

EXPLANATION 4.2: THE FIRST SCHOOL OF VIENA

THE FIRST SCHOOL OF VIENA

The most important musical center moves to Vienna and it is in this city where three great composers who were active in Classicism worked: Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

Haydn was born in 1732 and lived to be 77 years old while Mozart was born in 1756 and died at age 35. The composers at this time are not yet independent as they will be in Romanticism and depend on the patronage of nobles, kings or ecclesiastical figures. They expect their music to be liked and interpreted with commercial success.

HAYDN

He was the last of the great composers who lived under the patronage of the nobility. He worked most of his life for the Earl of Eszterhazy in Hungary and in Vienna. He is known as the father of the symphony, not because he invented it but because he fixed its structure and gave it great depth. He composed more than 100 symphonies and numerous chamber music. Like Handel he spent a few years in London where he had great success.

MOZART

He was a child prodigy, played with great ease the key and the violin at eight years of age. He composed his first opera at twelve. He had a short life although fertile in works, embodied in symphonies, concerts, sonatas, operas, chamber music, religious and works for weddings, baptisms and parties which he called "serenades" and "divertimentos". He died very young in absolute poverty and buried in a common grave.

BEETHOVEN

Independent musician who did not give in to any pattern. He handled his financial affairs with wisdom. He met Haydn, with whom he had some lessons, and Mozart, who predicted a bright future for him. It was the hinge between classicism and romanticism for belonging to both periods. He embodied the figure of the victory of the bourgeoisie in front of the aristocracy. He created a very personal style that influenced later composers. His style made music a way of self-expression, with emphasis on the impulsive, the revolutionary and the mysterious, aspects that form the basis of romanticism. He died sick, probably from a liver disease.

COMPREHENSION TEXT QUESTIONS

- 1. Who did Haydn work for most of his life?**
- 2. How many years did Haydn live longer than Mozart?**
- 3. In what musical genre did Haydn emphasize everything?**
- 4. On what date was Mozart born?**
- 5. What is Mozart's music called for weddings, baptisms and parties?**
- 6. Why is Beethoven a "hinge"?**
- 7. What was Beethoven's style like and what did he emphasize?**