

1246. GEORG NIKOLAUS NISSEN¹ (AS AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE) TO
BREITKOPF & HÄRTEL,² LEIPZIG

Vienna/ To / Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel. / Leipzig

Vienna, 8th July, 1799

Frau Mozart's absence in the country,³ due to continue for some weeks, prevents me from replying today to the whole of Your Nobly Born Sirs' letter of 22nd June.⁴ [5] In the meantime, during the visit I recently paid her, she has put me in a position to give the following answer and to act accordingly.

	By post-coach I have sent you	
	1. the <i>Requiem</i> ⁵ (for ⁶ 10 copies and) _____	25 fl.
	2. the <i>canons</i> and the <i>quartet</i> . ⁷ She will not part with this for	
[10]	anything other than 7 ducats _____	31.30 ^{kr}
	3. the <i>glass-harmonica quintet</i> ⁸ <i>ditto</i> _____	31.30
	4. No. 28 of the 10 th packet, ⁹ if you cannot show	
	where it was printed. She has no information	
	on this. Also included is the beginning of	
[15]	another <i>sonata</i> _____	9.–
	and 5. No. 3 of the second packet ¹⁰ to the same	
	conditions _____	9.–

		106 fl.

She thanks you for the revision of the 2 catalogues, and wishes you had taken over the task for the 3rd.¹¹ [20]

You had requested No. 1 of the second packet,¹² but it was not properly classified and belongs to a different workgroup.

You had furthermore requested No. 24 of the 10th packet,¹³ and in your letter you wrote: We cannot find out where it was printed, but the theme is well-known and the piece is old. [25] You also make this remark in your subsequent notes: Very old and probably also printed. But here your reviser erred, as is only human, for it is the – *harmonica quintet*, as it is

¹ BD: 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: Founded as "Breitkopf" in 1719. On 1st November, 1795, Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf concluded a contract of partnership with Gottfried Christoph Härtel (1763-1827). This was followed in 1796 by a secret contract of sale in which the entire Breitkopf business was made over to Gottfried Christoph Härtel. The latter was also declared universal heir by Breitkopf shortly before his death in 1800.

³ BD: Probably spa treatment again at Baden near Vienna.

⁴ BD: No. 1245a (lost).

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 1245/88-70. The publishers had obviously agreed.

⁶ BD: Word unclear.

⁷ BD: 13, as mentioned in No. 1270/23; cf. No. 1245/33-36. The quartet is KV App. 5 (517a). Cf. note on No. 1243/32-33.

⁸ BD: KV 617. On 15th June, 1799, Constanze was still asking for 12 ducats (= 54 florins).

⁹ BD: Not identified.

¹⁰ BD: Not identified.

¹¹ BD: The three thematic catalogues sent to the publishers on 15th June, 1799. Cf. No. 1245/31.

¹² BD: Not identified.

¹³ BD: The glass-harmonica quintet.

titled even in Mozart's catalogue, which you sent back on 22nd June, and it was composed on 23rd May, 1791, that is, in the last year of his life, [30] and far from being old. It has only been performed once, and no-one has it in their possession. Now, as a major misunderstanding has obviously occurred here, the same could also be the case with No. 4. (28) and No. 5. (3) above, although I have no thoughts of sending the latter to you.

If it meets with your approval, [35] I will send you, at your least nod, a complete thematic catalogue of all *sonatas* composed by Mozart after 1784, which will put you in a position to form a firm judgement regarding the completeness of your collection. My client makes no profit from this; the suggestion is made purely out of consideration for you.

[40] If you would send me a catalogue of the Mozart *clavier concertos* which you will probably be dealing with soon, and at the same time accept the condition that those which have been composed since the beginning of 1784 will be purchased by yourselves, you are at liberty to do so and I can then inform you of the additional ones I have, which I cannot do otherwise. [45] I shall have the older ones evaluated by a knowledgeable person¹⁴ and once again give you a report on this. At the end of this negotiation you will also receive a complete thematic catalogue extracted from his own manuscript.

You cannot possibly find the prices given above unfair. [50] From 12 ducats¹⁵ you immediately deduct 6, and Frau M. puts only one on top of that.

I furthermore wish to tell you that you will find one *canon* more than you were told about, namely *Alleluja*,¹⁶ so we are missing only one single *canon* from the original thematic catalogue, namely *Nasco*.¹⁷ You have no doubt had the beautiful, well-known *canon* In the – – (grave, as one sings for decency) it is dark etc.¹⁸ for a long time now: [55] it must have been composed before 1784. We do not have it. As far as songs are concerned, she knows of nothing more, other than the one that begins: Meine weise Mutter spricht: Küssen, Küssen, Kind, ist Sünde.¹⁹ But it must have been composed before 1784 and is very beautiful; we do not have it. I have been assured that *Bey dem Auszug ins Feld*²⁰ exists here, [60] but my enquiries have remained fruitless. The same is true with *Wer unter eines Mädchens hand etc.*,²¹ which must also be older than 1784. Perhaps it too was composed by Andre.

Why have you not sent back the catalogue of canons like the others? She asked to have all catalogues returned, and she is still waiting for that one. [65] And allow me one more question: why have you kept the incomplete song *Mi lagnerò*,²² since, as you say, you do not wish to use it?

For my part, I am very appreciative of the flattering words you saw fit to express regarding my person, and I reserve for myself the privilege of replying on a future occasion. [70]

Now I will proceed to the invoice:

You owed Frau M.	_____	6 fl. 23. ^{kr}
for the 5 <i>clavier concertos</i> sold ²³	_____	13. 20.
the above	_____	106. –

¹⁴ BD: Abbé Maximilian Stadler, baptised Johann Karl Dominik Stadler (1748-1833), monk, priest, abbot. From 1796 entirely dedicated to music.

¹⁵ BD: = 54 florins.

¹⁶ BD: KV 553, a 4-part canon based on a Gregorian chant; cf. No. 1083/9.

¹⁷ BD: "*Nascoso è il mio sol*", KV 557, cf. No. 1083/13.

¹⁸ BD: "*Beym Arsch ists finster*" ["It is dark around the arse"], KV App. 6 (441b; KV⁶: App. C 9.03).

¹⁹ BD: "My wise mother says kissing, kissing, child, is sin". KV⁶: App. C 8.16. There is no other mention of this song anywhere.

²⁰ BD: KV 552; cf. note on No. 1083/5 and note on No. 1243/23.

²¹ BD: KV 506. Appeared

²² BD: The nocturno "*Mi lagnerò tacendo*" for two sopranos and bass accompanied by 2 clarinets and basset horn, KV 437; cf. No. 1236/57. Constanze probably considered it incomplete because the instrumental parts were included with the trios KV 436, 438, 439.

²³ BD: Presumably five copies of KV 503, costing 2 florins 40 kreuzers each.

[75]	Frau M.'s letter of 15 th June _____	1.	36.
	Your packet of 5 th June _____	1.	1.
	Your letter of 22 nd June _____	1.	36.
	The packet with the <i>Requiem</i> etc. _____	1.	19.–
	This letter _____	–	12

[80] 131 f. 27^{kr}

for which Frau Mozart expects a payment order as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect,

Your Nobly Born Sirs'

obedient servant,

[85] The authorised representative.²⁴

²⁴ BD: Nissen is still protecting his anonymity.