

1321. CONSTANZE MOZART¹ TO JOHANN ANTON ANDRÉ,² OFFENBACH

Vienna / To / Herr Johann André, / Music Publisher / Offenbach / am Mayn.

Dear Herr *André*,

Vienna, 16th Nov., 1800.

It will still be present in your memory that there were 6 *sonatas*³ in Mozart's estate which I considered to be his work [5] and which I told you I had sold to Breitkopf und Härtel, who had declared them to be very poor, just as you yourself did. You constantly asked me for the copy and I gave it to you on your word of honour that you, who knew that I had already sold it, [10] would make no misuse of it.

Now the most violent scruples have arisen in me that they are not by Mozart. Nevertheless, because I sold them to *B. & H.*, who can publish them without Mozart's name if they wish (I have corresponded with them on this and let them know my scruples), all that is irrelevant, and your obligation, [15] my friend, remains the same.

The main reason that I am announcing this to you is that you should on no account list these themes in Mozart's thematic catalogue; I cannot now accept them as his work and would object if they were made known, in whole or only as themes, as by Mozart. [20] In the meantime I have left it up to Breitkopf und Härtel to assess them once again and to evaluate them according to their internal criteria. I have released myself entirely from any guarantee that they are by Mozart – this is the main thing that I want to see done.

In this context yet other scruples arise in me, [25] namely whether that certain opera without a name,⁴ with melodrama instead of recitative, which seems to be unfinished, or which I at least considered not to be finished, really is by Mozart. To me it seems so, but on the other hand I have doubts. The handwriting in the text is either Mozart's or is deceptively similar to it. You must be the one who can best judge the handwriting in the notation. [30] The latter, of course, varies in itself throughout the years. But you will have other manuscripts which are similar to this handwriting. At the end of every composition, at least of every major composition, Mozart made a characteristic mark which I have otherwise never seen made so cleanly and lightly, roughly so: ~~W/A~~ No, I cannot do it, but you will surely know it and recognise it. If these marks in the opera are genuinely by Mozart, then the *opera* itself will of course also be so. But nobody, nobody really knows, and the handwriting of the text and the notation is deceptively similar to Michael Haydn's or his regular *copyist*'s.

[40] Regarding my proposition with the themes of all the fragments, you unfortunately do not reply! Its publication would bring me astonishing joy, the right place for it would be at the end of your catalogue; I am of course not seeking any profit here. No-one else can publish this catalogue with the completeness of which you alone are capable, since you additionally have some only partially finished pieces⁵ which I have not noted. [45] It is furthermore possible that this fragment catalogue of mine lists a few pieces which were completed later and therefore cannot be counted among the fragments. In short, from every point of view, no-one would be as suitable as you for publishing this catalogue, which will certainly be very

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting. Nissen: cf. note 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: The so-called *Romantic Sonatas* for keyboard and violin KV 55-60 (209c-h), (KV⁶: Anh. C 23.01- 23.06). Cf. No. 1236/2; 1321/4-23. Their authenticity or otherwise is discussed in BD VI on page 462.

⁴ BD: The German singspiel later known as *Zaide*, KV 344 (336b); cf. Nos. 1252/33; 1255/3-11.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 1285/74-75.

welcome to all knowledgeable people, [50] and it must also be pleasing to you that, as a result, no-one can work out these themes in future and publish them as Mozart's work, no-one can thus prejudice you, and you remain the only authentic editor.

How I look forward to your *quintets* and *quartets*, to *Don Juan*,⁶ in short, to everything!

[55] You have surely received the completed fragments⁷ from Berlin by now? I would ask you to inform me of this, since otherwise the time within which I have to notify the post is slipping by.

N. commends himself.⁸ I am, and remain, your most obedient servant

C. Mozart.

⁶ = Don Giovanni.

⁷ BD: Cf. No. 1310/14 ff. Fragments made up by Stadler, namely KV 442, 400 (372a), 372, 443 (404b); cf. note on No. 1299/42 ff.

⁸ BD: Georg Nikolaus Nissen (1761-1826), secretary to the Danish Legation in Vienna. Met Constanze at the end of 1797, was either her landlord or cohabitant. Nissen advised Constanze in all business matters from 1798 onwards. Cf. No. 1224 for longer note.