**Fortepiano Graf op. 423, 1822 – Kunsthistorishes Museum Wien**

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In 1820, Leipzig’s *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* reported a visit to Graf’s workshops by the Duchess Maria Luisa of Parma and Archduke Rudolf, Cardinal-Archbishop of Olmütz. The royal couple “not only toured with approval [Graf’s] entire extensive establishment, but also ordered certain of his instruments. In fact, this tireless artist manufactures the most excellent pianofortes; they do not find an equal in beauty, consistency, strength and fullness of tone, and the solidity of their construction ensures their durability. His unceasing endeavour to achieve the highest possible perfection in his instruments and his attempt at quadruple-strung unisons have delivered the most beautiful results… The foremost virtuosos make use of his instruments for their public performances.”

In fact, Beethoven had wanted a Graf piano since at least 1816, according to his letters. Beethoven and Graf were clearly close; when the great composer died in 1827, Graf and Schubert were the torchbearers at his funeral.