

1403. CONSTANZE NISSEN¹ TO JOHANN ANTON ANDRÉ,² OFFENBACH

*To Herr / Herr André / Music Publisher / in / Offenbach am
Mayn / postage paid as far as / the border*

Salzburg, 28th Oct.
1825

Most honoured and dear sir, friend and – ally

[5] Allow me (and my functionary,³ whom you already know, who also dares to make a claim on your kind sentiments) to open a correspondence with you friend-to-friend,⁴ which, if your time is as much in my favour as I am sure your inclination is, is admittedly only sure to bring an advantage to me. Yet you may perhaps be able to detect, during the course of my letter, [10] that I am at the same time striving to present you, if possible, with something pleasant. And I beg you to believe that I would do this at every opportunity, even if I had no hopes of getting anything in return.

The very first thing that I would request you to send are the four sets of Mozart's works which you are publishing from the original manuscript [15] in a different way from the one we agreed. I have been travelling for 5 years now and do not know where and when I will be staying anywhere.⁵ You promised only to deliver the items to Hamburg or Vienna free of charge, but did not hesitate to send them to me in Copenhagen for a time, and indeed voluntarily, without my having requested it. [20] This favour, for which I was grateful to you, has aroused in me the courage to ask you for another favour, for which I will be even more grateful: namely that with your occasional shipments you should send 2 copies to Steiner,⁶ or to whomsoever you wish in Milan, addressed to my son Karl,⁷ who is known to everyone there, and

[25] 2 copies to your agent in Lemberg⁸ or to Steiner and Company in Vienna (preferably, of course, directly to the first destination) addressed to my son Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart⁹ in Lemberg, who is also easy to find in that place.

It is self-evident that this wish of mine is retrospective [30] and also extends to what you have published since I last received anything in Copenhagen. There are grounds to fear that Lose¹⁰ has long had something for me, and this leads to the inconvenience for you of writing to tell him that he must settle the account for it with you. On the other hand, some

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting, Constanze's signature. Georg Nikolaus Nissen (1761-1826), secretary to the Holstein Legation in Regensburg and then 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, especially with the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel and André. The letters, often formulated by him and signed by Constanze, reveal an experienced, if cautious, businessman. Cf. No. 1224 for longer note.

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: Nissen.

⁴ BD: The correspondence had obviously been interrupted for some time; cf. No. 1358 of 2nd March, 1803.

⁵ BD: A pretext. Apart from travelling to the spa in Gastein, Constanze had spent the time 1821-1825 in Salzburg.

⁶ BD: Steiner & Co., publishers in Vienna.

⁷ BD: Active there as a civil servant since 1810.

⁸ = Lviv, Ukraine.

⁹ BD: Franz Xaver Wolfgang. After concert tours extending over several years, he settled in Lemberg in 1822 as a music teacher and later as theatre music director. Perhaps at Constanze's instigation, he started to call himself "Wolfgang Amadeus", presumably hoping for more effective "publicity".

¹⁰ BD: Not identified.

things are probably already available from Steiner, where I have the impression I have seen all kinds of things, [35] but which could be put at your disposal without much trouble.

– From now on we are dealing with new interests. I will request charity from you, for your gifts will have the value of charity, since you are putting them into the hands of a needy person.

May I request the following gifts?

[40] One copy of the Mozart *thematic* catalogue in his own hand¹¹ which you have published, or even, if you wish to place me under even more exceptional obligation to you, Two copies of the same. Back then you willingly gave me everything I asked for. You would certainly have been happy to give me two, three copies or more. [45] But I asked you only for one. One of my sons has it; the other has none; I myself have none. You can see that we all wish to have it. At this stage copies of it have no doubt become very rare. I therefore restrict my express request to one.

One copy of your catalogue of the earlier Mozart compositions, [50] the one you lent to the blessedly departed Gerber,¹² as his *Lexicon* testifies. It will no doubt contain the information on year and place indicated on many compositions (and so on), when and where they were written etc. Gerber has given the world a summary of its content: I give you my word that it will not be circulated either in part or as a whole, [55] depending on the conditions you impose on me.

I openly confess to you that I would be saddened if you did not consider yourself free to grant me this favour.

One copy of the entire information on Mozart's life¹³ in Number 1 of the Musical Correspondence¹⁴ published in Speyer in 1792, [60] otherwise known, I believe, as Bossler's *Realzeitung*. – I have gone to a great deal of trouble in vain hoping to obtain a copy or see the journal itself: I hope it will be less difficult for you.

Now you know the sum of my wishes. Although I feel quite clearly that I have no right at all to put you to so much inconvenience, [65] I will not say another word about it once I have expressed to you the very great sense of obligation I would feel: I would have to be afraid of offending your delicacy and putting myself in the apparently unfair light of not placing my entire confidence in you, which I certainly do, inasmuch as time and circumstances do not constrain you. [70] — I am happy with whatever form of dispatch is convenient for you, preferably, I admit, the least expensive one. And this would no doubt be in one of your packages to Hacker¹⁵ or Mayr¹⁶ here, or to a nearby seller of books or music, Munich, Regensburg, Linz, Landshut or suchlike. It should be addressed to me or my husband, and I will pay your expenses for copying and shipping [75] and the transport costs along the way where this is required of me by yourself or others. You would either instruct your agent in Munich, Regensburg etc. to send something from time to time in his packages for Mayr or Hacker, or you would be so gracious as to inform me simply of the person in my vicinity to whom you have sent it, so that I can arrange everything necessary there myself.

¹¹ BD: André had published Mozart's "Verzeichnüss" under the title "Thematisches Verzeichnis /sämmlicher Kompositionen / von W. A. Mozart [...]" in 1805. An improved version appeared in 1828.

¹² BD: This catalogue, seeking to cover works before 1784, never appeared in print. André lent a handwritten copy of it to his friend Ernst Ludwig Gerber (1746-1819), who mentioned it in his *Neues historisch-biographisches Lexikon der Tonkünstler* (4 vols., Leipzig, 1812-1814). André concluded this catalogue in 1833, but did make some additions here and there afterwards. Constanze's request was in vain.

¹³ "Lebensnachrichten". BD: Cf. NissenB, appendix, p. 215, no. 40.

¹⁴ BD: Heinrich Philipp Bossler published the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* between 1790 and 1792, successor to the *Musikalische Real-Zeitung* (1788-1790).

¹⁵ BD: Benedikt Hacker (1769-1829), came to Salzburg in 1783 and took violin lessons with Leopold Mozart and clavier with Michael Haydn. Violinist at the monastic foundation Nonnberg. Founded a publishing house in 1802.

¹⁶ BD: The *Mayrische Buchhandlung*, an established bookseller in Salzburg.

[80] I would counsel you simply to summarise this information and whatever else you wish to communicate to me in a few lines: it is fair if your business is interrupted only a little after my long letter has unduly robbed you of so much time. May I furthermore take the liberty of having my immodest husband dictate this to me: *Bis dat qui cito dat?*¹⁷ [85] Yet he also stipulates that everything must of course be secondary to whatever is intrinsically important for yourself.

The little that I have the joy of being able to offer you consists of the following: I had cherished hopes of finding all kinds of things at my sister-in-law's¹⁸ and in the birthplace of my blessedly departed husband. [90] The most untiring investigations have brought me no further results.

In *copy*. A cradle song in 3 stanzas: *Schlafe, mein Prinzchen*, etc. *Andante* F major. Quite the sweetest of things, recognisably Mozartian in many aspects,¹⁹ naive, whimsical. I must add that his sister knows nothing about the song. [95] But it has for many years passed as *M.*'s work here, everyone else accepts it as such, and specifically Herr Schinn²⁰ in Munich, who lived here some time ago, testifies to its authenticity. It must date from his youthful years, because he did not compose it in Vienna. But nothing in it points to the youthfulness of the composer. [100]

In *copy*. *Aria buffa: Dentro il mio petto* etc.²¹ in 4/4 time D major *Allegro maestoso*. Some of the last comments fit here. It is typical for him, but my sister-in-law and I did not know it. Here they maintain it is authentic.

In *copy*, but only a few fragments of *Concerto a 3 Cembali* in F.²² [105] The work was written by *M.* He writes about it in letters to his father and says, amongst other things, that he played it in Augsburg. It must date from around 1777.

In *copy*, the very earliest *compositions*²³ by the child *M.*, from (Jan.) 1762 and 1763, written in their own notebook by his father, [110] consisting of a few staves, yet there are a few pieces from Brussels and Paris which are certainly considerably longer.

In the original, 2 of a few staves²⁴ which will be somewhat more recent than 1763. In the original: an *introduction* or *prelude*,²⁵ written for his sister in later, but not the very last, years. The piece can be called a little *fantasy* (on 4 pages). [115] C major. It starts with an *Allegretto* C major/minor, then makes a transition into a *Capriccio*, *Andantino*, *Cantabile* and concludes with a *Capriccio allegro assai*.

In *copy*: his sister still claims to have a *prelude* written for her.²⁶ But the poor 75-year-old is blind.

[120] She will not part with anything that is original, it is necessary to wait.²⁷ I am happy to have *copies* made of the *copies* and send them wherever you want, as well as a *copy* of the original *prelude* which I have just mentioned.

¹⁷ BD: "He who gives quickly gives double".

¹⁸ BD: Nannerl, Mozart's sister.

¹⁹ BD: "Wiegenlied" KV 350 (Anh. 284f; KV⁶: Anh. C 8. 48). Actually composed by Bernhard Flies (* 1770?), text by Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter (1746-1797).

²⁰ BD: Johann Georg Schinn (1768-1833), from 1818 viola player at court in Munich. Previously flautist to the Bishop of Eichstätt; in Salzburg pupil of Michael Haydn.

²¹ BD: No. 3 from *La finta giardiniera* KV 196, mentioned in No. 0551/56-57.

²² BD: The so-called "Lodron Concerto", written in February, 1776, for Countess [Gräfin] Antonia Lodron and her two daughters. The performance in Augsburg in 1777 is mentioned in No. 0355/102-103, another in Mannheim in 1778 in No. 0439/28-32.

²³ BD: Leopold entered them in Nannerl's notebook: KV 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1 (1e), 1f, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5a, 5b.

²⁴ BD: Presumably short early works.

²⁵ BD: KV 395 (300g), supposedly composed in Paris, July, 1778. Cf. Nos. 0466/160-163; 0471/264-266. Constanze made a copy of the work available to André in 1826.

²⁶ BD: Probably the "Praeludium" which Nannerl sent to B & H on 8th February, 1800. Cf. No. 1280/14-15.

²⁷ BD: Until Nannerl's death. She died in October, 1829.

There is nothing more here, except perhaps earlier pieces of church music not known to you. Jähndel,²⁸ a choirmaster here, is making a complete catalogue of all of these [125] and is also searching further afield. If this could be of interest to you, it would be a pleasure for him to enter into correspondence with you on this and similar matters. He is a very dear man. Contrary to what the Leipzig *A. M. Z.*²⁹ as well as other journals say against the earlier church pieces, it occurs to me here that I should tell you that two large-scale *Vespers*,³⁰ which were previously quite unknown in Vienna, were performed there in the cathedral and in the court chapel as recently as 15 Oct., 1825; [130] the former organised by the music director there, Gänsbacher,³¹ both of them, as G. writes, entirely bearing the stamp of Mozart's genius. They are both in the key of C for 4 *concertante* voices, 2 *violins*, trumpets, timpani, *organ* and *violone*. [135]

The end. Forgive my verbosity! Be so gracious as to reply to whatever and however you please. Permit me to hope that you will do it in your first quiet moment. If there is anything you do not believe you can grant me, I shall remain persuaded that it is not in your power. [140] Yet, more in hope in your friendship than in fear of your powerlessness, and with my unchanging deep respect and attachment, I have the honour to be your most devoted servant

[145]

Constance Nissen
As functionary, spouse, consequently guardian,
and with the most profound respect your
most obedient servant
Nissen.

²⁸ BD: Anton Jähndel (1783-1861). After studies in Munich occupied church music posts in Salzburg. Aided Nissen with his biography, cf. literature in BD VI, p. 612.

²⁹ BD: *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, edited by Friedrich Rochlitz, published in Leipzig by B & H.

³⁰ BD: *Vesperae de Dominica* KV 321 (1779) and *Vesperae solennes de confessore* KV 331 (1780). Mozart asked Leopold to send them to him in Vienna in 1783, cf. No. 0731/25.

³¹ BD: Johann Baptist Gänsbacher (1778-1844), from 1796 in the military reserve [Landsturm]. From 1801 music studies with Abbé Vogler and Albrechtsberger. Later music teacher in Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Leipzig and Darmstadt.