



Paul  
**WRANITZKY**  
(1756–1808)

## Orchestral Works • 8

Grande sinfonie caractéristique  
pour la paix avec la  
République française

Symphony in D major

Symphony in E flat major  
'Jagd-Sinfonie'

Czech Chamber  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra Pardubice

Marek Štilec



## Paul Wranitzky (1756–1808)

### Orchestral Works • 8

Paul Wranitzky (Pavel Vranický) was born in the southern Moravian village of Neureisch (today Nová Říše, Czech Republic) where he received his first musical training at the local Premonstratensian monastery. After studies in Jihlava and Olomouc, he moved to Vienna in 1776 to study theology at the university, where he also became director of music at the theological seminary.

In 1783 he became music director to Count Johann Baptist Esterházy of Galantha, an amateur oboist and distant relative to Haydn's employer. Upon the count's recommendation, Wranitzky joined the Viennese Masonic Lodge Zur gekrönten Hoffnung, for which he composed songs as well as symphonies. The composer Joseph Martin Kraus (1756–1792) was a visiting member at the lodge in 1783. Kraus, an already established composer, recognised Wranitzky's budding compositional talent and provided encouragement and possibly some lessons. Several early publications also mention Wranitzky as a student of Haydn.

Wranitzky and Mozart became masonic brothers when three lodges merged in 1785. A concert given at the lodge on 15 December 1785 included two symphonies by Wranitzky, expressly written for the lodge, as well as a cantata, a piano concerto and improvisations by Mozart.

In 1785, Wranitzky became orchestra director at the Kärntnertortheater and two years later also at the Burgtheater. From the early 1790s until his death he would hold the position of first orchestra director for both court theatres.

Wranitzky's first stage work, *Oberon, König der Elfen*, was premiered by Schikaneder's troupe at the Theater auf der Wieden in 1789. Its success prompted Schikaneder to launch a series of fairy-tale operas, with Mozart's *The Magic Flute* from 1791 being the most well known today.

As secretary of the Tonkünstler-Societät from 1794 to 1807, Wranitzky revitalised the society, resolving a dispute regarding Haydn's membership application and welcoming the celebrated master into the society with a glowing speech. Haydn reciprocated by insisting that Wranitzky lead the orchestra in the society's profitable performances of *The Creation*. Wranitzky's high regard as an orchestra leader is further attested by Beethoven requesting Wranitzky to premiere his *First Symphony* in 1800.

The imperial court favoured Wranitzky with commissions. He became a favourite composer of the Empress Marie Therese (1772–1807), for whose private concerts he served as concertmaster and provided exclusive compositions.

After his sudden death in 1808 his musical legacy was quickly overshadowed by his colleagues and friends Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven. Only in recent years has his music again begun to garner the attention it clearly deserves.

Compared to his exact contemporaries Mozart and Kraus, Wranitzky began his serious compositional activities late in life. While a sizeable body of canons and part songs for male voices were probably produced during his student years, the first datable instrumental compositions are from the early 1780s when he was already in his mid-twenties. However, he quickly made up for lost time and became a very productive composer, notwithstanding his busy rehearsal and performance schedule at the theatres.

While Wranitzky composed in most genres, symphonies seem to have held a special position in his creative interest as he produced them continuously during his career. Today 45 symphonies survive, making him one of the most prolific composers of his day in the genre. During the second half of the 1790s, Wranitzky was the most important symphonist in Vienna. It is therefore not surprising that many features of Wranitzky's style are echoed in the early symphonies of Beethoven.

### Symphony in E flat major 'Jagd-Sinfonie', P31

The *Symphony in E flat major (Pošťolka 31)*, subtitled *Jagd-Sinfonie* ('Hunt Symphony'), survives in manuscript in the music collection of Ferdinand III of Tuscany. During his exile in Vienna due to the Napoleonic wars, the Grand Duke frequently employed Wranitzky as a composer and performer.

With one of the shortest running times in Wranitzky's entire symphonic output, this charming symphony is comparable in length to just the first movement of the *Op. 31* symphony, yet it is densely packed with musical invention.

The symphony opens with a stately, yet lyrical slow introduction marked *Adagio*. The following *Allegro* prominently features the horns and, for a first movement, presents a surprising hybrid of sonata form and rondo, blending structural elements in a unique manner.

Opening with a pastoral *Andante amoroso* scored for winds only, the second movement suddenly transitions into a vivid depiction of a storm. Featuring four timpani, the storm rages with intense force, interspersed with calmer episodes before eventually subsiding.



After a brief *Menuetto* and *Trio*, the symphony concludes with a spirited *Rondo*. Featuring hunting calls once more, the finale exudes joy and relief, celebrating both the resumed hunt and the rejuvenated landscape that follows the storm's end.

### **Symphony in D major, P17**

Also hailing from Grand Duke Ferdinand's collection is the likewise unpublished *Symphony in D major (Poštołka 17)*.

The symphony opens with an *Adagio* introduction, where stately dotted rhythms frame lyrical writing for the woodwinds. This leads into the *Allegro vivace*, set in sonata form, where Wranitzky skilfully employs the simplest of musical building blocks – an arpeggiated triad, a rising scale, a turn, and a descending arpeggio – before combining and developing these motifs with great effectiveness.

Featuring a set of variations on a poignant *Andante* in a siciliana rhythm, the second movement is opened quietly by the strings and a solo flute. Unexpectedly, the sombre mood is twice dispelled by jubilant martial fanfares before the movement ultimately settles peacefully in the major.

The ensuing *Menuetto* features rhythmic interplay, occasionally offsetting the dotted rhythms to create a 'stumbling' effect. The *Trio* section contrasts *forte* winds with *piano* strings, offering a distinct textural shift.

Beginning with a rising arpeggio, the *Rondo* finale inverts one of the main motifs from the first movement. This bright and breezy movement brings the symphony to a rousing conclusion.

### **Grande sinfonie caractéristique pour la paix avec la République française, Op. 31, P12**

One of his best-known works today, Paul Wranitzky's *Grande sinfonie caractéristique pour la paix avec la République Française, Op. 31* ('Grand Characteristic Symphony for Peace with the French Republic') (*Poštołka 12*) was published in early June 1797 by Gombart in Augsburg.

Set within the customary four movements of the Classical symphony, it depicts the events of the French Revolution, the subsequent War of the First Coalition against France, and the ensuing peace negotiations following the Armistice of Leoben on 18 April 1797.

The first movement, titled *Die Revolution* ('The Revolution'), opens with an ominous *Andante maestoso* introduction before launching into the tumultuous *Allegro molto*, set in an approximated sonata form. In the exposition, syncopations, tremolos, and scurrying strings build drama. An *English March* is heard *pianissimo*, as if in the distance, but is brusquely interrupted by the strings. After a modulating passage, the development section leads into a pompous *March of the Austrians and Prussians*, before the stormy material of the revolution returns, leading this expansive movement to its tense conclusion.

Titled *Das Schicksal und der Tod Ludwigs* ('The Fate and Death of Louis'), the second movement opens with an affectionate and languid *Adagio affettuoso* that grows increasingly despondent, culminating in two *fortissimos* marking the fall of the guillotine. A dire funeral march follows, with muted trumpets and cloth-covered timpani. The movement concludes with the return of the initial *Adagio*, tenderly evoking the memory of Louis XVI.

The return of the *Der Engländer Marsch* ('English March'), now heard in full force, followed by the *Marsch der Allirten* ('March of the Allies') opens the third movement. A 'cannon shot' on the bass drum leads into *Das Getümmel einer Schlacht* ('Tumult of a Battle'). Piccolo calls, snare drum rolls, cannon shots, and agitated strings vividly depict the raging battle.

In the final movement, a tender and pastoral *Andante grazioso* titled *Die Friedens Unterhandlungen* ('Negotiations of Peace') leads into an *Allegro vivace* titled *Der Jubel über die Herstellung der Friedens* ('Jubilation Over the Establishment of Peace'). Structured in a clear-cut sonata form, this movement brings the symphony to a brilliant conclusion, capturing the exuberant spirit of the peace settlement.

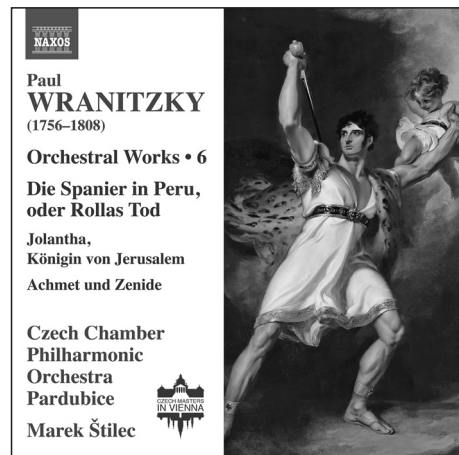
Alas, the reality of the peace negotiations proved to be much more convoluted than Wranitzky had anticipated when composing the symphony. When Wranitzky requested permission in December 1797 to perform the *Peace Symphony* at the Tonkünstler-Societät's annual Christmas concerts, the negotiations were still ongoing. Since a final peace had not yet been reached, Emperor Franz II consequently forbade the symphony from being performed publicly. However, this did not sour Wranitzky's relations with the court, where the symphony was later performed in private. The peace negotiations ultimately failed, and the war resumed in 1799.

It is also worth noting that the Napoleonic connection, the inclusion of a funeral march, and the extensive length of the symphony all foreshadow Beethoven's '*Eroica*' *Symphony*.

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## Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice



The Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice is valued for its stylistic interpretations and the extraordinary quality of its orchestral sound, and it is rightly ranked amongst the world's leading representatives of Czech musical culture. It often performs at the most prestigious festivals in the Czech Republic and venues throughout Europe such as the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, the Grosses Festspielhaus, Salzburg, the Herkulesaal and the Gasteig, Munich, the Musikverein, Vienna, the Brucknerhaus, Linz, and the Meistersingerhalle, Nuremberg among many others. Outside Europe the orchestra has performed in Japan and toured extensively around America. The first principal conductor, Libor Pešek, quickly raised the orchestra to a high standard, and subsequent principal conductors have included Marco Armiliato and Mariss Jansons. The orchestra has also welcomed numerous world-renowned soloists such as Isabelle van Keulen, Vladimir Spivakov, Ludwig Güttler, Radek Baborák, Gábor Boldoczki and Sergei Nakariakov. Aside from concerts, the orchestra regularly engages in operatic and theatre projects and has recorded dozens of successful albums on record labels including Naxos, ArcoDiva, Supraphon, Classico, Monitor-EMI and Amabile. [www.kfpar.cz](http://www.kfpar.cz)

## Marek Štilec



Czech conductor Marek Štilec is known as an interpreter of Classical orchestral repertoire and is a specialist in Czech Romantic and contemporary music. He has collaborated with orchestras the world over, including the New World Symphony, Ulster Orchestra, London Classical Soloists, Orchestra of the Swan, Berlin Camerata, Kammerphilharmonie Graz and Sinfonietta Bratislava. A prolific recording artist, he has made over 30 albums for labels including Naxos, ArcoDiva, cpo and Supraphon. In the field of historically informed performance Štilec has collaborated with ensembles including Czech Ensemble Baroque and Ensemble 18+. He is also the founder of the Wranitzky Kapelle and artistic director of Academy Prague Mannheim with Das Kurpfälzische Kammerorchester Mannheim. He attended the masterclasses of conductor Leonid Grin at the International Järvi Academy for Conducting, and has also taken masterclasses with Michael Tilson Thomas, Jorma Panula and Gerd Albrecht. Since 2020 he has been the permanent principal choirmaster of the Czech Boys' Choir, Boni Pueri.

[www.arcodiva.cz/en/agency/instrumental-soloists/marek-stilec](http://www.arcodiva.cz/en/agency/instrumental-soloists/marek-stilec)





Paul Wranitzky, after Bossler

Paul Wranitzky began composing late in life compared to his friend Mozart, but quickly rose to become the most important symphonist in Vienna by the end of the 1790s. The dramatic *Grande sinfonia caratteristica pour la paix avec la République française* depicts the French Revolution and France's subsequent war with Austria. Political complications saw its performance in Vienna forbidden by Imperial decree, but this did not end Wranitzky's success at court: the exuberant *Symphony in D major* and the charming 'Hunt Symphony', both unpublished, come from the collection of the Emperor's brother.



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(1756–1808)



## Orchestral Works • 8

**Symphony in E flat major  
'Jagd-Sinfonie' ('Hunt Symphony'),  
P31 (1790s)\***

**16:30**

- 1 I. Adagio – Allegro
- 2 II. Donnerwetter: Introduzione  
Andante amoroso – Allegro assai
- 3 III. Tempo di Menuetto – Trio
- 4 IV. Rondo: Allegro molto

5:23

6:00

1:57

3:04

**Symphony in D major, P17  
(1790s)\***

**22:46**

- 5 I. Adagio – Allegro vivace
- 6 II. Andante
- 7 III. Menuetto: Allegro – Trio
- 8 IV. Rondo: Allegro molto

8:00

6:46

3:52

4:04

**\*WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

**Symphony in C minor, Op. 31  
'Grande sinfonia caratteristica pour  
la paix avec la République française'  
(‘Grand Characteristic Symphony  
for Peace with the French Republic’),  
P12 (pub. 1797)**

**38:23**

- 9 I. Die Revolution: Andante maestoso –  
Allegro molto – Englischer Marsch –  
Oesterreicher und Preußischer Marsch
- 10 II. Das Schicksal und der Tod Ludwigs:  
Adagio affettuoso – Ein Trauer Marsch
- 11 III. Der Englischer Marsch: Tempo di Marcia  
movibile – Marsch der Allirten – Das Getümmel  
einer Schlacht: Allegro
- 12 IV. Die Friedens Unterhandlungen: Andante  
grazioso – Der Jubel über die Herstellung der  
Friedens: Allegro vivace

15:51

7:52

4:41

9:56

## Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice

### Marek Štilec

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The scores used for these recordings are available for free download at [www.wranitzky.com](http://www.wranitzky.com)

Cover: *La Liberté guidant le peuple* (detail) (1830) by Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863)

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