

1281. CONSTANZE MOZART¹ TO JOHANN ANTON ANDRÉ,² OFFENBACH

Dear Herr *André*,

[Vienna, 9th February, 1800]

It would now be quite possible for me to obtain the original score³ of my husband's famous *Requiem*⁴ from the anonymous person who commissioned it, but his representative spoke to me about fifty ducats.⁵ [5] Are you willing to spend this on it? Or what is the highest price you are willing to give for it? Until now I had believed that my copy was good, but a knowledgeable person⁶ has assured me that it falls a long way short of the perfection⁷ of the original. I cannot judge it at the moment, but if this were true, it would of course be worth the trouble of buying the original. [10] Since my husband did not completely finish the work⁸ because he died over it when it was close to completion, I cannot say for certain how much is written in his own hand. In the meantime, whether more or less, this copy about which we are speaking is obviously the most authentic of all. I have the honour to be, with great respect, your most obedient servant [15]

Constance Mozart

Verte⁹

I would only ask that you answer the last letter regarding my son¹⁰ very soon indeed.

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting; last three lines and signature Constanze's hand. 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: Presumably not the original score itself, but a copy made from it; cf. No. 1322/11-13.

⁴ BD: This is the start of Constanze's correspondence with André over the Requiem, conducted in parallel with the ongoing correspondence with B & H concerning the same work.

⁵ BD: 50 ducats = 225 florins. The lawyer Dr. Johann Nepomuk Sortschan was Graf von Walsegg-Stuppach's representative.

⁶ BD: Presumably Abbé Stadler, who must have seen the copy in Dr. Sortschan's house at the beginning of February and compared it with a copy matching Constanze's, for she had sent hers to B & H on 8th August, 1799 (cf. No. 1246/7-8, 78).

⁷ BD: Contradicted by Constanze's statement in No. 1304/5, which was made after a new comparison of the versions at the beginning of August.

⁸ BD: If Constanze's statements in this letter are accurate and not intended to mislead (cf. also No. 1240/22), Mozart's share in the work must have been substantially greater than often assumed; in particular, the drafts and sketches drawn on by Süßmayer must likewise have been more numerous and comprehensive, cf. No. 1419/27-29. More literature listed in BD VI, p. 517.

⁹ = turn the page.

¹⁰ BD: No. 1275; Constanze enquired about possible employment for Carl Thomas in the Hanau area.