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Hans Georg Nägeli as Publisher and Bookseller of Piano Music

1. Introduction Hans Georg Nägeli is best known to Beethoven scholars for having published the first edition of the three sonatas Op. 31 in his series “Répertoire des clavicinistes”. In fact, he is mostly remembered for the editions’ many errors as there had been no proofreading. The most unfortunate incident happened on the final page of the first movement of Op. 31/1, where Nägeli felt the need to add four spurious bars. His aim was to provide a tonic response to the unanswered dominant question immediately preceding; in other words, he was correcting a reputed mistake by Beethoven.¹ When Ferdinand Ries played the sonata from the freshly printed edition, Beethoven reportedly reacted with the memorable words: “Damn it, where is that written?”²

Martin Staehelin reproduced a copy from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (D-Mbs 4 Mus.pr. 16070) where the four measures are cancelled.³ Still, many copies of the Nägeli edition do not contain the pen strokes (e. g., the copies in A-WN, CH-ZZ, D-BNba). These uncorrected copies must have been part of the very first issue, or else we should have to conclude that the correction was not added systematically by the publisher. In at least one copy of a far less famous composition, a capriccio by Bonifacio Asioli printed in 1803, there is also one crossed-out measure (see Figure 1). Notice that this copy comes from the publishing firm’s own archive. Possibly a similar incident had happened?

As a publisher, Nägeli quite often discussed compositional issues with the authors he was corresponding with. He suggested improvements to or set precise requirements for Václav Tomášek, Christoph Ernst Friedrich Weyse and Carl Czerny for works that he eventually published, and he downright refused to publish works by E. T. A. Hoffmann, though the composer repeatedly submitted them.⁴ In replying by proxy to a Leipzig bookseller, Nägeli made a brief sketch of himself as a music publisher as early as 1794:

- 1 The rationale for the correction was pointed out by Martin Staehelin: Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven. *Der Zürcher Musiker, Musikverleger und Musikschriftsteller in seinen Beziehungen zu dem grossen Komponisten*, Zurich 1982, p. 29.
- 2 “Wo steht das, zum Teufel?” The whole episode is described in Franz Gerhard Wegeler/Ferdinand Ries: *Biographische Notizen über Ludwig van Beethoven*, Koblenz 1838, pp. 88 f.
- 3 Staehelin: Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven, p. 28.
- 4 Max Ernst Unger: *Vom Musikverleger H. G. Nägeli*, in: *Schweizerische Musikzeitung* 63 (1923), pp. 193 f., 209 f., 225 f., here pp. 225 f.; Staehelin: Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven, pp. 28 f.



FIGURE 1 Bonifacio Asioli: *Capriccio per il Piano Forte Op. 1*, Zürich: Hans Georg Nägeli [1803], p. 6. CH-Zsta VII.300:1 Schachtel 8 Mappe 11

“Tell him I’m about to produce myself as a composer; I’m strict with myself and shall never publish something bad; I’m corresponding with the best composers; I only accept masterpieces in my publishing house”.⁵

This is a quite remarkable display of self-consciousness for a 21-year old from the Swiss province. Nägeli, in a word, had a mission: he saw himself as more than a “Notenkrämer” – a mere merchant – and placed the progress of art above his monetary advantage.⁶ Contemporaries thought the same, e. g., the German journalist Carl Friedrich Cramer, who met him in Paris early in 1807:

- 5 “Sag ihm ich sey im Begriff als Componist aufzutreten; ich sey streng gegen mich selbst und werde nie etwas schlechtes herausgeben; ich stehe mit den besten Componisten in Verbindung; ich übernehme nur Meisterstücke in meinen Verlag”. Nägeli to Johann Jakob Horner in Leipzig, Zurich, 10 December 1794, CH-ZZ Ms M 8.39. All quotations from Nägeli’s correspondence preserve the original spelling and punctuation, even if it does not respect present-day rules. English translations are mine unless otherwise stated.
- 6 Miriam Roner quotes several letters in which Nägeli uses this disparaging term, see Miriam Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis. Hans Georg Nägelis Theorie der Musik*, Stuttgart 2020 (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft, Vol. 84), pp. 148f.

“It was a vivid pleasure to meet you personally; at last I met a man who does not only as a simple merchant practice usury on music; [...] but one who is himself an artist and possesses judgement and discernment in his head and heart; and belongs to the [...] knowledgeable judges and critics.”⁷

It was his sense of a calling in the service of art that gave him the confidence to intervene in the work of even the most reputed masters of his time.

The work and the relevance of Hans Georg Nägeli have recently received renewed attention – starting with the re-ordering of his *Nachlass* in the University of Zurich library in 2005 –, and the 250th anniversary of his birth in 2023 has stimulated further research.⁸ In the present article I will briefly introduce Nägeli, examine his catalogues as a bookseller and his series of publications dedicated to the piano repertoire, and conclude by pointing out the ‘Swissness’ of Nägeli’s endeavours.

2. Nägeli’s multiple talents Nägeli was a quite exceptional person and pursued vastly different, though interrelated, activities.⁹ He opened a lending library; published music; composed (mostly vocal and choral music); was a music pedagogue and a music critic; wrote on the aesthetics of music; and, finally, was also a politician in his later years. He grew up as a pastor’s son in Wetzikon, a town in canton Zurich. Aged 17 he moved to Zurich and the next year opened a lending music library in Augustinergasse No. 24. In the 1790s he began composing, at first lieder, later also instrumental and choral music. In his thirties he developed a keen interest in pedagogy. In 1805 he founded the Zürcherisches Sing-Institut, an amateur mixed choir after the model of the Berliner Sing-Akademie.¹⁰ From 1808 he composed more and more, especially for choir, here again

- 7 “Nicht ohne lebhaftes Vergnügen habe ich Ihre persönliche Bekanntschaft gemacht; weil an Ihnen mir endlich ein Mann begegnet ist, der nicht wie ein bloß gewöhnlicher Crämer mit Musik Wucher treibt; [...] sondern einer, der in dem Gegenstand seines Gewerbes selbst Künstler und in dieser Kunst Urtheil und Unterscheidung in seinem Kopf und Herzen besitzt; und zu den kenntnisvollen [...] Richtern und Kritikern gehört.” [Carl Friedrich] Cramer to Nägeli, Paris, 14 January 1807, CH-ZZ Ms Car. xv 186.9.
- 8 See Katharina Müller: *Nachlassverzeichnis Hans Georg Nägeli (1773–1836)*, Zurich 2005; Thomas Kabisch: *Hans Georg Nägelis Theorie instrumentaler Virtuosität*, in: *Schweizer Jahrbuch Für Musikwissenschaft* 34/35 (2014), pp. 109–145; Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*. I would like to thank Miriam Roner for sharing with me an early version of her seminal Nägeli book. The results of Martin Staehelin’s life-long study of Nägeli could unfortunately not yet be consulted for the present article. See Martin Staehelin: *Hans Georg Nägeli (1773–1836). Einsichten in Leben und Werk*, Basel 2023.
- 9 For his biography see the summary table in Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 362–371, and Andrea Schmid: *Hans Georg Nägeli. Komponist, Verleger, Musikmensch*, Wetzikon 2021. On his political commitment see Louis Delpech: *Revolution und Geschichte. Hans Georg Nägeli und die demokratische Muse*, Winterthur 2023 (*Neujahrsblatt der Allgemeinen Musikgesellschaft Zürich*, Vol. 207).
- 10 Staehelin: *Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven*, pp. 12 f.; Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 163–214.

following the much-admired Carl Friedrich Zelter, a collection of whose lieder he later published.¹¹ These endeavours are connected with his pedagogical goals. In 1810 he published the *Gesangbildungslehre nach Pestalozzischen Grundsätzen* together with Michael Traugott Pfeiffer (as the first volume of his *Vollständige und ausführliche Gesangschule*).¹²

For my present scope, it is important to stress the interest that Nägeli showed from the very start of his career in the aesthetic value of instrumental music. Already in 1795, he had written to his friend Johann Jakob Horner:

“You say, music without poetry is like a hieroglyph, an often very nice script but whose meaning we seldom guess. Certainly; but this is not about guessing anything, and in my eyes instrumental music has no lesser value because it cannot be reduced to concepts or elevated to science as poetry can be.”¹³

In a manuscript dating from 1796–1799, possibly in preparation for a lecture, to which the title “Über die Musik” was later added, he attempted writing down his already astonishingly mature thoughts, but apparently he felt they were not yet ready for publication.¹⁴ A few years later, in 1799, he wrote to Philipp Albert Stapfer, who at the time, as Minister for Science and Arts of the revolutionary Helvetic Republic, was planning a reform of education and had founded a “Bureau für Nationalkultur”:

“I have a full-fledged theory, and just need exercise in writing to argue for the essence and worth of music as art in itself (of instrumental music, which many only admire but most people disregard as something confusing), to prove its suitability for aesthetic education, as a versatile occupation and for development of strength, for the simultaneous increase of the feeling for life and intellectual activity and thus to win several and more participating followers among the class of philosophers (especially educators).”¹⁵

- 11 Carl Friedrich Zelter: *Neue Liedersammlung*, Zurich 1821. Many Nägeli editions are available online on the e-rara platform for digitised rare books, www.e-rara.ch (all links last consulted in March 2022).
- 12 Michael Traugott Pfeiffer/Hans Georg Nägeli: *Vollständige und ausführliche Gesangschule*, Zurich 1810.
- 13 “Du sagst Musik ohne Poesie sei eine Hieroglyph, eine Schrift oft mit schönen zügen, deren Inhalt man aber selten errathe. Freylich; aber es ist hier gar nicht ums errathen zu thun, und die Instrumentalmusik hat des wegen in meinen Augen keinen geringren Werth, wann sie sich schon nicht auf begriffe zurückführen, od[er] zur Wißenschaft erheben läßt wie die Poesie.” Nägeli to Johann Jakob Horner, Zurich, 21 February 1795, copy by Nägeli’s son Hermann, CH-zz Ms M 8.39/8.
- 14 CH-zz Ms Car xv 203,2 (fair copy) and Ms Car xv 203,8 (draft); see Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 350–353.
- 15 “Ich bin mit meiner Theorie im Reinen, bedarf nur noch mehrerer Sprachkenntniss u. Sprachfertigkeit, um als Schriftsteller das Wesen u. den Werth der Musik als für sich bestehende Kunst (der Instrumental-Musik, die so Viele bloss anstaunen und die Meisten als etwas Verworrenes u. Verwirrendes geringschätzen) zu begründen u. darzuthun, ihre Tauglichkeit zur aesthetischen Bildung, zu vielseitiger Beschäftigung u. Entwicklung der Kräfte, zur gleichzeitigen Erhöhung des Lebensgefühls u. der Geistesthätigkeit zu beweisen und ihr so auch unter der Klasse der Philosophen (besonders der Erzieher) mehrere u. theilnehmendere Anhänger zu gewinnen.” Nägeli to Philipp Albert Stapfer, Zurich, 21 February 1799, copy by Hermann Nägeli, CH-zz Ms Car xv 200,30c. On this letter see also Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, p. 131.

In a nutshell, this was a programme for not a small part of his later life.

The first time Nägeli formulated his theories on instrumental music for the public was in a speech held at the second meeting of the Schweizerische Musikgesellschaft, a society of amateur performers founded in 1808. The speech, published in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* in 1811, contained, amongst other topics, a plaidoyer in favour of piano virtuosity.¹⁶ In 1823/1824 he organised a conference tour in several South German cities. His ultimate goal was to settle down in Frankfurt, but this did not succeed.¹⁷ In 1826, though, he published in book form his *Vorlesungen über Musik mit Berücksichtigung der Dilettanten* with the publisher Cotta in Stuttgart.¹⁸ Here he finally formulated extensively his ideas on instrumental music, on which he had been ruminating for thirty years. His concept of the intrinsic value of instrumental music, in particular of piano sonatas, and the positive effect of keyboard virtuosity in stimulating competition amongst composers for the progress of musical art is very much relevant to his activities as bookseller and publisher.

3. The catalogues of Nägeli's lending library One way to contextualise Nägeli's appreciation of Beethoven is to look at the catalogues of his lending library. He chose the titles from the catalogues of his correspondents in Germany, Austria and France; though he did not keep everything in stock in his shop in Zurich (which moved in 1801 from the Augustinergasse to the Obern Hirschengraben No. 20 and in 1807 to the Oberdorfstrasse No. 5),¹⁹ he was certainly able to provide his customers with all the titles listed. The fact that he chose from a panoply of different catalogues implies that the listed titles reflect in a certain measure his personal inclinations.

Several preserved sources give an idea of his assortment in the period of his firm's most thriving activities, from 1791 until 1807. There are printed catalogues starting in

- 16 Hans Georg Nägeli: Anrede an die Schweizerische Musikgesellschaft bey Eröffnung ihrer Sitzung in Schafhausen [sic] den 21. August 1811, in: *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 13 (1811), cols. 655–664, 665–673, 685–692; see also Kabisch: Hans Georg Nägelis Theorie instrumentaler Virtuosität. On the Schweizerische Musikgesellschaft see Arnold Niggli: *Die Schweizerische Musikgesellschaft. Eine musik- und kulturgeschichtliche Studie*, Zurich 1886 and Claudio Bacciagaluppi: *Die Schweizerische Musikgesellschaft (1808–91). Ausstrahlung, Repertoire, soziale und politische Implikationen*, in: *Schweizer Chorleben seit 1800. Musik, Gesellschaft, Politik und nationale Identität im Wechselspiel = Vie chorale suisse depuis 1800. Musique, société, politique et identité nationale en interaction*, ed. by Caiti Hauck and Cristina Urchueguía, Bern, forthcoming.
- 17 Rudolf Hunziker: Hans Georg Nägeli. Einige Beiträge zu seiner Biographie, in: *Schweizerische Musikzeitung und Sängerbblatt* 76 (1936), pp. 601–640, here pp. 633 f.; Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 257 f.
- 18 Hans Georg Nägeli: *Vorlesungen über Musik mit Berücksichtigung der Dilettanten*, Stuttgart 1826, Reprint, with a foreword by Martin Staehelin, Darmstadt 1983.
- 19 Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 363 f.

1792 with yearly updates preserved until 1805 and numerous, though irregular announcements in the Zurich official newspapers.²⁰ While the printed catalogues only list music prints, in the Nägeli Nachlass in the University of Zurich library, there is also one catalogue of manuscripts that can be dated to around 1804–1806, judging from the repertoire.²¹ It does not list (understandably) any works by Beethoven but contains mainly titles of vocal sacred music by Johann Sebastian Bach, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel and Gottfried August Homilius, and music of Milanese composers such as Giovanni Andrea Fioroni, Bonifacio Asioli and Francesco Pollini, among others.

TABLE 1 Beethoven editions in Nägeli's catalogues, 1792–1805

1794	WoO 40, WoO 66
1795	WoO 67
1796	Op. 1
1797	Op. 2
1798	[piano variations]
1799	Op. 9, Op. 10, Op. 46
1800	Op. 12, [piano variations]
1801	Op. 6, Op. 13, Op. 14, Op. 15, Op. 17, Op. 18
1802	Op. 17 [other edition], Op. 19, Op. 21, Op. 22, Op. 23, Op. 25, Op. 26, Op. 27/1–2, WoO 71, WoO 73, [string quartet]
1803	Op. 12/2 [arrangement], Op. 20 [arrangement], Op. 28, Op. 29, Op. 29 [arrangement], Op. 30, Op. 31/1–2, Op. 33, Op. 34, Op. 51
1804	Op. 35, Op. 36, Op. 39, Op. 41, Op. 42, Op. 43 [Hoffmeister & Kühnel full score], Op. 43 [Hoffmeister & Kühnel piano score], Op. 43 [selection], Op. 44, Op. 45, Op. 46 [other edition], Op. 48/1–6 [Hoffmeister & Kühnel edition], Op. 88 [Hoffmeister & Kühnel edition], WoO 14, WoO 15, WoO 78, WoO 123, WoO 129
1805	Op. 13 & Op. 31/3 [Nägeli edition], Op. 37, Op. 38, Op. 49, WoO 15 [unidentified edition], WoO 55, WoO 64, WoO 74, WoO 79, WoO 82

In Nägeli's printed catalogue and its yearly updates, we find no fewer than 70 Beethoven titles (see Table 1). Most of them are first editions;²² reprints are probably mostly Leipzig

²⁰ The catalogue and supplements, containing the new publications from the corresponding year, are preserved in A-wgm 567/8. Advertisements are published from 1792 in the *Donnstags-Blatt* (known as the *Zürcherisches Wochenblatt* from 1801). The data extracted by the author from the catalogue and supplements for the following considerations is accessible on the Zenodo repository, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4581182>.

²¹ "Verzeichnis | bey Hans Georg Nägeli Musikalien-Handlung vorfindlicher | musikalischer Manuscripte", manuscript, CH-zz Ms. Car xv 208:1. The Bach titles in the catalogue are instrumental to its dating, see Karen Lehmann: Zur Provenienz der Bach-Kantatensammlung Hans Georg Nägelis. Dokumente aus dem Briefkopierbuch 1804/06 des Verlages Hoffmeister und Kühnel in Leipzig, in: Johann Sebastian Bach. *Weltbild, Menschenbild, Notenbild, Klangbild*, ed. by Armin Schneiderheinze and Winfried Hoffmann, Leipzig 1988, pp. 403–409, and Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, p. 70 n. 73.

editions, considering the close commercial relations Nägeli had with Hoffmeister & Kühnel and with Breitkopf.

Nägeli's catalogue had also a section for musicians' portraits. The supplement for 1802 lists a Beethoven portrait, quite certainly Hoffmeister's edition of the portrait first published in 1801 by Cappi in Vienna.²³ Nägeli also traded in musical instruments, amongst others with Howard [Hauert] in Bern, Pleyel in Paris and also later with Dieu-donné & Schiedmayer in Stuttgart.²⁴

TABLE 2 Authors and number of editions of piano sonatas from Nägeli's catalogues, 1792–1805

14 editions: 1 author

Muzio Clementi

12 editions: 1 author

Johann Baptist Cramer

10 editions: 2 authors

Ludwig van Beethoven, Daniel Steibelt

7 editions: 1 author

Jan Ladislav Dussek

6 editions: 4 authors

Giacomo Gotifredo Ferrari, Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Joseph Wölfl

4 editions: 6 authors

Gottlob Bachmann, Johann Wilhelm Hässler, Leopold Koželuh, Franz Lauska, August Eberhard Müller, Wilhelm Friedrich Riem

3 editions: 9 authors

Louis Adam, Adrien Boieldieu, Charles-François Dumonchau, Emanuel Aloys Förster, Friedrich Joseph Kirmair, Franz Xaver Kleinheinz, Charles Pausewang, Anton Reicha, Maximilian Stadler

2 editions: 20 authors

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Johann David Brüning, Franz Danzi, Victor Dourlen, Friedrich Ebers, Christoph August Gabler, Wenzel Robert Gallenberg, Josef Gelinek, Johann David Hermann, Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Friedrich Kersten, Johann Michael Lanz, Ignace Pleyel, Johann Franz Xaver Sterkel, Johann Baptist Vanhal, Bernard Viguerie, Franz Weiss, Ernst Wilhelm Wolf, Paul Wranitzky

²² In Table 1, reprints and unidentified editions are indicated by additions in square brackets.

²³ See the information accompanying the digitisation of the copy in D-BB B 23, www.beethoven.de/de/media/view/5005287131971584/scan/0.

²⁴ For Bern and Paris, see Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 83–85; for Stuttgart, see the letter by Nägeli to Dieu-donné & Schiedmayer, Zurich, 24 July 1820, CH-Zsta VII.300:1 Schachtel 1 Mapped 1.

1 edition: 46 authors

Charles-Simon Catel, Friedrich Dalberg, Françoise Elizabeth Desfossez, Franz Destouches, Anton Eberl, Carl Friedrich Eckhard, Carl Fasch, John Field, Eucharius Florschütz, Anton Fodor, Friedrich Christoph Gestewitz, Friedrich Wilhelm Haack, François-Joseph Herold, Hyacinthe Jadin, Louis Jadin, Gotthard Wilhelm Kahl, Friedrich August Kanne, Johann Christian Kittel, Justin Heinrich Knecht, Nikolaus von Krufft, Johann Georg Lämmerhirt, Christian Ignatius Latrobe, Franciszek Lessel, Johann Georg Lickl, Anton Liste, Joseph Ludwig Lodi, Johann Gallus Mederitsch, Hélène-Antoinette-Marie de Montgérout, Wilhelm Pohl, Francesco Pollini, Henri-Joseph Rigel, Jeremias Rosenmüller, Antonio Rosetti, Johann Caspar Rüttinger, Johann Schadeck, Giacinto Schiatti, Schnyder [?], Gottlob Wilhelm Scholz, Joseph [?] Schubert, Schwarz [?], Johann Spech, Jean-François Tapray, Daniel Gottlob Türk, Volkert [?], Philipp Wschejansky, Georg Carl Zulehner

Let us now focus on the sonata genre (which Nägeli considered the highest genre of instrumental music)²⁵ and compare the number of Beethoven sonata editions in Nägeli's catalogues with those of other composers (Table 2). The ranking certainly reflects the productivity and general success of the respective authors, but again in a certain degree also a personal choice of repertoire. In fact, Nägeli had written to Johann André in 1795:

“The difficult solos by Clementi and Cramer are not profitable, but I am personally very interested; so, I would be very grateful if you could send me (if not engraved, handwritten) single copies with the next post carriage. Please send me the incipits of Dussek's works.”

And later the same year: “I already have the complete works of Haydn, Clementi, Cramer, Ferrari and Dussek”.²⁶

4. “Ich habe ein Projekt mit französischen Musikalien” Nägeli's printed catalogues were intended for his local public in Switzerland and southern Germany. But he also traded with other booksellers and publishers, specialising in a quite promising branch: trade, often en gros – that is, with more than 50 copies²⁷ – between France and Germany. From

25 Nägeli: *Vorlesungen über Musik*, pp. 176 f.

26 “Die schweren Solo's von Clementi u. Kramer sind nicht com[m]erciabel; sie interessieren mich aber sehr für mein particulier; deswegen verbinden sie mich sehr, wen[n] Sie mir durch nächsten Postwagen (wo nicht gestochen, doch geschrieben) einzelne Exemplare übersenden. Von Dusseks Werken erbitte ich mir die Themata”, Nägeli to Johann André in Offenbach, Zurich, 25 July 1795, CH-W BRH MS 124/2; “Mit den sämtlichen Werken von Haydn, Clementi, Cramer, Ferrary, Dusek bin ich schon versehen”, Nägeli to Johann André in Offenbach, Zurich, 16 September 1795, CH-W BRH MS 124/2. Though it is not the focus of this paper, Nägeli's catalogues can also be useful to trace unknown music editions, such as the six Sonatas “dans le Style d'Ekard, Haydn, Clementi, Cramer, Steibelt & Mozart” by Antonio Rosetti, the three Sonatas Op. 3 by [Joseph?] Schubert, or the three Sonatas Op. 1 by Françoise Elizabeth Desfossez, mentioned in the 1792, 1796, and 1797 catalogues, respectively.

27 “Wenn nehmlich der Handel ins Grosse getrieben, d. h. wenn von dem nehmlichen werk 50–100 Ex. verkauft werden könnten”; Nägeli to Johann Kaspar Horner in London, Zurich, 14 August 1802, CH-ZZ Ms Car. 200.36b (copy by Hermann Nägeli).

Zurich, Nägeli announces to his friend Johann Jakob Horner on 25 March 1795 that he has “a project with French music”.²⁸ Starting at the latest in 1793, he had been selling Parisian prints to German publishers/booksellers: to Breitkopf (by 1793) and Hoffmeister & Kühnel (by 1801) in Leipzig, to Hoffmeister (by 1794), Artaria (by 1795) and the Industrie Comptoir (by 1802) in Vienna, to Falter in Munich (by 1794), and to Fischer in Landshut/Silesia (by 1799).²⁹ As for his contacts in Paris, he wrote on 24 January 1795 to Bernard Viguerie that he already corresponded regularly with the Institut national de musique and with the publishing firms Bailleux, Boyer, Imbault, Naderman and Sieber.³⁰

As a bookseller he conducted a life-long battle against reprints of pirated originals – quite logically so, since his plan was to sell original Parisian prints in Germany and (to a lesser extent) vice versa. He was aware of this problem already in 1794, when he wrote to the Institut national that “it is necessary to always send me a large number of copies of each novelty at a time, because there are publishers in Germany who counterfeit French novelties”.³¹ In youthful self-assurance he wrote to Clementi the same year that “I [...] am so critical to [the music publishers’] enterprise that none dare pirate my work for fear of jeopardising our relationship.”³² This assumption was to prove itself unfortunately untrue: in 1828, he still reproached several German publishers for having published pirated reprints of his own editions of works by Wölfl, Tomášek, Beethoven and himself.³³

- 28 “Wen[n] du auf Weimar kom[m]st, so suche mit dem Redakteur des Mode Journal Bertuch Bekanntschaft zu machen, ich habe ein Projekt mit französischen Musikalien, wobei mir dieser Bertuch ganz vortrefflich an die Hand gehen kön[n]te”. Nägeli to Johann Jakob Horner, Zurich, 25 March 1795, CH-zz Ms M 8.39.
- 29 Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, p. 64.
- 30 Nägeli to Bernard Viguerie in Paris, Zurich, 24 January 1795, CH-zz Ms Car xv 200,17 (copy by Hermann Nägeli).
- 31 “Il est necessaire de m’envoyer toujours de chaque nouveauté un grand nombre d’exemplaires à la fois, car il y a des éditeurs en Allemagne qui contrefont les nouveautés françaises”. Nägeli to the Institut national in Paris, Zurich, 29 November 1794, CH-zz Ms Car xv 199,3a (copy by Hermann Nägeli). See also Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 65 f. For a discussion of pirate reprints and reprints by permission in connection with Beethoven see Patricia Stroh: *Evolution of an Edition. The Case of Beethoven’s Opus 2 Part 2. Partners and Pirates, Correction and Corruption. The Reprint Publishers and Their Editions from 1798 to 1826*, in: *Notes* 60 (2003), pp. 46–129.
- 32 “Ich [...] bin [den Musikverlegern] so wichtig, dass keiner sich unterstehen darf, mir ein Werk nachzudrucken, weil es das Mittel wäre, sich mit mir zu entzweyen.” Nägeli to Clementi in London, Zurich, 19 November 1794, CH-zz Ms Car xv 199,2a. See *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi*, ed. by David Rowland, Bologna 2010 (*Opera omnia*, Vol. 14), p. 22; the English translation is on pp. 22 f.
- 33 “Wollen Sie nicht allen Verlegern, denen Sie Schutz Ihres Eigenthums zumuthen, die Reciprocität anbieten, die ich wirklich von Ihnen fordern muß, indem mir vormals, als angehendem Verleger

When he expanded the scope of his firm and planned his first publication projects, not having the necessary infrastructure, he had to look for an engraver and a printer. His first two editions were engraved in Zurich. He started collaborating with a certain J. H. Walder, who in the 1780s and 1790s engraved a handful of music prints from Zurich and Winterthur. In 1793 Walder engraved for Nägeli a first set of sonatas by his teacher, Johann David Brüning. Brüning's Op. 2 was prepared for Nägeli by Jacob Joseph Clausner, an engraver from nearby Zug.³⁴ Brüning's Op. 3 was instead printed in Paris by Imbault thanks to Nägeli's mediation, and – according to himself in a letter to Clementi – at his own expense.³⁵ For his further publications in the 1790s, vocal music by himself and by Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen, he moved to Wilhelm Haas in Basel, who used typography.³⁶ But he was quite unhappy with Haas:

“As much pressure I may make on that confounded Haas, I couldn't even get him to tell me when he can finish the work [on Nägeli's first lieder collection, *Lieder in Musik gesetzt von H. G. Nägeli*, Zurich 1794]. In the end I'll have to make up my mind to let the Alsatian print my lieder, as little as I like the idea. In case it should be impossible to come to an agreement with Haas, tell me please how to manage producing a reasonable and not tasteless edition with the Alsatian”.³⁷

Finally, Haas finished the work in time; the reference to an unidentified Alsatian printer, however, is interesting in that Nägeli was apparently ready to resort to a printer outside Switzerland. Between 1797 and 1800 the political troubles in Switzerland forced him to interrupt his activities as a publisher. But from 1800 on he started again, with increased intensity and with a new concept. Continuing his journey westwards, from

große alte Handlungen, kostspielige Originale von Wölfl, Tomaschek, Beethoven (von Lezterm 4 verschiedene Klavierwerke) unbarmherzig nachdruckten, und ich seither, sogar als selbstverlegender Autor, vielfach ausgeplündert worden bin”. Circular letter by Nägeli to Artaria in Vienna, Breitkopf & Härtel, Hoffmeister, Peters and Probst in Leipzig, Schlesinger in Berlin, Schott in Mainz and Simrock in Bonn, as a reply to a “pro memoria” in the *Intelligenzblatt* of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of 18 June 1828, [Zurich], 16 August 1828, CH-W BRH MS 124/5.

- 34 Walder worked for Bürkli (RISM A/I w 90), for Füssli (RISM A/I k 217) and for the composer Franz Schwaiberger (RISM A/I s 2454 and 2455) in Zurich as well as for Steiner in Winterthur (RISM A/I f 2091 and RISM A/I w 846; ww 846). Clausner had engraved a fantasia for the composer Joseph Bernhard Sidler (RISM A/I s 3396).
- 35 Nägeli to Muzio Clementi in London, Zurich, 18 January 1794, CH-zz Ms Car xv 199,29; see also *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi*, p. 19.
- 36 On Nägeli's first publications see Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 90–95.
- 37 “So sehr ich den vermaladeyten Haas pressire, so habe ich es noch nicht einmal dahin gebracht, daß er sich bestimmt erklärt hat, auf welche Zeit er mir das Werk liefern kann. Ich werde mich am Ende noch entschließen müssen, meine Lieder bey dem Elsässer drucken zu lassen, so ungerne ich es auch thue. [...] Wenn es geradezu unmöglich wäre, mit Haas zurecht zu kommen, so sag mir doch, wie ich es anstellen müßte um auch bey dem Elsässer noch eine vernünftige und nicht geschmacklose edition her auszubringen”. Nägeli to Johann Jakob Horner, Zurich, 27 September 1794, CH-zz Ms M 8.39/3.

Zurich to Basel and Alsatia, and profiting from his well-established contacts with Paris, he decided to engrave and print all his products directly in Paris. Charles-Nicolas Richomme signed a contract to engrave 120 plates per month for Nägeli – a quite impressive quantity.³⁸

5. The two piano series after 1800 In the 1790s Nägeli was a bookseller who occasionally printed some music; from 1800 to 1807 his activities as a publisher were at least as relevant to his business as his bookshop. Between 1801 and 1802 Nägeli started two very ambitious series that were intended to be complementary and reflect his idea of the development of keyboard music. Of the “Musikalische Kunstwerke im strengen Style von J. S. Bach u. andern Meistern”, seven volumes were published between 1801 and 1804 with works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Friedrich Händel and Johann Ernst Eberlin.³⁹ For the “Répertoire des Clavecinistes” he started with four reprints of works by Muzio Clementi, Johann Baptist Cramer, Jan Ladislav Dussek and Daniel Steibelt (see Table 3). No earlier edition of Steibelt’s two sonatas is actually known; nevertheless I agree with Miriam Roner’s view that Nägeli’s volume 4 is probably a reprint.⁴⁰ The first issue with original works was thus volume 5 with Beethoven’s Sonatas Op. 31 Nos. 1 and 2. With the aim of augmenting the impact of his new series, Nägeli actually waited for the fifth volume to be ready before announcing the “Répertoire” to the public. In accordance with his attitude towards pirate reprints, he pointed out:

“I find it finally necessary to note that, in order not to diminish anyone’s rights in this undertaking (with regard to the older works to be included), I have contractually acquired the publishing rights from the original publishers of such works that essentially belong here”.⁴¹

Notice that the five composers of the first five volumes are also the most represented in Nägeli’s catalogues as a bookseller (compare Table 2 and Table 3).

38 Nägeli to Kaspar Keller in Paris, Zurich, 9 October 1802, CH-zz Ms Car xv 200,40b (copy by Hermann Nägeli).

39 On Nägeli’s views of Bach’s instrumental music at the time see Bernd Sponheuer: *Das Bach-Bild Hans Georg Nägelis und die Entstehung der musikalischen Autonomieästhetik*, in: *Die Musikforschung* 39 (1986), pp. 107–123; on the series as a whole see Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 103–107.

40 See *ibid.*, p. 110.

41 “Endlich finde ich noch nöthig anzumerken, daß ich, um bei diesem Unternehmen (in Hinsicht auf die aufzunehmenden ältern Werke) niemanden an seinem Recht zu schmätern, von den Original-Verlegern solcher Werke, die wesentlich hierher gehören, das Verlagsrecht vertragsmäßig an mich gebracht habe.” Hans Georg Nägeli: *Ankündigung*, in: *Der Freimüthige* 1 (1803), *Litterarischer und artistischer Anzeiger. Beilage zu dem Freimüthigen*, Achtes Blatt, pp. 31 f., here p. 32. Also in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 5 (1803), *Intelligenzblatt* No. 23, August 1803, pp. 98 f.

TABLE 3 The titles in the “Répertoire des Clavecinistes”.

First editions are marked by an asterisk

Vol. 1	Muzio Clementi, Trois sonates, 1803
Vol. 2	Johann Baptist Cramer, Trois sonates, 1803
Vol. 3	Jan Ladislav Dussek, Trois sonates, 1803
Vol. 4	Daniel Steibelt, Deux sonates, 1803
* Vol. 5	Ludwig van Beethoven, Deux sonates [Op. 31/1-2], 1803
* Vol. 6	Friedrich Wilhelm Haack, Caprice et variations, 1803
Vol. 7	Christoph Ernst Friedrich Weyse, Allegri di bravura, 1803
* Vol. 8	Maximilian Stadler, Deux sonates suivies d'une fugue [fugue: reprint of Op. 1/3], 1803
* Vol. 9	Anton Liste, Deux sonates, 1804
Vol. 10	Muzio Clementi, Trois sonates, 1804
* Vol. 11	Ludwig van Beethoven, Deux sonates [reprint of Op. 13 and first edition of Op. 31/3], 1804
* Vol. 12	Joseph Wölfl, Sonate précédée d'une Introduction et Fugue, 1804
* Vol. 13	Francesco Pollini, Variations et Rondeaux, 1804
* Vol. 14	Václav Jan Tomášek, Sonate et Rondeau, 1805
Vol. 15	Ludwig van Beethoven, Grande sonate [Op. 53], 1805
* Vol. 16	Christoph Ernst Friedrich Weyse, Allegri di bravura, 1809
* Vol. 17	Anton Liste, Grande Sonate, 1810

In August 1803, Nægeli published an announcement of his “Répertoire” in the French press:

“This repertoire will form a collection of Sonatas and other pieces for unaccompanied piano, composed by Mr. Beethoven and other German composers, which are not yet known in France. Above all, those shall be chosen which stand out for their profound knowledge of harmony, for their most varied and ingenious passages, permitting a brilliant performance.”⁴²

Notice that the authors of the “Répertoire” are not considered to be well known in France. The wording also reflects Nægeli’s views on the qualities of piano compositions as the works in the series are praised for their combination of harmonic knowledge and brilliant performance. For the French public he left out the first four volumes and started with the Beethoven volume, adding volumes 6 and 7 (which were absent from the German announcement): “The first three issues, containing: The 1st Beethoven, two great Sonatas, the 2nd Haak, Caprice and Variations, the 3rd Weyse, 6 Allegri di bravura, have

42 “Ce Répertoire formera une collection de Sonates et d’autres pièces pour le Piano sans accompagnement, composées par M. Beetoven et par d’autres auteurs allemands, qui ne sont point encore connus en France. On choisira surtout celles qui se font remarquer par une connoissance profonde de l’harmonie, par les tours les plus variés, les plus ingénieux, et les plus propres a [sic] faire valoir une exécution brillante.” Hans Georg Nægeli: *Nouvel ouvrage périodique intitulé: Répertoire des Clavecinistes*, in: *Correspondance des amateurs musiciens* 1 (1802/1803), No. 37, 18 thermidor an 11 (= 6 August 1803), p. 4.

already been published.”⁴³ Not much is known about sales and print runs. We know that 200 copies of volumes 1–5 were to be sent from Paris to Zurich. We also know that, for the French market, Nägeli kept in Paris 50 copies of volumes 5–7.⁴⁴ He also issued French title pages for the series “im strengen Style”, renaming it more generically “Collection de Fugues des maîtres anciens”, as already noticed by Rudolph Hunziker.⁴⁵ For the “Répertoire” series, he just added the name of his French partner, Madame Nadermann, because the title page was already in French. The series number, which was always entered by hand, is adapted, reading for instance 5 in the German issue and 1 in the French issue (see Figures 2a and 2b).

Both the “Kunstwerke im strengen Style” and the “Répertoire des clavecinistes” can thus be seen, amongst others, as pioneering efforts to bring these respective repertoires to the French public. Érard, Pleyel, Sieber, Cochet, and Imbault had been reprinting piano and chamber works by Beethoven since 1800, but presumably not all were authorised reprints. Since late 1802, one could buy original German editions of Beethoven’s works at the newly opened shop of Heinrich Simrock.⁴⁶ As late as 1805 Simrock felt the need to explain to the Parisians who Beethoven was:

“This young composer, now one of Germany’s leading pianists, tends to rival Steibelt in his constant work: he is at once graceful and learned. Some amateurs reproach him for not singing enough: the German newspapers reply by advising them to study it enough to play it the way it should be played, and guarantee that this reproach will not be repeated.”⁴⁷

- 43 “Les trois premiers Cahiers, contenant: Le 1er BEETHOVEN, deux grandes Sonates, Le 2e. HAAK, Caprice et variations, Le 3e. WEYSSE, 6 Allegri di bravura, sont déjà sortis de presse.” Ibid.
- 44 “Von den Sonaten von Clementi, Cramer, Dusseck, Steibelt, Beethoven müssen seiner Zeit 200 Ex. gedruckt u. hergesandt werden”. Nägeli to Kaspar Keller in Paris, Zurich, 3 November 1802, CH-ZZ Ms Car xv 200,42b (copy by Hermann Nägeli); “Lassen Sie für Frankreich 50 Ex. Beethoven als 1ten Heft des Répertoire, 50 Ex. Haak als 2ten Heft u. 50 Ex. Weyse als 3tes Heft drucken, u. die Nummern 1, 2, 3 setzen Sie mit Schwarzer Kreide klein u. artig geschrieben vorn an das Wort Suite auf den Titeln”. Nägeli to Kaspar Keller in Paris, Zurich, 25 May 1803, CH-ZZ Ms Car xv 199,37a (copy by Hermann Nägeli).
- 45 Hunziker: Hans Georg Nägeli, pp. 617f. As an example, see the German and French title pages of Nägeli’s edition of J. S. Bach’s Sonatas BWV 1014–1019 in the copy owned by the University of Zurich library (shelfmarks Mus Jac G 69 and Mus 841), available online on the e-rara platform.
- 46 François Lesure: Les premières éditions françaises de Beethoven (1800–1811), in: Musik, Edition, Interpretation. Gedenkschrift Günter Henle, ed. by Martin Bente, Munich 1980, pp. 326–331.
- 47 “Ce jeune compositeur, aujourd’hui l’un des premiers clavecinistes de l’Allemagne, tend par ses constants travaux à rivaliser Steibelt [sic]: il est à-la-fois gracieux et savant. Quelques amateurs lui reprochent de ne pas chanter assez: les journaux allemands leur répondent en leur conseillant de l’étudier assez pour le jouer tel qu’il doit l’être, et promettent qu’alors ce reproche ne sera pas renouvelé.” [Anon.]: Musique, in: Gazette nationale ou le Moniteur universel 17 (1805), 24 April 1805, p. 900.



FIGURE 2A The German title page of Op. 31/1-2
D-BNba HCB C Md 31 (Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Sammlung H. C. Bodmer)

After Simrock, Nægeli was possibly the second to provide the Parisian public with a Beethoven novelty and thus can be considered amongst the pioneers of Beethoven reception in Paris.

6. Competition and cross-reference in the “Répertoire” As mentioned above, in June 1803, when the first Beethoven volume was ready, Nægeli printed an announcement in the supplement (*Beilage*) to August von Kotzebue’s *Der Freimüthige oder Berlinische Zeitung für gebildete, unbefangene Leser* followed in August by an identical one in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*. There he told the readers that the first five volumes were ready and that he planned to publish further issues with works by Beethoven, Georg Joseph Vogler, Bonifacio Asioli, Friedrich Wilhelm Haack, Anton Reicha and Christoph Ernst Friedrich Weyse.⁴⁸

Eventually, he would publish in the series works by Haack and Weyse but none by Vogler and Reicha. He did publish at the time two capriccios by Asioli (Op. 1 and Op. 5), but for unknown reasons he decided not to put them into his series. Possibly Asioli did

48 Nægeli: Ankündigung.



FIGURE 2B The French title page of Op. 31/1–2
D-BNba J. Van der Spek c op. 31 (Beethoven-Haus Bonn)

not send him a third one to fill the volume, even if he otherwise gave out his works free of charge. Perhaps the third capriccio turned out to be for piano four hands and – because it didn't fit the series – was printed separately as Op. 3.⁴⁹ Nägeli had also asked Dussek for new works late in 1802, but Dussek did not accept, feeling bound to his German publishers Breitkopf & Härtel.⁵⁰ Nägeli then asked Clementi for works by Dussek to distribute on the continent, and, in 1804, sent in exchange Beethoven's Op. 31/3 and Joseph Wölfl's Sonata in c minor (from volumes 11 and 12 respectively); while Clementi reprinted Nägeli's editions, in the end, no new volume with works by Dussek entered the series.⁵¹ Clementi himself had actually promised to compose new works especially for the "Répertoire":

49 RISM A/I AA 2502 III,79, AA 2502 III,82 and AA 2502 III,80 (for four hands). See the letter by Nägeli to Johann Jacob Horner in Paris, Zurich, 18 July 1802, CH-ZZ Ms. Car xv 196.27.2.

50 Max Ernst Unger: Vom Musikverleger H. G. Nägeli, in: Schweizerische Musikzeitung und Sängerblatt 63 (1923), pp. 193 f., 209 f., 225 f.; Roner: Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis, p. 109.

“I announce to the public that, having examined during my stay in Zurich the plan of the Répertoire des Clavecinistes of Mr. Nägeli’s publishing house, I will make several new productions, of which Mr. Nägeli will be the only legitimate publisher on the continent, in favour of this enterprise, which deserves all my approval”.⁵²

Though in August 1805 he only had to “give the last touch to [his] three new sonatas, which [Nägeli] has expected so long”, no new set was printed in Zurich, and the three sonatas mentioned are commonly identified as Clementi’s Op. 50, only issued in 1821.⁵³

The core piece of Nägeli’s announcement is an invitation for a sort of composition competition, and the works required should combine contrapuntal skill with progressive instrumental virtuosity:

“All other piano composers who have not received my personal invitation are invited to correspond with me and send me their contributions if they dare to compete with the artists mentioned. I will not reject anything without stating my reasons, and I will reward what I take in appropriately. I briefly set out my main requirements here: first of all, I require piano solos in a grand style, on a large scale, with diverse variations from the usual sonata form. The works should be characterised by detail, richness and fullness of sound [Vollstimmigkeit]. Contrapuntal movements must be interwoven with artificial piano-player passages. Anyone who is not skilled in the arts of contrapuntal music and is not at the same time a piano virtuoso will hardly be able to achieve anything worthy of note here.”⁵⁴

- 51 Clementi’s letter from Leipzig to Frederick William Collard in London on 10 June 1804 mentioning the transaction with Nägeli is known only as a fragment from later transcriptions, see *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi*, pp. 117–119. A *Grand Sonata for the Piano Forte* composed by Lewis Van Beethoven, Op. 47 [sic], London [1804] (RISM ID No. 993000277); A *Grand Sonata for the Piano Forte Composed by Joseph Woelfl*, Op. 25 [sic], London [1805] (with copies e.g. in GB-Lbl).
- 52 “Je previens le public, qu’ayant examiné pendant mon séjour à Zurich le plan du Répertoire des Clavecinistes de l’édition de Mr. Naiguéli, je ferai paroître en faveur de cette entreprise, qui merite toute mon approbation, plusieurs nouvelles productions, dont Mr. Naiguéli sera seul editeur legitime sur le continent.” Muzio Clementi: *Musik-Anzeige betreffend das Répertoire des Clavecinistes*, in: *Zeitschrift für die elegante Welt* 4 (1804), *Intelligenzblatt* of 2 June 1804, p. [1] (signed by Clementi from Zurich on 18 May 1804); there followed an announcement by Nägeli of volumes 8 to 12 of the “Répertoire” on p. [2].
- 53 Clementi to Collard in London, Berlin, 31 August 1805, in: *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi*, p. 154. See also *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi*, p. 126 n. 206, Unger: Vom Musikverleger H. G. Nägeli, p. 194, and Leon Plantinga: Clementi “et ses trois styles”, in: *Muzio Clementi cosmopolita della musica. Atti del convegno internazionale*, Roma 2002, Bologna 2004, pp. 3–24, here p. 19.
- 54 “Alle andern Klavierkomponisten, an die meine besondere Einladung bisher noch nicht gelangen konnte, lade ich hiermit ein, mit mir in Korrespondenz zu treten, und mir ihre Beiträge einzusenden, wenn sie sich getrauen, mit den genannten Künstlern zu concurriren. Ich werde nichts verwerfen ohne Anführung meiner Gründe, und, was ich aufnehme, angemessen honoriren. Meine Hauptanforderungen setze ich hier kürzlich fest: Es ist mir zunächst um Klavier-Solos in großem Styl, von großem Umfang, in mannigfaltigen Abweichungen von der gewöhnlichen Sonaten-Form zu thun. Ausführlichkeit, Reichhaltigkeit, Vollstimmigkeit soll diese Produkte auszeichnen. Contrapunktische Sätze müssen mit künstlichen Klavierspieler-Touren verwebt seyn. Wer in den Künsten des

It is not clear if any works published in the series were written in response to the competition. We know that E. T. A. Hoffmann did contact Nägeli after reading it in the *Freimütige* supplement, but Nägeli refused the music he submitted.⁵⁵

Of Ljubljana-born baron Francesco Pollini, Nägeli had listed in his 1803 supplement catalogue three sonatas (labelled Op. 1 by Nägeli) and had recently published a set of *Tre canzonette coll'accompagnamento di Piano-Forte*.⁵⁶ Pollini's variations and rondeau in volume 13 of the "Répertoire" (1804) are dedicated to Clementi. Not surprisingly, his compositional style – at least here – reminds one of Clementi or Mozart rather than Beethoven (see Figure 3). One additional volume in the series has a dedication to a



FIGURE 3 The theme from Francesco Pollini's *Variations & Rondeau pour le Piano-Forte*, Zurich: Nägeli 1804 (RISM A/I, pp 5070 1,60). CH-E 737,23

Contrapunkts keine Gewandtheit besitzt, und nicht zugleich Klavier-Virtuose ist, wird hier kaum etwas Nahmhaftes leisten können." Nägeli: Ankündigung. The French announcement mentioned above (Nägeli: *Nouvel ouvrage périodique*) was much shorter, and while the main elements are maintained, it did not mention the competition.

55 Unger: *Vom Musikverleger* H. G. Nägeli, pp. 225 f.

56 RISM A/I pp 5070 1,55 and RISM A/I pp 5070 1,5, respectively.

composer: Anton Liste's two sonatas (Vol. 9, 1804), dedicated to Beethoven.⁵⁷ Considering the scope of the series and the text of the competition announcement, a dedication to a fellow composer is quite a commitment.

When Nägeli published his first piano compositions in 1808, the first set of six of a planned twelve toccatas (*Douze Toccatés pour le Piano-Forte*, Zurich: Nägeli [1808]), he dedicated them "aux auteurs du repertoire des Clavecinistes". Out of modesty, he did not insert his own work in the series; nevertheless, with his dedication he both took the "Répertoire" composers as models and also gave them an example of his concept of progressive piano composition. It is not by chance that Nägeli composed toccatas: in his aesthetics, the modern keyboard "Toccatenstyl" since Clementi was a landmark for instrumental music, concentrating the highest possible degree of artistic performance ("Kunstleistung") in a dense, virtuosic texture.⁵⁸ In 1808, Marie Bigot praised Nägeli's toccatas, and together with her husband, she found at least two new subscribers for them: "Your toccatas, dear Mr Nägeli, have been a great pleasure to me; I play them every day and not yet as well as I would like, but I find them incredibly beautiful, especially the first three."⁵⁹ Their style appears to be an unusual mixture of Baroque reminiscences and modern piano technique (see Figure 4).

7. Nägeli's catalogues and publication series from the 1820s The Napoleonic wars led to a financial crisis in 1808 which put a stop to Nägeli's ambitious editorial projects. In 1809 and 1810 two last volumes of the "Répertoire" were issued with works by Weyse and Liste. Nägeli had to leave the management of his business to his creditor Hug and change the firm's name to "Nägeli and Company". The contract with Hug had a ten-year option for Nägeli to buy back his firm, but, failing to take advantage of that option, in 1818 he was fired, and the business continued as "Gebrüder Hug". Nägeli opened a new firm under his name, which he led until his death in 1836 (and which was eventually amalgamated into Hug in 1849).⁶⁰ The sources for the activities of the new firm are the printed general catalogue of 1818, its yearly supplements (incompletely preserved), and several advertisements in the *Zürcherisches Wochenblatt*.⁶¹

57 *Deux Sonates Pour Le Piano Forte Composées par Antoine Liste*, Zurich [1804] (Répertoire des Clavecinistes, Vol. 9) (RISM ID No. 400101992).

58 Kabisch: Hans Georg Nägelis Theorie instrumentaler Virtuosität, p. 136 f.; Nägeli: Vorlesungen über Musik, p. 172.

59 "Ihre Toccaten lieber Herr Näguely haben mir ein sehr grosses Vergnügen gemacht; Ich spiele sie alle Tage und noch nicht so gut als ich es wünschte und doch finde ich sie ungemein schön besonders die drey ersten". Marie Bigot to Hans Georg Nägeli in Zurich, Vienna, 23 October 1808, D-BNba BH 160.

60 Staehelin: Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven, p. 11.

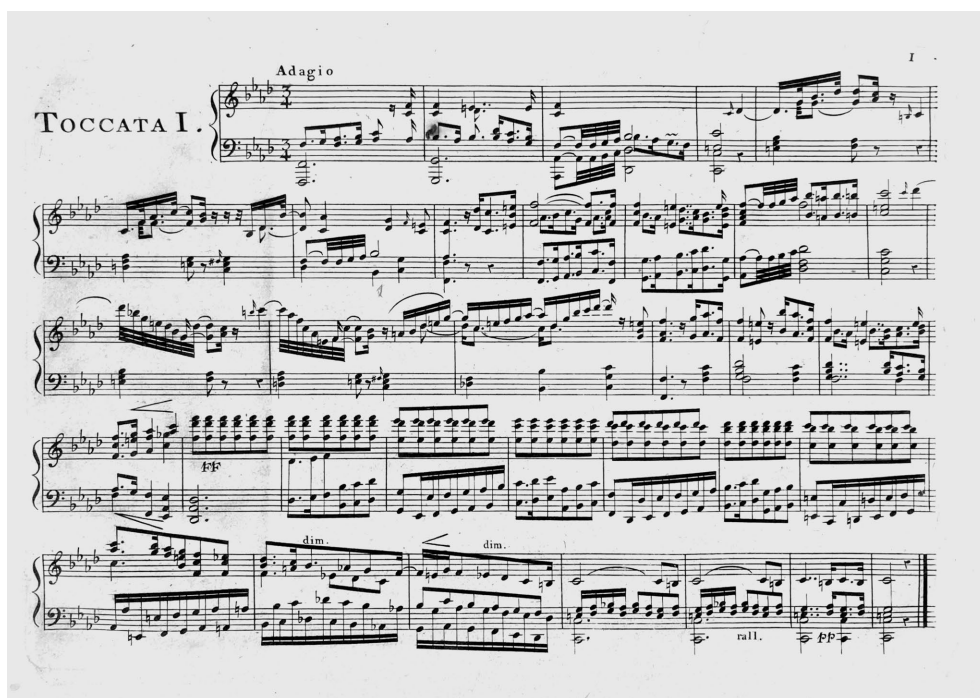


FIGURE 4 The opening of the first toccata from Nägeli's *Douze toccates*, Vol. 1, Zurich: Nägeli [1808]. CH-W BRH 10827 (Winterthurer Bibliotheken, Sammlung Winterthur)

In the 1820s, a few titles from Nägeli's earlier production resurfaced in France but with Richault as publisher: works by Asioli, Danzi, Tomášek, Bach, and Händel. These are not newly engraved but instead used the original plates. Richault reissued Asioli's capriccios Op. 1 and Op. 5, three duets by Franz Danzi and a sonata by Tomášek.⁶² The address confirms that the Asioli reprints were not issued before 1825. In 1828, the *Revue Musicale* announced that Richault had bought the rights of the works by Bach and Händel that Nägeli had engraved in Paris.⁶³ Indeed, Richault issued *Vingt-quatre préludes et fugues dans tous les tons et demi-tons du mode majeur et mineur* (Nägeli's volumes 1 and 2, 1801), *L'Art de la fugue* (volumes 4 and 5, 1802) and *Six grandes sonates entremêlées de fûgues pour le clavecin*

- 61 The catalogues are kept in CH-zsta (the general catalogue), CH-BU (the general catalogue and the supplements Nos. 1/1818, 2/1818, 5/1821, 6/1822, 7/1823 and 8/1824) and CH-zz (the supplement No. 6/1822).
- 62 RISM A/I AA 2502 III,78 and RISM A/I AA 2502 III,81; a copy of both is preserved in CH-E; RISM A/I D 1027; DD 1027, with copies in A-wgm and US-R; of the Richault editions of Tomášek's Op. 14, a copy is preserved in A-wn and is digitally accessible: <http://data.onb.ac.at/rep/10015207>.
- 63 "La propriété des ouvrages de J. S. Bach et de Haendel, que Naiguéli de Zürich avait autrefois fait graver avec soin à Paris"; Anik Devriès-Lesure/François Lesure: *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français*, Genève 1979–1988 (Archives de l'édition musicale française, Vol. 4), Vol. 2, p. 363.



FIGURE 5A Series title page of the “Répertoire des Clavecinistes” from Beethoven’s Op. 31/1–2. CH-zz Mus WG 75: 5 (<https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-25214>)

ou piano forté avec violon concertant (volume 6, 1803) by Bach, as well as Huit suites pour le clavecin ou piano-forte (volume 3, 1802) and Six fugues (from volume 5, 1802) by Händel.⁶⁴ Nägeli (or Hug) had evidently sold the plates for the older editions.

In 1825, Nägeli sought to revive his two important series of the 1800s by starting two new series: “Musikalische Ehrenpforte” (explicitly a continuation of the “Répertoire des clavecinistes”) and “Die Kontrapunktisten des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts” (implicitly a sort of modern correspondent to the ancient masterpieces “im strengen Style”). Already by comparing the series titles it is clear that Nägeli wants to resume where he left off with the “Répertoire” in 1810 (see Figure 5a/b). In his announcement of the two new series from January 1826, he also quoted the abandoned “Répertoire” series and mentioned further that Carl Czerny, Friedrich Kuhlau, Ignaz Moscheles and Ferdinand Ries had already promised a contribution for the “Ehrenpforte” as well as other unnamed masters for the “Kontrapunktisten”:

64 A copy of all titles is preserved in GB-Lbl except for the Goldberg Variations, kept in US-CAe and digitised: <https://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.Loeb:3996755>. The Art of Fugue is also digitally available from F-Pn: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k117480ob>.



FIGURE 5B Series title page of the “Musikalische Ehrenpforte” from Czerny’s Op. 124. CH-zsta VII.300:1 Schachtel 9 Mappe 28

“That the *Repertoire des Clavecinistes*, which I undertook a quarter of a century ago, contains in its seventeen issues a significant treasure of excellent piano works, is well known and acknowledged. [...] With such piano compositions, and by means of them, the art of piano playing also progressed, and has now in our days attained such an expansion and dissemination that an undertaking which opens up a new concurrence for the composers of this genre, and which promises to deliver only solid works of art, must now be considered quite timely. [...] Among the piano composers who have been most famous for years, most have given their approval to the undertaking, and Messrs. Carl Czerny in Vienna, Kuhlau in Copenhagen, Moscheles in London, and Ries in Godesberg have already assured me of their contributions. [...] This undertaking will contain piano solo works in the greatest possible variety; the artful and difficult – as long as it is suitable for the instrument – shall not be excluded, nor shall the more simple, as long as it is witty and inventive. [...] Only real fugues and

canons will be excluded. These will be provided in a special undertaking under the title: 'Die Contrapunktisten des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts'. For this, too, I have been assured of important contributions."⁶⁵

Already in 1822, Sebastian Zetter, a German living in Paris, had written to Nägeli, suggesting to him a collaboration both for publishing new works in Paris and for distributing Nägeli's editions in France. In his answer, Nägeli proposed to send him "a conspicuous piano work by Ries and one by Czerny", the two Sonatas that were eventually published.⁶⁶ Nägeli pursued his strategy of collaborating with Parisian engravers, but he tried to minimise financial risks by sharing the rights with his new French printer for the "Ehrenpforte". Of the two published volumes with sonatas by Ries and Czerny, there are two issues with separate frontispieces but identical content.

SONATE | FÜR DAS | Piano-Forte | COMPOSITIRT UND | der Frau Amalia Schott |
geborenen KIRCHHOFFER in Wien | zugeeignet | VON | FERD. RIES. | Op. 141. |
Erstes Heft der musikalischen Ehrenpforte. | Subscriptions-Preis 3 Groschen,
Ladenpreis 4 Groschen p. Bogen. | Eigenthum der Verleger. | ZÜRICH bey
Hans Georg NÄGELI u. Comp. | Noël sc[ripsi]t (CH-zsta VII.300:1 Schachtel 9
Mappe 28)

- 65 "Daß das vor einem Vierteljahrhundert von mir unternommene Repertoire des Clavecinistes in seinen siebzehn Lieferungen einen bedeutenden Schatz von vortrefflichen Klavierwerken enthält, ist bekannt und anerkannt. [...] Mit solchen Klavier-Compositionen, und vermittelt derselben schritt auch die Klavierspielkunst vorwärts, und hat nun in unsern Tagen eine solche Erweiterung und Verallgemeinerung erlangt, daß nunmehr eine Unternehmung, welche für die Componisten dieses Faches eine neue Concurrenz eröffnet, und nur gediegene Kunstwerke zu liefern verspricht, ganz zeitgemäß befunden werden muß. [...] Unter den seit Jahren her rühmlichst bekannten Klavier-Componisten haben die meisten der Unternehmung ihren Beyfall ertheilt, und schon haben die Herren Carl Czerny in Wien, Kuhlau in Copenhagen, Moscheles in London, und Rins [recte Ries] in Godesberg mir ihre Beyträge zugesichert. [...] Diese Unternehmung wird Klavier-Solo-Werke in möglichster Mannigfaltigkeit enthalten; das Kunstvolle und dabey Schwierige wird, sofern es instrumentgemäß ist, eben so wenig ausgeschlossen, als das Einfachere, sofern es geistreich und erfinderisch ist. [...] Einzig bleiben wirkliche Fugen und Canons ausgeschlossen. Diese werden in einer besondern Unternehmung unter dem Titel: 'Die Contrapunktisten des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts.' geliefert. Auch hiefür sind mir wichtige Beyträge zugesichert." Hans Georg Nägeli: Musik-Anzeige, in: Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände 20 (1826), Intelligenzblatt No. 1, January 1826, pp. 2 f., here p. 2.
- 66 "Das erste was ich gleich jetzt in Paris herauszugeben habe, ist ein großes Klavierwerk von Ries und eins von C. Czerny." Hans Georg Nägeli to Zetter & C. in Paris, [Zurich], 11 July 1822 (draft), CH-zz Ms Car. xv 197.23.1. Preparations however lasted for almost three years. In March 1825, Nägeli told Tobias Haslinger that the first two volumes of the "Ehrenpforte" would soon arrive from Paris: "kommt nächstens v. Paris an Ehrenpforte 1-2 Hefte (Ries und Czerny)". Hans Georg Nägeli to Tobias Haslinger in Vienna, [Zurich], 18. March 1825 (draft), CH-zz Ms Car. xv 196.23.

Quarante-neuvième | GRANDE SONATE | pour le Piano Forte | COMPOSÉE ET DÉDIÉE | à Madame Amélie Schott, | née Kirchhoffer de Vienne, | PAR | FERD. RIES | Op. 141. Prix 7f. 50c. | À PARIS, | Chez ZETTER et Comp.ie Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière N.o 3 | Propriété des Editeurs. 67. Déposé à la Direction (F-PN VM 12 24429)

SONATE | für das Piano-Forte | VON | CARL CZERNY. | Op. 124. | Zweites Heft der musikalischen Ehrenpforte. | Subscriptions-Preis 3 Groschen, Ladenpreis 4 Groschen p. Bogen. | Eigentum der Verleger. | ZÜRICH bey Hans Georg NÄGELI u. Comp. | Noël sc[ripsi]t" (CH-zsta VII.300:1 Schachtel 9 Mappe 28)

Sixième | GRANDE SONATE | POUR LE | Piano Forte seul | Composée par | CHARLES CZERNY. | Op. 124. Prix: 10 f. | À PARIS, | Chez ZETTER et Comp.ie Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière N.o 3 | 68" (F-PN VM 12 6994)

Notice the plural form "Eigentum der Verleger" / "Propriété des editeurs" in the Ries sonata (in Czerny, the French counterpart is missing): Nägeli and the Parisian firm were partners in the enterprise. Notice also the French publisher's catalogue numbers, 67 and 68. While Nägeli usually did not assign a number to his editions, they are repeated on every page of the two sonatas as follows: "(Z. 67.) N.o 7" and "(Z. 68.) N.o 8".

In the draft of his first letter to Zetter, Nägeli had mentioned a plan to publish works by Johann Sebastian Bach under the series title "Oeuvres d'église de haute composition",⁶⁷ a plan that was apparently abandoned in favour of more recent contrapuntal works. The title pages of the five extant volumes of the "Contrapunktisten" series also carry the wording "Eigentum der Verleger", though I was not yet able to find a copy with a different imprint. A "Z" number is missing, but there is a numbering at the bottom of each page continuing progressively after Czerny's No. 8.⁶⁸ Thus, I presume that they were also engraved and printed by Zetter and Company, though they did not take them over in their own publisher's catalogue.⁶⁹ According to Anton Reicha, who in June 1826 suggested Nägeli to contact them (apparently unaware of their common enterprise), they accepted to print music on behalf (and at the financial risk) of others:

67 Hans Georg Nägeli to Zetter & C. in Paris, [Zurich], 11 July 1822 (draft), CH-zz Ms Car. xv 197.23.1.

68 The *Canone a due voci* by Franz Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee, for example, issued as volume 4 of the "Contrapunktisten", bears "N.o 12". The copy in CH-zz Ms v 38,4 is available online on the e-rara platform.

69 Sebastian Zetter had actually retired from the business at the end of 1825 after only two years of activity, and the firm was continued by his partner Daniel Jelensperger, who died in 1831. See Devriès-Lesure/Lesure: *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français*, Vol. 2, p. 429; on Jelensperger see the obituary in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 33 (1831), col. 531.

“These gentlemen are Germans and only deal with products that are not their own: they do not engrave at their own expense but on behalf of others. Their interest is therefore to sell what is entrusted to them. They are honest people with whom I myself have had many great works engraved at my own expense. Address yourself to their house; I believe that you will be satisfied”.⁷⁰

In April 1826, Nägeli was ready to pay 30 ducats to Czerny, who would soon send a new manuscript, of which unfortunately nothing is known.⁷¹ A few months later, Nägeli asked Czerny in Vienna to help him find further contributors, particularly the Archduke Rudolph and Franz Schubert:

“I definitely count Schubert among the good, even excellent piano composers. I consider the first movement of his a minor Sonata (by Pennauer) [D 845, 1826] to be a capital piece. If you are personally acquainted with him, please assure him that I will gladly include him among the collaborators of the ‘Ehrenpforte’ as soon as the subscription is secured, to which he could also contribute.”⁷²

Nägeli had mentioned his wish to ask the Archduke for a contribution to the “Ehrenpforte” already in a letter to Beethoven, possibly from June 1825, but it is not known if he eventually asked him at all, and if so, what the reply was.⁷³ Upon Nägeli’s invitation (via Czerny), Schubert accepted to provide a new sonata with a letter on 4 July 1826:

“Not only the favourable reception of this sonata but also your wish, which is most flattering to me, make me quite ready to satisfy your request as soon as you wish. In this case, I would have to ask you to pay me the fee, which consists of 120 fl. C. M., in advance in Vienna. By the way, it was very pleasant for me to be in correspondence with such an old and famous music publishing house.”⁷⁴

- 70 “Diese Herren sind Deutsche, und geben sich nur mit Producten ab die nicht ihr Eigenthum sind: sie stechen nicht auf ihre eigenen Unkosten: wohl aber für die Rechnung anderer. Ihr interesse ist daher das zu verkaufen was man ihnen anvertraut. Sie sind redliche Leute, bey welchen ich selbst auf meine Unkosten manche große Werke habe stechen lassen. Adressiren Sie sich an das Haus, ich glaube daß Sie zufrieden werden”. Anton Reicha to Nägeli in Zurich, Paris, 6 June 1826, CH-ZZ Autogr. Ott, Reicha.
- 71 See Nägeli to Freiherr [Johann Friedrich Cotta] von Cottendorf, Zurich, 10 April 1826, CH-W BRH 124/8.
- 72 “Den Klavier-Componisten Schubert zähle ich entschieden unter die guten, ja vortrefflichen. Der erste Satz seiner A-moll-Sonate (bey Pennauer) halte ich für ein Capital-Stück. Sind Sie mit demselben persönlich bekan[n]t, so versichern Sie ihn, dass ich ihn sehr gern unter die Mitarbeiter der ‘Ehrenpforte’ aufnehmen werde, sobald die Subscription gesichert sey, wozu er wohl auch mitwirken kön[n]e.” Nägeli to Carl Czerny in Vienna, Zurich, 18 June 1826, copy by Rudolph Hunziker, CH-W BRH MS 124/9 (original in A-wgm).
- 73 See Staehelin: Hans Georg Nägeli und Ludwig van Beethoven, p. 56; Ludwig van Beethoven: Briefwechsel. Gesamtausgabe, ed. by Sieghard Brandenburg, Munich 1996–1998, Vol. 6, pp. 93–95.
- 74 “Nicht nur die günstige Aufnahme dieser Sonate, sondern auch Ihr mir höchst schmeichelhafter Wunsch, machen mich ganz bereit, Ihrem Verlangen, sobald Sie wollen, Genüge zu leisten. In diesem Falle müßte ich Sie doch ersuchen, mir das Honorar, welches in 120 fl. C. M. besteht, in Wien voraus anzuweisen. Übrigens war es mir sehr angenehm, mit einer so alten berühmten Kunsthandlung in

Requested to provide a new sonata for the “Ehrenpforte” in mid-1825, Carl Maria von Weber refused.⁷⁵

As for the “Contrapunktisten”, in his letter to Czerny of June 1826, Nägeli writes that “the current contributors are, in addition to your Mr. Sechter, Reicha in Paris & Schnyder in Frankfurt”.⁷⁶ Indeed, five slender volumes were eventually published with works by Simon Sechter, Anton Reicha and Franz Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee.⁷⁷ Preserved correspondence with Sechter and Reicha concerning their publications dates between August 1825 and June 1826; Sechter accepted promptly and sent his manuscripts in February 1826 while Reicha was still choosing suitable pieces in June 1826.⁷⁸ This confirms that, by the summer of 1826, Nägeli had been promised all the music that was eventually published in the “Contrapunktisten” series. The contributions for the “Ehrenpforte” by Kuhlau and Moscheles announced in January 1826 and the new sonata by Schubert following the agreement in July never appeared. Why were both series discontinued?

The publication of the new series was connected with Nägeli’s plans to move to Frankfurt, as he explains in his above-mentioned letter to Beethoven:

“It had long been in my life’s plan, when my sons had grown up, to expand my music business, for this purpose [...] to establish a firm in Frankfurt, the capital of southern Germany, and then to appear with new publishing ventures, which would be for the present state of musical culture what a quarter of a century ago the *Werke der strengen Schreibart* and the *Repertoire des Clavecinistes* were.”⁷⁹

Correspondenz getreten zu seyn.” Otto Erich Deutsch: *Schubert. Die Dokumente seines Lebens*, Kassel 1964, p. 365.

- 75 Carl Maria von Weber to Nägeli in Zürich, Dresden, 6 June 1825, CH-zz Ms Car xv 199,6a (copy by Hermann Nägeli).
- 76 “Die bisherigen Mitarbeiter sind nebst Ihrem Herrn Sechter, Reicha in Paris & Schnyder in Frankfurt”. Nägeli to Carl Czerny in Vienna, Zurich, 18 June 1826, copy by Rudolph Hunziker, CH-W BRH MS 124/9 (original in A-wgm).
- 77 See the list of products from Nägeli’s publishing firm in Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 390–395.
- 78 Four letters from Simon Sechter in Vienna to Nägeli in Zurich are dated 7 August 1825, 30 November 1825, again 30 November 1825 (a note intended to be attached to the music manuscripts) and 4 April 1826, in CH-zz Ms Car. xv 193.12.1 (copy), Ms Car. xv 193.12.2, Ms Car. xv 193.12.3 and Autogr. Ott, Sechter, respectively. The letter from Anton Reicha in Paris to Nägeli in Zurich, 6 June 1826, is preserved in CH-zz Autogr. Ott, Reicha (a copy is in Ms Car. xv 190.32).
- 79 “Es lag längst in meinem Lebensplane, [...] wenn meine Söhne herangewachsen seyn würden, [...] meine Musikhandlung zu erweitern, zu diesem behuf ein [...] Etablissement in Frankfurt, [...] der Hauptstadt von Süddeutschland zu gründen, und dann mit neuen Verlagsunternehmungen aufzutreten, welche für den jezigen Stand der [...] musik[alischen]. Cultur das wären, was vor einem Vierteljahrhundert die *Werke der strengen Schreibart* und das *repertoire des Clavecinistes*.” Beethoven: *Briefwechsel. Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 6, p. 93.

It is reasonable to conclude that later in 1826, when the idea of settling in Germany was abandoned due to missing financial support and to the failure of obtaining citizenship in Frankfurt, the new publication series were discontinued.⁸⁰

8. “Ein ächter Schweitzer” I would like to conclude by underlining what I consider to be the ‘Swissness’ of Nägeli. Already Carl Friedrich Cramer noted: “I consider you to be a real Swiss, that is, an honest and righteous man”.⁸¹ Cramer identified ‘Swissness’ with morality in reference to the legendary moral qualities of the inhabitants of the Alps and, by extension, of the whole of Switzerland (there are no mountains in Zurich). But I propose to consider Nägeli typically Swiss in another way.

Acting on the periphery of the musical world, in a small country with reduced infrastructure for a music publishing enterprise, he made the best out of his position. He didn’t attempt to build up a music engraving enterprise on his own but decided to rely on his excellent international network. On one side, he profited from the traditionally strong connections of Switzerland with Milan, providing the market north of the Alps with works by Milan-based composers such as Bonifacio Asioli, Francesco Pollini, Alessandro Rolla and Niccolò Zingarelli. On the other side, he specialised as a middleman between France and the German-speaking world, distributing French editions in Germany and publicising German composers in Paris. Offering Beethoven’s piano sonatas to the French public was at the time (August 1803) a new and somewhat daring venture.

80 More details are provided by Hunziker: Hans Georg Nägeli, p. 633, and by Roner: *Autonome Kunst als gesellschaftliche Praxis*, pp. 257 f.

81 “Dabeÿ halte ich Sie für einen ächten Schweitzer, das heißt genug gesagt: für einen billigen und rechtschaffenen Mann”. Carl Friedrich Cramer to Nägeli, Paris, 14 January 1807, CH-zz Ms Car. xv 186.9.

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Volume 16

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Philology, Context and Performance
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