

The
MAGNIFICENT

7

The Sequel

Great Composers in Song

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Franz Schubert

(1797–1828)

Franz Schubert was born in a suburb of Vienna, Austria, on the last day of January, 1797. His name means “shoemaker.” His father was the headmaster of a school and Franz was born at the school in a house called “The Red Crayfish.” There were 14 children in his family and he was the 12th; seven of his brothers and sisters died while they were still young.

Schubert’s father was his first teacher and taught him to play the violin. His brother, Ignaz, taught him piano. When he was 11, Franz became a member of the Vienna Imperial Court chapel choir; a great training ground for an aspiring musician. He studied with the famous court composer, Salieri, who was so impressed with Franz that he said, “That one knows everything!”

Franz began composing music early. He wrote his first song when he was 14. Between the ages of 16-19, he started to write large works: five symphonies, four masses, several string quartets, some state music, an opera, and two of his most famous songs “Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel” and “The Erl King.” No one has ever been able to write solo songs as quickly or as well as Schubert. In 1815, at the age of 18, he wrote 140 songs in a year! On a single day in October of that year he wrote eight songs. He was amazing!

It seemed that Schubert was constantly on the move and unable to settle down. He fell in love early, but was too poor to marry and she married someone else. He was short and shy and spent a lot of time alone. Schubert wanted to write songs and settle down, but needed money and liked to enjoy life and stay out late! He couldn’t seem to get his life in order and was careless about commitments, showing up late or missing appointments. Although some of his songs were published, he never made much money from any of them.

In 1822, Schubert began his most famous work. Today we call it “The Unfinished Symphony” because he only completed two movements (and had sketches for a third) and without explanation went on to other projects. This was very unusual as he always completed one work before beginning another. Why, then, did he stop working on this amazing symphony in the middle and never complete it? It’s a mystery!

In March of 1828 there was a public concert in Vienna of his works. It was a real high point and he accomplished a lot that year. Somehow, though, his triumph was short lived. His health was poor and he moved in with his brother. Although no one seems able to pinpoint a specific illness, Schubert died on the 19th of November at 31 years of age.

Schubert is the master of German lieder (song), and the first major composer of the new century. Although he never really made a lot of money, he is considered to be one of the very first composers to support himself with his talents. No one seemed to realize what a magnificent talent he was until many years after his death. Forty years went by before anybody found a copy of “The Unfinished Symphony.” In his brief life, Schubert wrote over 1000 pieces of music.

Schubert was buried near Beethoven and was so deeply in debt that his friends had to take up a collection to put a monument on his grave. One of his best friends said of him, “He was a little man, but he was a giant!”

4. IN THE TOWN OF HAMBURG

("Spring Song")


FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Gently (♩ = 76) **4** 5 *mp*




In _____ the town of Ham-burg he was
When ____ he went to Eng-land peo-ple
Though _ you won't re-mem-ber all the

7



born, they say, and an - y - one could
stood to cheer, and e - ven Queen Vic -
tunes he wrote, and some _____ of them are

10 13



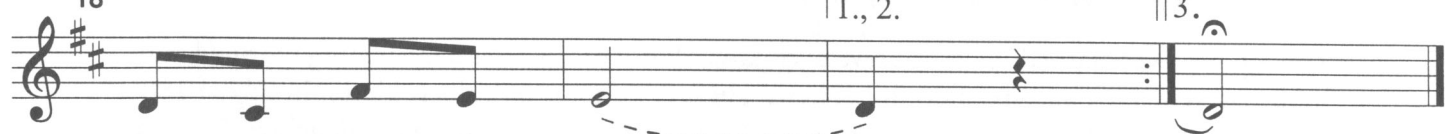
spot his tal-ent when they heard him play. ____ Young Fe - lix was per -
to - ri - a was like - ly to ap - pear. ____ We can - not help but
played to - day and so you should take note. ____ Just go _____ to an - y

14



form - ing at the age of nine, while oth - er kids his
won - der now a - bout his fate if he had lived more
wed - ding; when the end is near, it might be Fe - lix'

18



age en - joyed the sun - shine.
years than thir - ty - eight. _____
"Wed - ding March" you hear. _____