

JOHANNES MATTHIAS SPERGER

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Johannes Matthias Sperger is a composer of which little is known. What is known is that he was a brilliant double bass player, an instrument for which he wrote 18 concertos. The total number of his concertos is probably 50 to 60. There are about 45 symphonies, instrumental pieces, cantatas and choral works.

He was born on 23 March 1750 in Feldsburg in Lower Austria.

In those days musicians found work in palaces for various noblemen and their courts and for the church. Sperger was no exception

He trained as a double bass player and studied composition in Vienna. One of his teachers was Albrechtsberger and his double bass tutor was Friedrich Pichlberger. It would appear that when younger, Sperger's first teacher was the local organist Franz Anton Becker.

At the age of 18 he made his debut in Vienna performing two of his symphonies.

From 1777 he worked for the Archbishop of Pressburg, the modern Bratislava, in his Hofkapelle. From 1778 Sperger was a member of the Wiener Tonkünstlersezietat, often as soloist and performing his own works.

During 1783 to 1786 he was a member of the Hofkapelle of Count Ludwig von Erdody and then principal double bass in the Mecklenburg Schwein Hofkapelle in Ludwigslust in Germany.

One of his symphonies was akin to Haydn's Farewell Symphony. When the players in the Haydn left the stage one by one Sperger's Grand Symphony in F of 1796 is a mirror of the Haydn starting with two violins and the ensemble gradually increases in numbers.

He died on 13 May 1812 in Schwerin

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