

THE DISCOVERY OF THE YEAR

– UNKNOWN MOZART-AUTOGRAPH IN THE MUSIC COLLECTION –



The Music Collection of the NSZL is considered an important station by the international Mozart-research for decades: at the end of the 1970's the national library bought a previously unknown manuscript of a prelude-fragment by the composer (afterwards this was included in the Köchel-record with the number 269c). Two decades later, the library added to its collection a very early copy of the Magic Flute, in addition, made for the Theater auf der Wieden, where the premier took place. But the discovery of last summer became even more famous. The director of the Music Collection (the writer of these lines), identified between the uncataloged fragments of the collection an autograph fragment of Mozart's most famous composition for the piano, the sonata in A major (K. 331). The public could look at the manuscript during Night of the Researcher, on September 26, 2014, in the reception hall of the national library. With this occasion, Zoltán Kocsis performed the complete sonata on a fortepiano copy.



Zoltán Kocsis performs the complete sonata on a contemporary copy of a fortepiano

The newly discovered bi-folio contains four pages from the Mozart autograph, which was nine pages long originally. It contains the segment from the 3. variation of the prelude of the sonata to the 10. beat of the Trio-section of the 2. movement. Thus, it is obvious that the newly discovered fragment was slipped into another bi-folio. The beginning of the prelude (the theme and the first two variations) was on the first two pages of the bi-folio; on the third and fourth pages was the continuation of the recently discovered fragment: the end of the Trio from the 2. movement, as well as the beginning of the famous alla turca finale (in our country it is known mostly as the „Turkish March”). Since the complete sonata did not fit on the eight pages prepared by Mozart, the composer noted the last beats of the finale on a separate page – this well-known fragment is kept in the Mozarteum in Salzburg, since 1991. Most probably the recently-discovered bi-folio, the fragment from Salzburg and the still latent „external” bi-folio got separated already in Mozart's life. Since there is not any kind of sign regarding the provenience of the source found in the Music Collection, except for the stamp of the NSZL, the path of the fragment to the national library has yet to be cleared.

As far as the musical content goes, the newly identified four manuscript pages contain very few differences compared to the first edition of the sonata, published in 1784, in Vienna. But exactly for this reason, the analyzers of the sonata can draw important conclusions from them. The autograph reinforces those fragments of the first edition, which were arbitrarily „corrected” by previous score-publications. Researchers and performers will be able to decide for themselves soon which solution they choose based on the knowledge of the most authentic sources, since the NSZL will post on the Internet the digital pictures of the autograph, and it will create a facsimile edition of the manuscript together with the Stiftung Mozarteum Salzburg.

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