

Music Review: The Eccentric Flute

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In the last few centuries, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart has been notably absent from the music scene, releasing no new musical scores, nor performing on the concert stage he once loved so well. Although public interest in his work has never completely waned, most critics have agreed that his death in 1791 was a barrier that even the creative genius of the great maestro could never overcome. But now, Mozart's latest contribution to musical history, "The Eccentric Flute," composed just 215 years after his death has proved the critics wrong.

Being buried in a box under six feet of brown mud has not dampened Mozart's genius, nor has it impeded his urge to innovate. His choice to release the work on Compact Disk rather than parchment shows his astounding ability to adapt. In fact, the effervescent mood of the pop anthem, "I never knew you could exist," which, on the surface is so different from his earlier work, might alienate some of his older fans. It appears to be a love song to the capabilities the Roland V-Synth keyboard, but the intricate harmonies evoke Don Giovanni expressing the paradox of music technology: the grand multitude of available opportunities and the tragedy of choice.

But the element that sets this work apart from his older pieces is the window he gives you into his own soul. The vestiges of mystical religious references that mark his older works are gone. Death seems to have replaced these ideas with an entirely modern pragmatism coupled with an urge to finally tell his own story. In fact, on track three he gives the

autobiographical tale of his struggle to bring this very work to market. On it he voices scathing criticisms for the Demons and Devils guarding the paths of the dead; at one point going so far as to compare them to music executives. In track five, “I am a rock,” he mixes references to contemporary music with his own painful experience with the process of fossilization. The honest description of the bitterness accompanying this transformation will make you revel in the strength of his desire to overcome the impossible. Whereas listening to the lovely melody of track eight will convince you that he succeeded. The entrancing melancholy of this song demonstrates without a doubt that turning to stone never hardened Mozart’s heart. In this sweet song called, “The worst thing in hell,” he describes the smell of fresh roses. He sings, so simply, “One whiff and I feel – almost – alive”.

Mozart’s boiling ambition catapults the final track, “*Must* is my color,” to relevance for the modern listener. The disparate threads threatening to unravel in Mozart’s brilliant mind are all drawn together crowning this timeless achievement, informing us that 215 years was not too long to wait. Although the simple, driving harpsichord rhythm lays the groundwork, it is Mozart’s unexpected electric guitar solo after the third verse which truly expresses the glory at the root of every artist’s quest for greatness.