

A Century of Musicians

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2022 marks the 100th anniversary of the first stamps to feature musicians, issued by Austria on April 24, 1922. It was a charity issue to benefit needy musicians. The stamps

were sold for ten times face value.

Austria has an extraordinarily rich musical life. Vienna, the capital, is nicknamed the “City of Music”. Some of Western classical music’s greatest composers made their home in Austria, even though they may be claimed by other countries. The composers are shown in roughly chronological order by denomination.

Franz Joseph **Haydn** (1732–1809), born in Rohrau, Austria, was a prolific composer who developed both the symphony and the string quartet. The image is a 1792 portrait by Thomas Hardy, who painted some of the most important musicians in 1790s London.



Wolfgang Amadeus **Mozart** (1756–1791), born in Salzburg, is one of the world’s most famous composers. A child prodigy, he wrote a prodigious amount of music in his brief life, including symphonies, operas, and chamber music. The image is from a portrait painted c. 1777 by Tischbein.



Ludwig van **Beethoven** (1770–1827) was born in Bonn, Germany, but spent most of his life in Vienna, where he gained fame as a superb pianist and a gifted improviser. The image is based on an 1818 drawing by von Klöber.



Franz **Schubert** (1797–1828), born in Vienna, wrote a vast amount of music in his very brief life—600 songs, symphonies, pieces for piano solo and chamber ensembles. The image is based on an 1825 painting by Rieder.



Anton **Bruckner** (1824–1896), born in northern Austria, was a renowned organist as well as an important 19th century composer. The image is based on an 1890 photograph.



Hugo **Wolf** (1860–1903), probably the least-known composer of the set, was born in Windischgraz, now part of Slovenia. He is primarily remembered as a superb composer of the

Johann **Strauss Jr.** (1825–1899), “The Waltz King”, was born in Vienna. He wrote over

400 waltzes, polkas and other dances, as well as a handful of operettas. The image is based on an 1898 portrait by Carl Pietzner.

lied, the German art-song. The image is based on an undated photograph of the younger Wolf.



Since then, countless countries have issued stamps featuring composers and musicians. And it all began with this charity set from Austria.

A technicality—the first musician on a stamp was Ignacy Jan **Paderewski** (1860–1941) on a stamp from Poland issued June 15, 1919. However, he is not shown as a musician, but as Prime Minister and member of the newly reconstituted Sejm, the Polish National Assembly.



Austria Sc #B50–B56 (1922). A 1969 souvenir sheet without postal validity (shown at 54%) was issued with re-coloured reprints (“Neudruck”) of the

Mozart, Beethoven, and Strauss, Jr. stamps, issued for the Vienna State Opera Centenary Exhibition (“Jubiläumsausstellung”), held in the grand ballroom (“Redoutensaal”) of the opera house. Poland Sc#134 (1919) ymew53@telus.net