

1216. CONSTANZE MOZART TO CHRISTOPH GOTTLÖB¹ BREITKOPF,² LEIPZIG

Hamburg,³ the 11th Dec.,
1795

Most esteemed Herr Breidkopf.

Forgive me for taking the liberty of writing, but it concerns my Bandel Terzett!⁴

[5] I thought I would already find it here |: since you yourself were so kind as to promise it to me |:; you also promised me that you would announce it in the newspaper in my name, which I have so far not found there either. Dear Herr Breidkopf, should I take over the responsibility for doing all this? – Then simply tell me regardless, I would be heartily glad to do it, and would have offered myself for the task straight away [12] if you yourself had not been so kind as to pre-empt me by telling me |: if you still remember |: that you wanted to print the Bandl Terzett for me – without charging me a kreuzer,⁵ and all the proceeds from it were to be mine. But, dear Herr Breidkopf, it is fair that if I wish to earn something, I must also give, [15] and I am therefore quite happy to bear whatever costs you may present me with, only make sure that I have it soon and receive a couple of 1000 copies of it, and that it appears very soon, indeed at once, in the newspaper. I need hardly ask you to take an interest in having a great number published by your esteemed agents. Then I would ask you to answer me very soon, [20] including the matter of what I must pay you if I give you an opera⁶ for printing –

I would have been quite happy to wait until my return to settle everything to do with this with you in person, but I am afraid I might be away too long, and I would certainly wish to be a little active in my business before then. [25] Forgive me my forthrightness, with which I shall constantly be your friend and servant

Constance Mozart

From my sister and Eberl, as well as from myself, every conceivable good wish to your dear, dear, dear wife⁷ and I would also ask her to answer my letter. [30]

¹ BD VI: Corrected from the “Gottlieb” in BD IV.

² BD: Christopher Gottlob Breitkopf (1750-1800). He composed and was an outstanding player of the glass harmonica. His father, Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf (1719-1794), made the acquaintance of Mozart, as well as of Haydn and Gluck, on a visit to Vienna in 1786. Constanze probably met Ch. G. Breitkopf and his wife during her stay in Leipzig (November, 1795). Leopold Mozart’s correspondence with J. G. I. Breitkopf started in the year 1772 (cf. No. 0263). He repeatedly tried to interest the publisher in his son’s music, but apparently without success during Mozart’s lifetime. The publishing firm “Breitkopf” was founded in 1719; it later became Breitkopf & Härtel.

³ BD: In autumn, 1795, Constanze undertook a concert tour in Germany along with her sister Aloisia Lange and the pianist and composer Anton Franz Eberl (1765-1807). Also included was Prague, where her son Carl Thomas was staying with Franz Xaver Neimetschek, by whom the younger Franz Xaver Wolfgang was also accommodated during the tour. The stay in Hamburg was at least from the middle of December to the middle of January. Eberl had composed a cantata “*Bey Mozarts Grab*” [“At Mozart’s Grave”] in December, 1791, and played a piano concerto by Mozart in a concert organised by Constanze in Vienna in 1794.

⁴ BD: “Bandel Terzett” ≈ “Ribbon Trio”. KV 441. A humorous trio for soprano, tenor and bass with accompanying strings, composed by Mozart (in Vienna in 1783, it is said) Breitkopf did in fact fulfil his promise (lines 11-12) to print it free of charge for Constanze in 1795 (cf. No. 1217): *Das Bändchen*, with piano accompaniment. Constanze was still criticising him for the (supposed?) delay in publication in 1790 (cf. Nos. 1224/24-25; 1226/10-11; 1228/55 ff.).

⁵ 60 kreuzers = 1 florin.

⁶ BD: *Idomeneo* in keyboard reduction, cf. No. 1214.

⁷ BD: Henriette Elenore, née Thilo. She married Ch. G. Breitkopf in 1793 and left him in 1796; the divorce was granted in November, 1797.