

1290. CONSTANZE MOZART¹ TO JOHANN ANTON ANDRÉ,² OFFENBACH

Vienna / To / Herr Johann André, / music publisher / in / Offenbach am Mayn

My dear Herr *André*,

[Vienna, 12th March, 1800]

Hardly do I receive your letter,³ but I rush to answer it in the same moment. [5] I am sorry to discover a hideous blot in it, where you threaten not to pay⁴ me until my answer arrives. This would truly be to your dishonour, and you would truly be doing wrong – you will feel what this is – if you were capable of doing it. But you cannot be. So it is only an – excuse in order to gain even more time, [10] to save a few more percent.

You can see that I am very forthright. But you should also see from the enclosed declaration how I then treat those who threaten me with wrongs and whom I can force to do right at court. I need my money, I have been relying on it, and, by God, I am losing yet again by your third postponement⁵ because I am so fastidious [15] – do not keep me waiting.

What you request is absolutely right, absolutely fair. Personally, I read the *Avertissement*⁶ with indignation, and the only remarks of yours which I cannot use are those concerning the plates for the *Concerto*.⁷ Breitkopf really did buy these from me at the beginning of 1799. [20] If I did not tell you this, it was because I did not think of it. Why did you not ask about it? You did of course know that the plates existed and that they cannot disappear. Yet this is trivial, and a secondary matter. As you know, I sold the copies as copies intended for you as a music seller, not as a printer, independently of, and before, our main business. [25]

I am now pleased to be convinced that my declaration, exactly as it is, will be according to your wishes, and I am happy to declare to you that I am only doing my duty. Of course I would have preferred not to parade myself in public; not forgetting, on the other side, the fact that I am damaging myself considerably. [30]

That is all I have to say to you, and I therefore close so as not to delay for a moment the answer to the letter which I received from you an hour ago.

In my heart I wish that you were not making a declaration: [35] I also hope that mine, which you will now publish in all possible places, will suffice you. It is so horrible to be involved in animosity and strife, and it seems to me that my declaration makes a clean sweep of everything. Isn't it true that it redounds more to your honour if only I speak?

Vienna, 12th March, 1800.

C. Mozart

ON AN ACCOMPANYING LEAF:⁸

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting. Nissen: cf. note on No. 1224.

² BD: Johann Anton André (1775-1842), publisher. He was the third son of Johann André (1741-1799), composer, music director (from 1766), founded the music publishing business in Offenbach in 1784. It was thus in Johann Anton's first year as a publisher that the contract was concluded with Constanze (8th November, 1799) regarding the music in Mozart's estate. His full title in 1826 was "Music Director to the Grand Prince of Hessen and Court Councillor at the Princely Court in Isenburg" ["grossfürstlich hessischer Kapellmeister und fürstlich Isenburgischer Hofrath"].

³ BD: No. 1289b, lost.

⁴ BD: The remainder of the purchase price (1050 florins).

⁵ BD: The second payment, due on 18th December, was delayed by André until January. Constanze had to start legal proceedings over the third payment, due at the beginning of February. This is now the "third postponement".

⁶ BD: Announcement, published by B & H on 5th March, 1800. André then threatened withhold payment until Constanze provided him with a suitable declaration to the contrary.

⁷ BD: KV 503, originally published by Constance herself, with copies to be sold on commission by B & H. The unsold copies were made over to André. Concerning the plates cf. No. 1230/19-20.

⁸ BD: Nissen's handwriting, Constanze's signature.

[40]

Declaration⁹
concerning Mozart's musical estate.

After I had made available to Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel in Leipzig, for a fee, some of my blessedly departed husband's original manuscripts – comprising only songs, *canons*, *fugues*, a glass *harmonica quintet*, a march for *clavier*, approximately 8 *sonatas* (of which six were only copies) [45] and a single *clavier concerto* – to help them with their editing, I then quite voluntarily offered them my entire stock of manuscripts. But the gentlemen mentioned, who did not think they could evaluate these from a distance, did not take me up on my proposal. Herr *André* from Offenbach, [50] who was put in a position to judge their value and richness during a stay here, has in the meantime purchased them from me and has thus become the indisputable legal owner, not of a remainder, but of an almost complete collection of entirely correct and entirely authentic Mozart original manuscripts, from his earliest youth to his death. [55]

Herr *André* requested me to make this declaration: he has a right to it. It adheres most strictly to the truth. I hereby present him with it.
Vienna, 12th March, 1800.

Constance Mozart

⁹ BD: Revised declaration in No. 1291.