



Paul  
**WRANITZKY**  
(1756–1808)



**Orchestral Works • 2**

**Symphonies**

**'La Tempesta' • Op. 16, No. 2 • Op. 33, No. 3**

**Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice**

**Marek Štílec**



## Paul Wranitzky (1756–1808)

### Orchestral Works • 2

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 de 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 Kärntnertheater 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.

### Der Schreiner (1799)

The one-act opera *Der Schreiner* was premiered at the Kärntnertheater in Vienna on 18 July 1799.

Simon, the titular carpenter, is fitting new windows at the home of the rich widow Frau von Sternwald. Intercepting a delivery of his wife's famous Krapfen (filled doughnuts) to the local doctor, Simon is shocked to discover she has baked love notes into the sweets. Frau von Sternwald is furious, as she and the doctor are to be married. Drama ensues.

The *Overture* starts with a *forte* unison figure before settling into an energetic *piano* theme containing rising intervals with offbeat accents. As the full orchestra joins in, this motif, together with *forzandos* and rapid grace note scales, is used to depict the sounds of hammering, planing and sawing. An extensive coda, featuring an attractive exchange of running scales, prepares the raise of the curtain.

### Symphony in D minor 'La Tempesta' (before 1795)

Only surviving in manuscript copies, the *Symphony in D minor 'La Tempesta'* ('The Storm') dates from before 1795, when its three movements were used as part of the incidental music to the play *Die Rache*.

Omitting a slow introduction, the *Vivace* first movement opens with a stern five-note knocking motif which is extensively featured throughout the taut sonata form movement.

Like the eye of a storm, the serene *Adagio* only occasionally hints at the surrounding turmoil. The quiet pastoral atmosphere is reinforced by muted strings and extensive woodwind solo passages.

An apprehensive, quiet theme in the strings open the extensive *Allegro con fuoco* finale. It is soon mercilessly interrupted by the arrival of the titular storm. Tremolos, sudden accents, dissonances and diminished chords are layered in different combinations to create an impression of nature's unpredictability. However, the movement is carefully planned out with multiple climaxes within a large-scale monothematic sonata form structure. To enhance the impact of the thunder, Wranitzky added a *timpanone* (a large kettle drum) part which contains some surprisingly detailed information such as 'quiet rain' and

'the weather wanes'. When the storm indeed finally dies away, a bird-like flute solo coaxes the main theme out into the sun. Rejoicing in the restoration of good weather, the full orchestra launches into an exuberant coda.

### Symphony in A major, Op. 16, No. 2 (pub. 1792)

The set of three *Sinfonies à grand orchestre, Op. 16* was published in 1792. However, the *Symphony in A major* is decidedly less 'grand' than its two companions. The orchestral forces and compositional style hints that this is an earlier work, brought into publishing by the increasing demand for Wranitzky's compositions. Stylistically it sits within Wranitzky's early symphonic period of the mid-1780s.

The first movement, in sonata form without repeats, starts with a softly spoken melody in the strings. A nearly continuous flow of semiquavers is humorously interrupted by chirping hemiolas, a surprise slow passage and a stuttering figure ultimately played on open A strings by the violins.

Muted violins accompanied by a single viola open the lyrical sonata form slow movement. The strings and hushed winds then take turns leading the way before quietly joining together. A brief *Menuetto* and *Trio* follows before the *Symphony* is concluded by a charming rondo *Finale*.

### Symphony in F major, Op. 33, No. 3 (pub. 1798)

The set of the *Drey grosse Sinfonien, Op. 33* was published in 1798 with a dedication to Baron Peter von Braun, manager of the Viennese court theatres.

A stately yet lyrical slow introduction featuring woodwind solos open the *Symphony in F major, Op. 33, No. 3*. In the following *Allegro vivace*, a sprightly theme in the strings leads into echoed calls in the winds before the full orchestra joins together. The secondary theme group builds upon motifs from the first, which are then further explored in contrapuntal fashion in the development. One particularly jaunty motif prevails to become the focus of the coda.

The slow movement is a set of variations on *Freut euch des Lebens* ('Life Let Us Cherish'), composed by Hans Georg Nägeli (1773–1836) in 1795. The song,

urging the enjoyment of life, went on to become extraordinarily popular and is to this day considered one of the most beloved German Volkslieder (popular 'folk' songs). Wranitzky provides imaginative and masterfully scored variations from effortlessly flowing woodwind solos to a marching band setting for the full orchestra.

The good-humoured *Menuetto* has a surprise in store. Its *Trio* is a short set of variations on the popular Viennese Volkslied *O du lieber Augustin*.

An upbeat and catchy theme opens the finale which is set in sonata rondo form. New and old motifs are explored and developed in the contrasting episodes while the primary theme itself is varied and re-orchestrated for each return. A rousing coda aptly concludes a symphony which has urged its audience to celebrate the joys of life.

**Daniel Bernhardsson**

### Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice



Photo: Frantisek Renza

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 Herkulessaal 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 Štílec



Photo: Daria Kalinowska

Czech conductor Marek Štílec 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, The Orchestra of the Swan, Berlin Camerata, Kammerphilharmonie Graz and Sinfonietta Bratislava. A prolific recording artist, he has made over 30 discs for labels including Naxos, ArcoDiva, cpo and Supraphon. In the field of historically informed performance Štílec has collaborated with ensembles including Czech Ensemble Baroque and Ensemble 18+. He is also the founder of the Wranitzky Kapelle and artistic director of Das Kurpfälzische Kammerorchester Mannheim. He attended the masterclasses of conductor Leonid Grin at the International Järvi Academy for Conducting, and 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

Czech by birth, Paul Wranitzky settled in Vienna where he became highly respected as an orchestra leader and composer. Today overshadowed by his friends Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, Wranitzky was the most important symphonist in Vienna in the late 1790s. The colourful overture to *Der Schreiner* ('The Carpenter') is followed by three contrasting symphonies. The dramatic '*La Tempesta*' contains elaborate storm effects, which predate Beethoven's '*Pastoral*' by over a decade. The compact *Symphony in A major* represents Wranitzky's early symphonic period of the mid-1780s while the *Symphony in F major* is notable for its catchy themes and masterful scoring.



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<b>1</b> <b>Der Schreiner – Overture</b> (1799) Vivace assai	<b>4:19</b>	<b>Symphony in A major, Op. 16, No. 2</b> (pub. 1791)	<b>18:01</b>
<b>Symphony in D minor 'La Tempesta'</b> (before 1795)	<b>27:50</b>	<b>5</b> I. Allegro molto	<b>6:06</b>
<b>2</b> I. Vivace	<b>11:13</b>	<b>6</b> II. Adagio	<b>5:16</b>
<b>3</b> II. Adagio	<b>6:10</b>	<b>7</b> III. Menuetto: Allegro and Trio	<b>2:34</b>
<b>4</b> III. Finale 'La Tempesta': Allegro con fuoco	<b>10:24</b>	<b>8</b> IV. Finale: Allegro molto	<b>4:03</b>
		<b>Symphony in F major, Op. 33, No. 3</b> (pub. 1798)	<b>23:30</b>
		<b>9</b> I. Andante – Allegro vivace	<b>8:50</b>
		<b>10</b> II. Allegretto	<b>5:43</b>
		<b>11</b> III. Menuetto: Allegretto and Trio	<b>3:50</b>
		<b>12</b> IV. Allegro assai	<b>5:04</b>

**WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS**

**Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice**  
**Marek Štílec**

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