

The Breitkopf and Härtel score for an aria by Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Score: Aria “In te spero, o sposo amato” , K. 440. W. A. *Mozarts sämtliche Werke. Kritisch durchgesehene Gesamtausgabe*. Ser.I–XXIV and Revisionsbericht in 8 parts. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1876–1905.

From his earliest years as a child prodigy to his death at the age of 35, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91) was a legendary figure. One of the most striking examples of artistic genius in human history, Mozart’s extraordinary musical gifts, expertly cultivated by his musician father, achieved an unparalleled fullness of expression in works that combine depth and fluidity with a seemingly effortless grace.

This aria was probably written in April or May of 1782. The text is from the opera *Demofonte* by Metastasio (Act I, Scene 2), and Mozart wrote it before his August 4 wedding that same year to Constanze Weber. In 1799, after Mozart’s death, she offered this attractive manuscript to Breitkopf and Härtel for publication.

This Breitkopf and Härtel score is intended to compare with the autograph manuscript in this collection. Although the legendary music publishers were not the first to publish Mozart’s music, they succeeded between 1876 and 1906 to make available the entirety of the Mozart canon.

Breitkopf and Härtel, the oldest music publishing house, began as book publishers in 1719 under the guidance of its founder Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf. In 1736 it published *Schemellis Gesangbuch*, which included Bach chorales. In the 1750s Johann Breitkopf, designer of the Breitkopf Fraktur typeface, improved methods of printing music with movable type. From 1762–87 Breitkopf published several thematic catalogs (“Thematische Verzeichnisse”) that documented the company’s music works and included information about Haydn and the early classical period as well as including music incipits.

In 1795 Gottfried Christoph Härtel took over the company and in 1807 began to manufacture pianos — an endeavor that lasted until 1870 — introducing high-quality instruments favored by composers Franz Liszt and Clara Schumann. In 1809 Breitkopf and Härtel released Beethoven's first editions from Op. 67 (Symphony No. 5) to Op. 89 (Mass in C). Beginning in 1830 the company began lifelong collaborations with Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, and Brahms.

The last decades of the nineteenth century saw the publication of an enormous number of music works, such as the Köchel catalogue (1862) containing all of Mozart's work in chronological order and the introduction of "Volksausgabe Breitkopf & Härtel," the first editorial series to contain all of the important concert works of the past. Throughout the twentieth century Breitkopf and Härtel continued as music publishers, despite the difficulties of both world wars. Today they continue their publishing operations with offerings online.

This Breitkopf and Härtel score is in the Music Division of the Library of Congress.

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