

1261. CONSTANZE MOZART¹ TO BREITKOPF & HÄRTEL,² LEIPZIG

Vienna / To / Messrs. Breitkopf & Härtel, / Leipzig

Most highly honoured sirs,

[Vienna, 28th October, 1799]

Having finally read your own announcement,³ which is of course substantially different to that of Messrs. Gayl and Hedler,⁴ [5] some things have however been omitted from what I sent you in my letter of 18th inst.⁵ But some of it has nevertheless also been retained.

I quite understand, and everyone would have done just the same in your place, that you had the *Requiem* printed only from my copy, despite already having two other copies. But since you would quite certainly have printed it from your copies if you had not had mine too, [10] for this is what your letters expressly state, and since what you paid me for mine was obviously no different than for a simple – although good – copy, you had no right to announce that you were going to publish it according to my manuscript (by which the public understands the original manuscript), [15] thus compromising my position vis-a-vis the anonymous gentleman. On the other hand, it seems to me, in view of the fact that you are using only my copy, that you owe me a larger payment, all the more so because the other copies, which you would have used had I not intervened, are probably to be counted among those very faulty ones you denigrate in your announcement, [20] and by publishing them you would have rendered the public an – I will only say – incomplete service. In the announcement I would have limited myself to stating that the *Requiem* would be published according to a genuine exemplar, and the public would certainly have believed you, as men who care about their honour.

[25] Fundamentally, as it seems to me, this case should be a stern warning to you not to take from others what you can have from me. In your announcement you say that the copies, and very poor ones at that, were offered at a high price. So now you have probably paid dearly for the first two copies and the money has been – thrown away. [30] Since, despite having your two copies, you still asked for mine, I can certainly take this as sure proof that you did not recognise either of them as genuine and that mine was therefore absolutely essential for you. In terms of its value to you, this turns out the same as if you had purchased the work from me. Perhaps I may still therefore flatter myself with a prospective payment. [35]

I most obediently beg you, as a special favour, to send me the march⁶ sent to you on 25th March at the very first opportunity, and therefore, if you have not yet used it, to have it copied for your purposes: it is, after all, very short and the *confrontation*⁷ is quickly done. [40] The same is true of the *sonata* with fragment⁸ which, according to your letter of 27th August,⁹ you kept and regarding which I beg for the same favour.

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting, Constanze's signature. Nissen: cf. note No. 1224.

² BD: Founded as "Breitkopf" in 1719. On 1st 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.

³ BD: Cf. note on No. 1278/4.

⁴ BD: Cf. note on No. 1260/3.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 1260/2 ff.

⁶ BD: KV 408 (383e), No. 1. Sent by Constanze on 25th February, 1799, cf. No. 1236/2, No. 1265/6-9.

⁷ BD: (French), = comparison, check.

⁸ BD: Cf. No. 1253/27.

⁹ BD: No. 1255a (lost).

If this could also be done with the *clavier concerto*¹⁰ which I sent you on 29th April and with the glass *harmonica quintet*¹¹ which I sent on 8th July, I would be exceptionally obliged to you.

[45] The originals of the songs are hopefully on their way to me, and likewise the answers to my letters of 26th Aug., 28th Aug., 29th Sept. and 10th October.¹² I would furthermore be so bold as to ask that the printed copies which you select for me should always be sent with the first consignment [. . .],¹³ and your representative should be instructed [. . .]¹⁴ to see to it personally that it is delivered at once. [50] So far, I have always had terribly long waits every time, sometimes simply because they did not deliver them to me on their own initiative, and only later did I find out from whom I had to request them. I still do not have the 5th volume.¹⁵

I have not yet found any announcement in your journal regarding my husband's personal album:¹⁶ [55] I suppose it has not yet been possible to insert the one about the German singspiel without text.¹⁷

I am, with the uttermost respect,
your most obedient servant
C. Mozart

My last letter cost 49^{kr}, so your
[60] debt is ascertained to be
17 fl. 5^{kr}.

¹⁰ BD: KV 466.

¹¹ BD: KV 617.

¹² BD: Nos. 1255, 1256, 1258, 1259.

¹³ BD: Damaged by seal, two words lost.

¹⁴ BD: Damaged by seal, two words lost.

¹⁵ BD: Cf. No. 1258/79. Constanze was promised 6 copies of the complete works (OeC).

¹⁶ BD: Cf. note on No. 1248/33.

¹⁷ BD: *Zaide*, cf. No. 1255/3-11.