

Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft

Mitteilungen 17 (2010)

S. 3-5

A previously unknown letter by Čajkovskij from June 3, 1891 to Ekaterina I. Laroš (Brett Langston)

Abkürzungen, Ausgaben, Literatur sowie
Hinweise zur Umschrift und zur Datierung:
http://www.tschaikowsky-gesellschaft.de/index_htm_files/abkuerzungen.pdf

Copyright: Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft e.V. / Tchaikovsky Society
<http://www.tschaikowsky-gesellschaft.de/impressum.htm>
info@tschaikowsky-gesellschaft.de / www.tschaikowsky-gesellschaft.de

Redaktion:
Thomas Kohlhase (1994-2011),
zusammen mit Kadja Grönke (2006-2008),
Lucinde Braun und Ronald de Vet (seit 2012)

ISSN 2191-8627

A previously unknown letter by Čajkovskij from June 3, 1891
to Ekaterina I. Laroš

presented by Brett Langston

In March 2008 a previously unknown letter by Čajkovskij was sold by John Wilson Manuscripts Ltd. and purchased by a private collector in Spain. The letter was addressed to Ekaterina Ivanovna Laroš, third wife of German Laroš (Čajkovskij's old and close friend) and the dedicatee of *Thème original et variations* for piano (No. 6 of the *Six Pieces*, Op. 19) and of the piano piece *Dialogue* (No. 8 of the *Eighteen Pieces*, Op. 72). Ekaterina was acquainted with the composer even before her marriage, and was especially close to him during the last years of his life, often travelling abroad with him.

Although the autograph only bears the date "3 June", the postmark on the envelope reads "3 Июня 1891", thus dating the letter to 3/15 June 1891. It is known that Čajkovskij had only a few days previously returned from his tour of America to stay in a rented house in the village of Maidanovo (near Klin), where he had previously resided between February 1885 and April 1888. Believing this to be unavailable or unsuitable during the winter months, Tchaikovsky had asked Ekaterina to find alternative accommodation, and had expressed interest in a nearby dacha owned by a certain "Strandman". In a letter to his cousin Anna Merkling of 11/23 June 1892, Tchaikovsky reported that "Regarding Strandman['s dacha], I decided that it's necessary to defer consideration until the autumn" (ČPSS 4401 vol. XVIA, p. 136). In fact Čajkovskij remained in the same house Maidanovo until 28 March/9 April 1892, after which he moved to his final residence in the town of Klin itself.

In the letter Čajkovskij thanks Ekaterina for her efforts on his behalf, reports that his work (on the ballet *The Nutcracker*) was proceeding successfully, and invites her to visit Maidanovo later that summer. He also expresses concern that her husband German Laroš should travel to the Austrian spa town of Karlsbad (now Karlovy Vary in the Czech Republic) as soon as possible for the sake of his health, which had suffered due to his frequent bouts of heavy drinking.

Follow the texts of envelope and letter.

Umschlag, Vorderseite, linkes Drittel abgerissen, Adresse von Čajkovskijs Hand:

[Екатери]не Ивановне
Ларошъ
[Адмир]алтейская набе=
[реж]ная № 10
С. Петербургъ

(= Ekaterine Ivanovne Laroš | Admiraltejskaja naberežnaja No. 10 [= Admiralitätsufer No. 10] | S. Peterburg [= St. Petersburg])

Umschlag, Rückseite: gedrucktes Monogramm Čajkovskijs, ineinander verschlungene Buchstaben in einem Kreis:

ПЧ [= PC]

In der rechten Hälfte Stempel der "Petersburger Stadtpost" und Datum 3. Juni 1891, in einem Kreis:

С. ПЕТЕРБУРГ
ГОРОДСК.[АЯ] ПОЧТА
3 ИЮН. 1891
[und links davon Zahl] 52 [die "5" nicht deutlich]

[Briefkarte, Seite 1, oben links: Monogramm, wie auf der Rückseite des Umschlags;
Brieftext:]

3 Июня

Милая Катя! Подробное донесение
Ваше получилъ, прочель его съ вели=
чайшимъ интересомъ и страшно
Вамъ за него благодаренъ. Спасибо
за все что Вы изъ за меня претер=
пели. Въ виду того, что мне зимой
не нужно всего дома, а лишь 3 или
4 комнатки, – я думаю, что дача
Штрандмана обитаема и зимой.

[Seite 2:]

Все это дело нужно отложить до осени
а темъ временемъ можетъ быть еще что
сыщется. Я засимъ за работу и работа
идеть очень успешно. Простите, что
сегодня имею возможность написать лишь
несколько строкъ. Скоро опять напишу.
Когда едете? Ради Бога не отклады=
вайте. Его необходимо везти въ Карлс=
бадь и я желаю чтобы это совершилось
поскорее, дабы конецъ лета Вы мог=
ли провести у меня въ Майданове.
У меня теперь Модестъ, Бобъ и Саня
Литке. Целую Ваши ручки.

Вашъ П. Чайковский

English translation:

June 3 [1891]

Dear Katja,
I received your thorough report, which I read
with great interest and for which I am terribly
grateful to you. Thank you for everything you
had to endure on my account. Bearing in mind
that I do not need a whole house for the winter,
but just 3 or 4 small rooms – I think that
Strandman's dacha would still be habitable for
the winter.

All these matters can be put off until the
autumn, and something else could be found
then. For now I have to work, and my work is
coming along very successfully. Forgive me

that it is only possible to write a few lines today. I will write again soon. When are you leaving? For God's sake do not put it off. He must be taken to Karlsbad without delay, and I hope this can be done with the utmost haste, so that you can spend the end of the summer with me at Maidanovo. At present I have Modest, Bob and Sanja Litke with me. With kisses for both your hands.

Yours P. Čajkovskij

In deutscher Übersetzung lautet der Brief:

3. Juni [1891]

Liebe Katja,
Ihren ausführlichen Bericht habe ich erhalten, mit größtem Interesse gelesen, und ich bin Ihnen schrecklich dankbar dafür. Danke für all das, was Sie meinetwegen erdulden mußten. Da ich im Winter nicht das ganze Haus, sondern lediglich drei oder vier Zimmerchen brauche, – denke ich, daß die Štrandmansche Datscha auch im Winter bewohnbar ist.

Diese ganze Angelegenheit kann man bis zum Herbst verschieben, und in dieser Zeit kann sich noch etwas anderes finden. Nun muß ich arbeiten, und meine Arbeit entwickelt sich sehr erfolgreich. Verzeihen Sie, daß ich heute nur einige Zeilen schreiben kann. Bald schreibe ich wieder. Wann fahren Sie? Um Gottes willen, schieben Sie es nicht auf. Ihn muß man nach Karlsbad bringen, und ich wünsche, daß das möglichst schnell geschieht, so daß Sie das Ende des Sommers bei mir in Majdanovo verbringen können. Bei mir halten sich derzeit Modest, Bob und Sanja Litke auf.¹ Ich küsse Ihre Händchen.

Ihr P. Čajkovskij

(Übertragung des russischen Originals und deutsche Übersetzung von Lev Vinocour.)

¹ Čajkovskijs Bruder Modest, sein Lieblingsneffe Vladimir Davydov (Sohn seiner Schwester Aleksandra) und Aleksandr Litke (Sohn seiner Cousine mütterlicherseits Amalija Šobert).