondered why a 'K number' follows the title, this lecture tells the tale! The presentation will outline Köchel's fascinating life history, his obsession with Mozart's music and will include examples of his magnificent music.

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DURATION: c1 hour

FEE: \$295.00

EXPENSES: a contribution toward travel costs is appreciated.

Thank you for considering my proposal and please contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

Dulais Rhys, Ph.D

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#### REFERENCES, RECOMMENDATIONS & REVIEWS

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