



1903
MOZARISTEG

Mozart
KATIE MAHAN LIVE ON SPIRITO



Steinway Artist Katie Mahan presents her latest album, recorded exclusively on the Steinway SPIRIO, the world's finest high resolution player piano capable of live performance capture and playback. *Ms. Mahan's* live performance of the album was recorded directly into a Steinway SPIRIO | r piano at Steinway Hall in New York City, and then recaptured and rerecorded live for the present album by the SPIRIO playback.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Overture to *Don Giovanni* K. 527, arr. Mahan (5:59)

Piano Sonata No. 9 in D major K. 311
I. Allegro con spirito (4:26)
II. Andante con espressione (5:26)
III. Rondo: Allegro (6:23)

Requiem in D minor K. 626, arr. Mahan
Confutatis maledictis (2:03)
Lacrimosa (4:05)

Fantasia in D minor K. 397 (5:33)

Sonata No. 7 in C major K. 309
I. Allegro con spirito (5:21)
II. Andante un poco adagio (6:14)
III. Rondo: Allegretto grazioso (5:38)

Serenade in G major *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* K. 525, arr. Mahan
I. Allegro (5:09)
II. Romanze: Andante (5:20)
III. Menuetto: Allegretto (2:01)
IV. Rondo: Allegro (4:01)

KATIE MAHAN, piano



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A person wearing a red opera costume with gold embroidery and a black hat with a yellow band is walking away from the camera through a stone archway. The background shows a building with a sign that says "STIEGLERLEIN".

The moment the Queen of the Night descended onto the stage, my life changed forever.

Many find it unthinkable, or at least unusual, to take a two-year-old child to a complete opera performance and expect the child to not only sit in silence but also to pay attention for several hours of music. But in my family, music was the center of life, and whether coming from the piano, the CD player or the radio, the sound of classical music filled the house from morning until evening, providing a beautiful accompaniment to my every activity. It was somehow only natural then that, at that tender age of two, I insisted on accompanying my parents when they attended a performance of *The Magic Flute* at the Santa Fe Opera.

I can say with conviction that attending the opera that night was not only the beginning of my life in music, but also the beginning of a lifelong infatuation with *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*. The music that subconsciously accompanied me through my days at home suddenly came to life before my very eyes as a complete magical world of colors, images, characters, drama and beauty, and the years since that day have been an endless journey of discovery into the magical and multifaceted world of *Mozart*.

On this album, I have tried to bring together the many sides of *Mozart's* magic across the numerous genres in which he composed, from opera to sacred music, orchestral to solo keyboard, and to effect my own pianistic voice on some of his most beloved non-keyboard works. The selections presented here were lovingly chosen to give a glimpse of the infinite variety of *Mozart's* creative imagination, from the dark psychological drama of *Don Giovanni* to the spiritual depth of the Requiem, from the endearing charm of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* to the virtuosity of the Piano Sonatas K. 309 and K. 311 and the D minor Fantasia K. 397.

The program begins with my own solo piano arrangement of the overture to *Mozart's* great opera, *Don Giovanni*. Although he composed in every major genre, it was the world of opera that afforded *Mozart* the greatest opportunity to bring his creative imagination to life through the expression of a kaleidoscope of emotions, dramatic moods and psychological states. Composed in 1787 and premiered in Prague with *Mozart* himself conducting, *Don Giovanni* is based on an old Spanish play dating back to the early 1600s called "The Trickster of Seville and the Stone Guest." The play, which is generally attributed to Tirso de Molina, recounts the universal tale of the downfall of a serial womanizer and the inability of a human being to change for the better. Originally commissioned in honor of the visit of Archduchess Maria Theresa to Prague on October 14, 1787, the production was not ready in time and ended up being premiered two weeks later, on October 29, with *Mozart* finishing the overture just the night before!

It is with great skill that *Mozart* was able to adapt his mastery of the theatrical and psychological elements of opera to the keyboard. Filled with dramatic mood changes, expressive color changes, dialogues between the voices and expressive flourishes, *Mozart's* keyboard works lead us through and beyond the instrument. They are like miniature operas for ten fingers. Each work possesses the clarity, balance, elegance, spontaneity, and the depth of human emotion that define his music. Each voice is a character in the drama, and each new melodic entrance is like an operatic event.

Both the Piano Sonata No. 7 in C major K. 309 and the Sonata in No. 9 in D major K. 311 date to the year 1777 during *Mozart's* journey with his mother to Mannheim and Paris. The Sonata in C major was composed for Rosina Cannabich, a young pianist and teenage daughter of the concertmaster of the Mannheim court orchestra, to whom *Mozart* was giving lessons in order to pay for his room and board. Unusual in its display of elements of the so-called Mannheim style, including sharp dynamic contrasts and rising scales or arpeggios which crescendo or accelerate as they climb higher, the work is also noteworthy in that it is believed to be the only instance in *Mozart's* oeuvre in which he attempted to depict an actual person in music. The Sonata in D major was also composed during *Mozart's* stay in Mannheim, and subsequently Augsburg, but, unlike the Sonata in C major, is not believed to have been composed for a specific individual or event. Both sonatas were published in Paris around the year 1782 together with the Sonata No. 8 in A minor K. 310.

With its haunting melodies, complex harmonies and profound emotional depth, *Mozart's* Requiem in D minor K. 626 stands out as one of the most distinctive works in the classical repertoire, and is the inspiration behind countless tales, legends and conspiracy theories surrounding *Mozart's* death. Commissioned by one Count Franz von Walsegg, an Austrian aristocrat and amateur musician with a reputation for commissioning works from well-known composers and then passing them off as his own, the mass was left unfinished upon *Mozart's* death. It is believed that the first eight bars of the Lacrimosa are the last notes ever written by *Mozart*.

Few details are known about the origins of either the D minor Fantasia K. 397 or the string serenade *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* K. 525. The Fantasia, one of *Mozart's* most popular works for piano, is generally believed to have been composed around the year 1782, while the serenade, one of the most popular works in all of classical music, was completed in Vienna on August 10, 1787.

It is my hope that the program presented on this album will inspire a curiosity to delve deeper into the magical world of *Mozart*, and that the piano arrangements included here will bring as much joy to my listeners as they did to me in creating them.

- Program notes by Katie Mahan





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