

1234. CONSTANZE MOZART<sup>1</sup> TO BREITKOPF & HÄRTEL,<sup>2</sup> LEIPZIG

Most honoured sirs,

[Vienna, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 1799]

After waiting the prescribed time before presenting the payment order to Herr Preindl,<sup>3</sup> I received the answer that he wishes to pay this afternoon and requests me to inform you [5] that he is doing this for my sake and does not really feel obliged to, because you still have not sent him the required number of copies. Herr Traege,<sup>4</sup> whom I see frequently, has also asked me to inform you that he is in similar embarrassment, and the demand is overwhelming him. I like to imagine that I shall receive the pleasing present of the second volume,<sup>5</sup> [10] which you were so kind as to promise me, when you send the consignment for the latter.

In recent days I have received proposals to purchase from me of individual compositions by my late husband, namely the *quintet* for glass harmonica and *quartets* for 2 *violins*, *viola* and *violoncello*.<sup>6</sup> [15] I am therefore all the keener to know your answer to my letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> January<sup>7</sup> as to the order in which we should tackle the musical items. The quintet mentioned is with wind instruments – *flute*, *oboe*, *viola* and *violoncello*, and I offer it to you for 12 ducats.<sup>8</sup>

I possess a little book with the inscription *Capricci di W. Mozart a Londra nel mese Dicembre 1764*<sup>9</sup> [20] (thus when he was 8 years old), containing little compositions written by himself on various ideas, and an *aria*: *Quel destrier che all'albergo è vicino*, the original of which is much too valuable to me for me to let it be engraved from. But I would send it back and fore to you to be copied at your expense, if you wish, [25] and leave it up to you to determine the price.<sup>10</sup> I am well aware that in itself it cannot be of great interest, but as a rarity, as a beam of the first dawn light of his genius, it does indeed remain very remarkable. It is amusing to see in it that he was composing at a time when he wrote 20 and 30 as 02 and 03; he numbered the pages himself. This little anecdote should also be in your collection. [30]

I hear that you are secretly making every effort regarding works unknown to you. Although I could perhaps have expected you to turn to me first, I have in fact nothing against this because I cannot of course gain any particular benefit from those which are already

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<sup>1</sup> BD: Nissen's handwriting, line 48 and signature by Constanze. Nissen: cf. note No. 1224.

<sup>2</sup> BD: Founded as "Breitkopf" in 1719. On 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1795, Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf concluded a contract of partnership with Gottfried Christoph Härtel (1763-1827). This was followed in 1796 by a secret contract of sale in which the entire Breitkopf business was made over to Gottfried Christoph Härtel. The latter was also declared universal heir by Breitkopf shortly before his death in 1800.

<sup>3</sup> BD: "order": cf. No. 1233/6, 9. Joseph Preindl (1756-1823), from 1793 music director at the Peterskirche ["St. Peter's Church"] in Vienna, from 1795 also adjunct music director at St. Stephan; applied for the post of Imperial and Royal Chamber Composer [k.k. Kammerkompositeur] left vacant by Mozart, but it was decided that the post was dispensable.

<sup>4</sup> BD: Johann Traeg (1747-1805) started a music business in Vienna in 1782 from a series of different addresses. He had already started selling copies of Mozart's works during the composer's lifetime, and advertised a large number of these (including 15 symphonies, concertos and chamber music). He was a correspondent for Breitkopf & Härtel and for André and later became a publisher. Joseph Haydn described him in a letter of 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1799, as a "10 kreuzer shop-keeper".

<sup>5</sup> BD: The second volume of the *OeC*, the complete works.

<sup>6</sup> BD: "quintet": KV 617; cf. line 11 ff. and No. 1233/24.

<sup>7</sup> BD: No. 1233.

<sup>8</sup> BD: = 54 florins.

<sup>9</sup> BD: KV 32a (*The Third Sketchbook*); probably one of the two notebooks mentioned by Leopold in his "Verzeichnüss" of 1768 (cf. No. 0144/58-59), the second of which is certainly the so-called *London Sketchbook* (KV 15a).

<sup>10</sup> BD: Constanze sent them for copying on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 1799, but must have received them back by 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1801, when she sent them to Johann Anton André, who returned them between 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1802. Since then the "Capricci" have been lost. Cf. Nos. 1237/87-88; 1240/57; 1248/15; 1267/175; 1270/19, 61; 1314/40 ff.; 1322/102; 1326/59; 1333/20; 1345/5.

known, [35] and would simply exhort you to continue diligently, since I myself will be very pleased if you can bring everything together, even without me.

For those things which are very well known, I am prepared to offer you the original scores on loan on if you are willing to take over the postage costs in both directions and to give me such payment as seems good to you. [40] Only in this way, it appears to me, can you be sure of the utmost correctness in your edition.

Preindl has just paid the 54 fl. 30<sup>kr</sup> <sup>11</sup> to your order, which I have put to your account.

Now I repeat once again my request that you might kindly give me the information about Herr Sievers,<sup>12</sup> [45] as you promised in your letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> *December*, 1798, and furthermore that you might kindly give advice or some kind of suggestion about the copies of the *concerto, opus 1*,<sup>13</sup> still in your keeping.

I have the honour to be your most obedient servant

CMozart.

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<sup>11</sup> 60 kreuzers = 1 florin.

<sup>12</sup> BD VI, p. 722: Joh. Fr. Lud. Sievers, not the Sievers proposed in BD VI, p. 457. Organist and cleric in Magdeburg Cathedral.

<sup>13</sup> BD: KV 503; cf. Nos. 1226/25-26; 1228/36 ff.