

Divertimento

Anna Amalia of Weimar

The *Divertimento* is, most likely, the first piece of chamber music using the clarinet written by a woman composer. It is an engaging work with a lovely *Adagio* followed by a spritely *Allegro*. In accordance with performance practice of the period, it is performed with the addition of a cello playing the bass line.

Anna Amalia, Duchess of Saxe-Weimer (1739–1807) was born in Wolfenbüttel, Germany. A niece of Frederick the Great, she was an amateur musician and composer. In addition to this *Divertimento*, she composed a number of *Lieder*. She was also an important and energetic patroness of the arts, and was instrumental in bringing both amateur and professional scholars, poets, and musicians to the court, thereby influencing the development of German cultural life of the period. Among the court visitors was Goethe who wrote the libretto for Amalia's *Singspiel, Erwin and Elmire*.