

1215. CONSTANZE MOZART TO JOHANN ANDRÉ (?),<sup>1</sup> OFFENBACH<sup>2</sup>

[Hamburg,<sup>3</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1795]

Most highly honourable, esteemed music director!

I permit myself the honour of sending you hereby, W.B.Sir, the enclosed *avertissemens*,<sup>4</sup> from which you will see that I am venturing upon the hazardous enterprise [5] of having engraved, at my own expense, an as yet completely unknown grand *concerto*<sup>5</sup> composed by my late husband. You yourself, well-born sir, being the proprietor of such an extensive musical publishing house, know best that enterprises of this kind are very hazardous, not only because of the great costs involved, [10] but above all because of increasingly destructive reprinting. I believe I will be best able to take up position against such damaging misdeeds if I request the most famous publishers of music, in the most friendly manner, to purchase publishing rights for this work printed at my expense. I am convinced that a musical artist of understanding such as yourself, W.B.Sir,<sup>6</sup> [15] recognises and appreciates, no less than other famous musical artists have always done, the musical merits of my husband of blessed memory, and I therefore hope, W.B.Sir, that you will not reject my request, but rather attempt to support, in every way you can, the widow of a man so famous in the musical world as Mozart. [20] I therefore ask you, W.B.Sir, to be pleased to grant a favourable answer and to fix the number of copies which you would most kindly be pleased to publish. More detailed information can be supplied by Dyk's Bookshop<sup>7</sup> in Leipzig, to whom I would ask you, W.B.Sir, to turn in this matter and to send your favourable answer. In anticipation of the same, I have the honour to be [25]

with all respect,  
W.B.Sir,  
your most obedient servant  
and friend  
Constanze Mozart.

---

<sup>1</sup> BD: Johann André (1741-1799), composer, music director (from 1766), founded his music publishing business in Offenbach in 1784. After his death, the business was continued by his third son, Johann Anton (1775-1842). It was thus in the latter's first year as a publisher that the contract was concluded with Constanze (8<sup>th</sup> November, 1799) regarding the music in Mozart's estate. There is no direct evidence in the letters that Johann André knew Mozart personally, but he could have obtained the piano concertos KV 459 and 537 directly from Mozart in Frankfurt in 1790; these were published by André in 1794 (in parts) as op. 44 and 46, each described in the title as "Coronation Concerto". Otherwise, during Mozart's lifetime, André published only reprints of his works.

<sup>2</sup> BD: The addressee is deduced from the greeting and the receiver's remark, which is in keeping with later remarks by the publishing house André on Constanze's letters.

<sup>3</sup> 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). Included was also Prague, where her son Carl Thomas was staying with Franz Xaver Neimetschek and where the younger Franz Xaver Wolfgang was also temporarily accommodated. 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* ["By Mozart's Grave"] in December, 1791, and played a piano concerto by Mozart in a concert organised by Constanze in Vienna in 1794.

<sup>4</sup> BD: = advertisements. These are lost.

<sup>5</sup> BD: Piano Concerto in C KV 503, dated 4<sup>th</sup>, 1786, written for a series of Advent concerts in Trattner's Room (cf. No. 1010/44). It is not clear whether these concerts took place. After initially planning to publish it with the help of Wenzel in Prague, Constanze published it at her own expense in 1798 with a dedication to the Prince of Prussia. Constanze later sold the plates to Breitkopf & Härtel (cf. Nos. 1230/19 ff.; 1231/89-52; 1232/5 ff.).

<sup>6</sup> Constanze writes "E:W: gebor" ["Euer Wohlgeboren" ≈ "Well-Born Sir"].

<sup>7</sup> "Dykische Buchhandlung".