

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Musikalisches Würfelspiel" (Musical Dice Games) is a fascinating blend of eighteenth-century classical music artistry and an early use of algorithmic composition. Published in 1792, a year after Mozart's death, this whimsical work allowed performers to create a unique composition using a set of pre-written measures arranged by chance. By rolling a pair of dice and consulting an accompanying chart, players would assemble a minuet as directed by the dice rolls, leading to one of many possible melodic configurations. The outputs seen on the opposing page exemplify this process, showing the fluid invention intrinsic to his method, with measures repeating identically no matter the sequence of assembly.

When considering copyright issues related to "Musikalisches Würfelspiel," it is essential to recognize its unique nature. Were it conceived today, the material used to generate the score—the tables and musical fragments—would be what copyright protects, leaving the rearranged minuet forms themselves in intellectual limbo. These forms are not static but dynamically created anew with each execution, making them **unfixed** artifacts. They are multitudinous in existence, each instantiation holding a temporary presence that evaporates with its performance.

In the context of dividing copyright authorship into percentages, Mozart's "Musikalisches Würfelspiel" exemplifies a clear allocation: 80% would be attributed to Mozart for the comprehensive origination of material, while 20% would be allocated to the human performer who brings the work to life. The dice, often thought to play a role, are merely facilitators of Mozart's preordained possibilities, captured entirely within his portion of authorship. Thus, the performer's involvement, though smaller, remains imperative, as it furnishes the musical design with audible, corporeal reality.