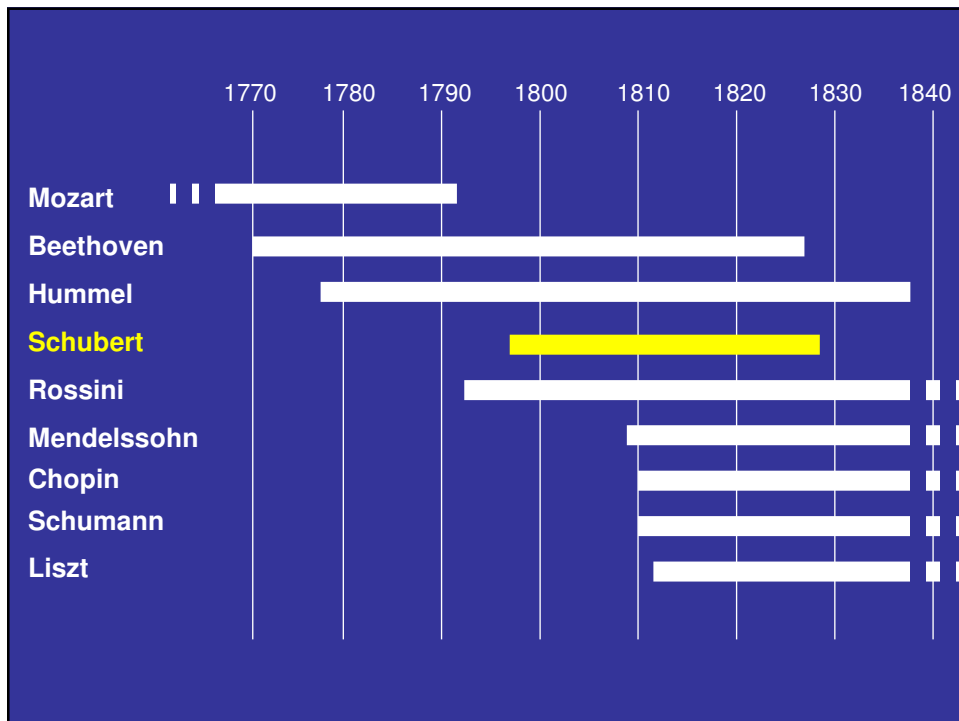


Marlow U3A Music Appreciation Group,  
February 2010

## Franz Peter Schubert



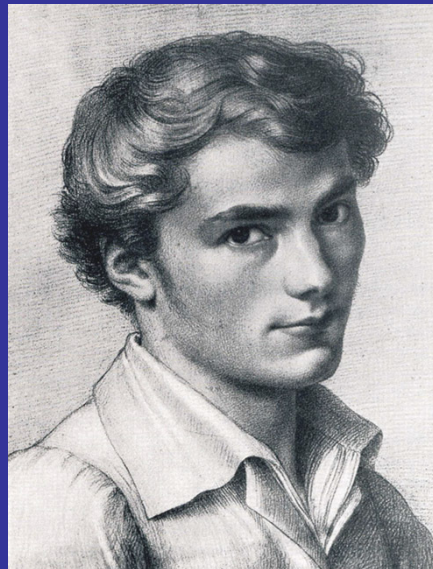
(1797-1828)



## Biography

- ♪ Born Vienna in January 1797; died, at tragically early age of 31, in November 1828.
- ♪ Son of schoolmaster. Early musical talent, studying piano, violin, organ, singing and harmony.
- ♪ Studied composition with Salieri (1808-13).
- ♪ 1808 won choral scholarship to the Imperial Seminary, the Stadtkonvikt.
- ♪ 1813 left to begin training as teacher, entering father's school in 1814.

## Schubert at the age of 16



## Biography

- ♪ Composed avidly, especially songs.
- ♪ Artistic friends gathered for evenings of Schubert's music ('Schubertiads').
- ♪ Appreciative audiences at these gatherings gave him influential contacts and confidence to break with schoolteaching (1818), to concentrate on composition.
- ♪ Intended to marry soprano, Therese Grob, but 1815 marriage consent law required proof of financial stability, so marriage never took place.

## Biography

- ♪ Early 1820s: aristocratic patronage; some songs issued but largely a dark period of his life. Reputation grew and he became better known.
- ♪ However, genius largely unappreciated and unrecognised during lifetime. Bulk of output not published and some not performed until late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Biography

- ♪ In last year worked tirelessly to satisfy publishers and, despite failing health, composed some of his greatest music.
- ♪ Great admirer of, and greatly influenced by, Beethoven, but they never actually met.
- ♪ Schubert followed Beethoven's coffin in 1827 and asked to be buried next to him. Original gravestones still together in Währinger cemetery in Vienna.



## Compositions and Style

- ♪ Almost 1,000 compositions: 600+ songs; 9 symphonies; operas; sacred works; solo piano; chamber music.
- ♪ Music formed bridge between Classical and Romantic periods.
- ♪ Experimented with style and unusual instruments and instrumental combinations.
- ♪ Wrote original tunes, but style influenced by contemporaries, esp. Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini.

## Compositions and Style

- ♪ Reused themes more than once, but repeated in different guise.
- ♪ Greatest, most mature, works composed between 1824 and 1828. These later works place him firmly in Romantic period.
- ♪ Established German lied as new art form. Well-known in his lifetime for songs, but other works not appreciated till later - many weren't published or performed during his lifetime.
- ♪ Lack of recognition may have been due to living in Beethoven's shadow. If he'd lived longer, would he have been recognised as Beethoven's natural successor?

### *Fantasy in G major (D1)*

- ♪ This Mozartian piano duet was written when Schubert was 13, in 1810.
- ♪ Use of Alberti bass (broken chord accompaniment) much used by Mozart (e.g. the beginning of Mozart's *Piano Sonata, K545*)



### *Incidental Music to 'Rosamunde', D797 – Music for the second ballet*

- ♪ Written in 1823, for extravaganza called “Rosamunde, Queen of Cyprus”, produced in Vienna.
- ♪ 11 numbers, including overture, three entr’actes, two ballets, songs and choruses - some parts repeated.
- ♪ Schubert completed it in 5 days.
- ♪ Only 2 performances given.

*Incidental Music to 'Rosamunde', D797 –  
Music for the second ballet*

- ♪ Music lay undiscovered until 1867 when Grove and Sullivan found and published it.
- ♪ Music for entr'acte between Acts 1 and 2 used again in 1824 and 1827.
- ♪ Simple, charming and immediately appealing.
- ♪ Some of us heard this on Sunday at the RFH.

*Der Erlkönig (D328)*

- ♪ Poem by Goethe depicting death of a child assailed by a supernatural being, the 'Erlking'.
- ♪ It is an intensely dramatic song, and was Schubert's most popular song during his lifetime.
- ♪ Challenging to perform due to vocal characterisation required and difficult accompaniment.

## *Der Erlkönig (D328)*

♪ Starts with the piano rapidly playing octaves triplets of repeated note.



The image shows a musical score for 'Der Erlkönig' (D328). It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The vocal line is in German and includes the lyrics: 'Wer rei - tet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?'. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand playing octaves and a left hand playing triplets of repeated notes.

## *Der Erlkönig (D328)*

*Who rides, so late, through night and wind?  
It is the father with his child.  
He has the boy well in his arm  
He holds him safely, he keeps him warm.*

*"My son, why do you hide your face so  
anxiously?"*

*"Father, do you not see the Erl king?  
The Erl king with crown and tail?"*

*"My son, it's a wisp of fog."*

## *Der Erlkönig (D328)*

*"You lovely child, come, go with me!  
Many a beautiful game I'll play with you;  
Many colourful flowers are on the shore,  
My mother has many golden robes."*

*"My father, my father, don't you hear  
What Erl king is quietly promising me?"  
"Be calm, stay calm, my child;  
The wind is rustling through withered leaves."*

## *Der Erlkönig (D328)*

*"Do you want to come with me, dear boy?  
My daughters shall wait on you fine;  
My daughters will lead the nightly dance,  
And rock and dance and sing you to sleep."*

*"My father, my father, don't you see there  
Erl king's daughters in the gloomy place?"  
"My son, my son, I see it clearly:  
The old willows they shimmer so grey."*

## ***Der Erlkönig (D328)***

***"I love you, your beautiful form entices me;  
And if you're not willing, I shall use force."  
"My father, my father, he's grabbing me now!  
Erl king has done me some harm!"***

***The father shudders; he swiftly rides on,  
He holds the moaning child in his arms,  
is hardly able to reach his farm;  
In his arms, the child was dead.***

## ***Impromptu No.1 (D899)***

- ♪ We'll hear the first and last of the set of 4 piano impromptus written in 1827.**
- ♪ No.1 - Example of Schubert reusing a theme (accompaniment of the Erl King, with quick, repeated notes in right hand).**

### ***Impromptu No.4 (D899)***

- ♪ **No.4 – Complete contrast: very beautiful - could almost be by Chopin.**

### ***The Trout Quintet: D667, 4th movement***

- ♪ **Very well-known piece of chamber music and one of the most beautiful.**
- ♪ **Unusual scoring: violin, viola, cello, double-bass and piano.**
- ♪ **Use of an earlier theme - song: 'The Trout' that we heard in our Animals, Birds and Insects session**
- ♪ **Example of theme and variation.**

### ***Der Hirt auf dem Felsen: The Shepherd on the Rock: D965***

- **Written in last few months of Schubert's life. Though ill, he was at the height of compositional life.**
- **Duet for unusual combination of voice and clarinet. Could also be considered chamber music. Voices blend beautifully together.**
- **Text: *High on a mountain top a lonely shepherd listens to the echoes rising from below. He expresses his grief and loneliness, but finally anticipates the coming of Spring and rebirth.***

### ***String Quintet in C (D956), 1828***

- **Considered Schubert's greatest chamber work.**
- **Completed two months before he died.**
- **Another unusual combination of instruments: 2 violins, viola, 2 cellos.**

***Symphony No.9 in C – ‘The Great’  
(D944), 1825***

**Final Movement: *Allegro vivace***

- **A work of monumental proportions.**
- **Schubert had bridged the gap between Classical and Romantic periods.**
- **Listen out for the brass: trombones, horns, trumpets.**
- ***“ ... rings out in a tremendous assertion of the power of the spirit over the dark forces of annihilation”***