

GASPAR DUARTE (ANTWERPEN)  
AAN [CONSTANTIJN HUYGENS (DEN HAAG)]  
21 NOVEMBER 1640  
**2581A**

**Antwoord** op een verloren gegane brief van Huygens van early to mid November 1640, in itself an answer to Duarte's letter of 24 October 1640..

**Samenvatting:** Duarte says he is happy because the manteca d'azar pleased Frederil Hendrik. He asks for a confirmation of his safe-conduct of the States of Holland of 1629. He asks Huygens for a pair of Italian and French airs which he assumes have been given to Huygens by Varenne. He has other nice airs from Varenne: *Belli occhi* and *Se credi Amor*. He describes the music ensembles they make together at his home: his three daughters on spinet, lute and viol with he himself on the violin, or two daughters singing with lute and viol, or two daughters singing while he sings the bass and one plays spinet or teorbo. He suggests Huygens do the same with his four sons.

**Huygens'** antwoord is verloren gegaan. Huygens's answer is lost. Duarte responded to it on 9 January 1641.

**Primaire bron:** Den Haag. Kon. Bibl.: brief (enkelvel, 23x33cm, a|-; autograaf). Aangekocht uit particuliere collectie Robert Grossmann (Fürstenau, Zwistersland):

**Namen:** Isabella Alewyns; Catharina (or Isabelle) Duarte; Francisca Duarte; Leonora Duarte; Frederik Hendrik; Christiaan Huygens; Constantijn Huygens Jr.; Lodewijk Huygens; Philips Huygens; Isabella van Oostenrijk; Bernard de Varenne; Anna Roemersdochter Visscher.

**Plaatsen:** Deurne; Holland; Lantaarnhof (bij Antwerpen); Londen; Zevenbergen.

**Titels:** *Occhi belli guarci* (lied); *Se credi col ferir, Amor, darmi tormento* (lied).

**Glossarium:** air (lied); concert (ensemble); espinette (klavecimbel); instrument (muziekinstrument); luth (luit); musicien (musicus); musique (muziek); viole bastarde (viola bastarda); violon (viool)

### Transcriptie

Monsieur,

Je suis bien aise que la manteca d'azar qu'avés présenté à Son Altesse lui a esté agréable.

Or, touchant à Vostre Mayson au Champs, j'é donné relation à celui qu'il m'en avoit parlé, lequel m'a donné commission d'en traicter avecq Mademoisele Vostre Cousine, come vous doit mander. Dont, je feray en Vostre endroit tout ce qu'il me sera posible (pour la rejouissance que j'aurei d'icelle) en cas que mon home va perseverent en son dessein, m'ayant dit estant à luy de la embellir ancor davantage d'une belle galerie.

Quant à ma sauvegarde, je vous dirai l'occasion que m'oblige à vous importuner, ce que depuis nostre revenue de Londres ne la puis trouver, pour l'avoir trop bien gardé avant nostre partement, mes bien cele de la Serenissime Infante dingne de haute memoire du sixième d'Avril 1624 et combien que cela n'inporte pas tant, aiant le tout esté recongnu tant par le Magistrat de Deuren come par après d'iceux di Sevenbergen qui me la maintenant en toute aseurance (dont je vous envoiey les copies, estant nessesaire) néanmoins, puisque l'occasion se présente m'honorer de Vostre faveur de me faire octrier une nouvelle confirmation pour ancor plus de seuretté, vous aiant envoyé la date quant je l'ay obtenu, affin de me faire la faveur d'avoir une Copie que sans doubte on doit trouver pardela sur le Register, la faisant rechercher par quelque clerq, en paiant les despences que i pour avoir, que je donneray ici à Mademoiselle Vostre Cousine et vous demeureray grandement obligé, me pardonnant ceste miene inportunité.

Touchant la musique, j'estimeray d'avoir une pair de ces beaux Airs Italiens e Fransois. Je pense qu'il vous sont este présenté par un gentilhomme musicien, nommé La Verane, que j'ai oui chanter en Angelterre, lequel devoit passer par Hollande. Nous avons quelques airs de lui, pour le moins deues bonnes, a savoir *Ochi belli guarci*, l'autre *Se credi col ferir, Amor, darmi tormento*. Nous usons quelque fois une musique domestique en petit concert d'instruments, come avons faict entendre à Mademoiselle Anna Roomers, à savoir trois instruments aveq leur particulier, d'estre de trois filles, l'espinette, é luth, é la viole bastarde, é

moy le violon, pour le 3m dessus, é pour les voix: un luth é la viole à deux dessus avecq les voix de mes deus filles, et quelques fois deux dessus avecq une basse que je chante avecq l'espínète o téorbe pour de petites madrigales du livre. Voila quelque fois nostre passetenps pour nous divertir une foi en 15 jours, ce que vous pourés ausi avoir, quant il vous plaira, par le moien de vos quatre filse que Die conserve. Finissant je baise très-humblement le meins, demeurant,

Monsieur,

vostre très-humble et très-affectionné serviteur  
G. Duarte.

En Anvers, ce 21<sup>e</sup> Novembre 1640.

### Translation

Sir,

I am very content that the *manteca d'azar* that you have presented to His Highness<sup>1</sup> has pleased to him.<sup>2</sup>

Well, concerning your mansion,<sup>3</sup> I have notified him<sup>4</sup> who has spoken to me about it, who has given me commission to deal about it with Madame Your Cousin<sup>5</sup>, as she must nitofy you. Therefore, I will do on your behalf everything that will be possible for me (for the pleasure I will have from it), in case my man remains with his plans, while he has said to me that he wanted to embellish it still further with a nice galery.

As regard my safe-conduct,<sup>6</sup> I will explain the occasion that forced me to disturb you, namely that after our return from London I could not find it, because I had stored it away too well before oure departure. But I could find the safe-conduct of the Serenissime Infante,<sup>7</sup> worthy of high memory, of 6 April 1624, and, although the matter is not that important, because everything is recognized by the Authorities of Deurne<sup>8</sup> and later by those of Zevenbergen,<sup>9</sup> who keep it for me assured (of which I can send copies, if that is necessary), nonetheless, because the occasion presents itself now that you honour me with the favour of assigning to me a new confirmation, in order to have more security, having sent to you the date when I did obtain it, so that you can do me the favour of letting me have a copy, because without doubt you can find [the original] in the Register, if you have some employee to search for it, while I will pay the expenses that there can be, which I will give here to Madame Your Cousin, and I will remain greatly obliged to you, hoping that you forgive my importunity.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederik Hendrik, Stadholder of the Republic, in whose service Huygens was.

<sup>2</sup> Manteca d'azar [=manteca de azahar], litterally "fat of orange blossom", a kind of ointment, made of fat of a goat or a pig mixed with orange blossom. Huygens had asked Duarte for some of this in his letter of 15 October 1640 (lost) and Duarte had written on 24 October that he had found some and would send it.

<sup>3</sup> Huygens possessed a mansion outside Antwerp, the Lantaarnhof, which he wanted to sell. This subject was also discussed in Duarte's letter of 24 October.

<sup>4</sup> I do not know who he is.

<sup>5</sup> This is Isabella Alewijns. She lived in Antwerp, widow of Jacob Buycx.

<sup>6</sup> The safeconduct is also mentioned in Duarte's letter of 24 October. It had been delivered by the States of Holland in April 1629.

<sup>7</sup> This is Isabella of Austria, daughter of Philips II, King of Spain. She was Governess of the Spanish Netherlands, 1598-1633.

<sup>8</sup> Just outside (East) of Antwerp, I believe the Lantaarnhof was there.

<sup>9</sup> Zevenbergen, today in the North-western part of Noord-Brabant, belonged formerly to the province of Holland. It was a border town, which means Duarte would enter the province of Holland there, when he was going to The Hague or elsewhere in Holland.

Concerning the music, I would appreciate to have a couple of these beautiful Italian and French airs [which] I believe they were presented to you by an nobleman musician, with the name Varenne,<sup>10</sup> whom I have heard singing in England and who had to pass by Holland. We have some airs of his, at least two good ones, to know *Occhi belli guarciri*<sup>11</sup> and the other *Se credi col ferir, Amor, darmi tormento*.<sup>12</sup> We have sometimes a small music ensemble at home, as we did present to Miss Anna Roemers,<sup>13</sup> namely, three instruments which are particularly suitable for three ladies,<sup>14</sup> the spinet, the lute and the viola bastarda,<sup>15</sup> and me the violin, for the third treble,<sup>16</sup> and for the voices: one lute and one viol for two trebles with the voices of my two daughters,<sup>17</sup> and some times two trebles with a bass which I sing, with the spinet or teorbo,<sup>18</sup> for small madrigals of the book.<sup>19</sup> That is how we pass the time sometimes to enjoy ourselves once every two weeks, which you can do also, if you like it, because of your four sons,<sup>20</sup> whom God may save. Ending this letter, I humbly kiss your hand, remaining,

Sir,

your humble and affectionate servant  
Gaspar Duarte.

Antwerp, 21 November 1640.

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<sup>10</sup> Although Duarte writes “La Verane”, I believe he refers to the musician and singer Bernard de Varenne, in the service of Quen Henrietta Maria of England. Varenne was in Holland in January 1640 and visited Huygens in The Hague and Joan Albert Ban in Haarlem. Duarte assumes he left French and Italian songs at Huygens’s premises. In his letter of 9 January 1641 Duarte acknowledges receipt of the songs from Huygens, an Italian and a French one. Concerning the French song Duarte makes the remark that it is not, according to him, an air de cour. Because Huygens was busy in 1640 with the composition of the French and Italian airs which were later included in his *Pathodia sacra et profana* (published Paris, 1647), I believe that Huygens sent to airs of his own composition. With his letter of 9 January 1641, Duarte sent two airs to Huygens. One is certainly *Se credi col ferir Amor darmi tormento*, the other is not *Belli occhi*, because Duarte wrote he could not find it. It could be *Ognhor desta la ray* (The eye is always awake), mentioned in Duarte’s letter of 27 April 1640.

<sup>11</sup> The third word of this title is somewhat unclear in the present letter. But in the letter of Duarte of 9 January 1641 one clearly reads “guarciri”, which is, however, impossible to translate. *Belli occhi* = beautiful eyes.

<sup>12</sup> This is good Italian: If you believe, Love, to give me pain by hitting me.

<sup>13</sup> Anna Roemersdochter Visscher is a Dutch lady of letters and so on, who visited the Duarte family in 1640. She wrote a poem on having heard Duarte making music with his daughters. See Nicolaas Beets, *Alle de gedichten van Anna Roemers Visscher* (Utrecht, 1881), Vol. 2, pp. 243-250.

<sup>14</sup> Duarte had four daughters. Francisca is often mentioned as keyboard performer, Leonora was the composer of a set of five-part instrumental compositions for viols, so these two were the performers on spinet and viola bastarda. The two other daughters were called Catharina and Isabella. It is impossible to tell who of them was the third performing daughter/

<sup>15</sup> Viola bastarda is a technique rather than an instrument. It refers to polyphonic playing on the viola da gamba (viol), sometimes made easier by a flatter bridge.

<sup>16</sup> Here Duarte presents an ensemble with spinet, lute, viola da gamba and violin.

<sup>17</sup> This is an ensemble with two daughters singing, one plays the lute and one the viol.

<sup>18</sup> This is an ensemble with two daughters singing and Duarte singing the bass, and accompaniment by spinet or teorbo.

<sup>19</sup> I do not know which book.

<sup>20</sup> Huygens had four sons: Constantijn [Junior], Christiaan, Lodewijk, Philips.

On Amers 21 novem<sup>r</sup> 1640

Monsieur

J'esuis bien aise que la Manteca d'Ar qu'auus Presente a S.A. lui a est agreable  
Or touchant a Vre Mayson aulchamps Je donne Relation a celui qui l'avoit par le  
lequel ma donne Commission d'entraiter avec Mademoiselle Vre Cousine come Vous  
deit mander. dont Je feray en Vre endroit tout ce qui l'aura possible (pour la raison  
que J'aurai di celle) en cas que mon home Va persuevent en son dessein maisant dot et  
aluy de la embellir ancor davantage d'une belle galerie — quant a ma sauvegarde  
Je Vous dirai l'occasion que m'oblige a Vous Importuner, et qui de puis nre Reuenus  
de Londres ne la puis trouver pour la voir trop bien garde auant nre Partement  
mes bien celle de la Soronuss. Infante d'ingne de haute memoire du six<sup>me</sup> d'auril 1624  
et combien que cela n'importe pas tant aiant letout este recongru tant par Le  
Magistrat de Deuron come par apres di ceux de Seuenbergen qui mela meintenon  
en toute assurance (dont Je Vous enuioy les copies estant necessaire) ne au  
moins puis que l'occasion se presente m'honorer de Vostre faueur pour me faire  
obtenir Une nouvelle confirmation pour ancor plus se seuerer Vous aiant ouy  
ladate quant Je l'ay obtenu affin de me faire La faueur d'auoir Vne copie  
que sans doute on doit traouer de la sur Le Registre La faisant veider  
par quelque flocq en payant les despences qui pourra auoir que Je donneray a  
Mad<sup>me</sup> Vre Cousine et Vous grandem<sup>t</sup> Oblige m'apportant cette mine Importun<sup>er</sup>

Monsieur  
Touchant la musique J'estimeray d'auoir Vne pair de ces beaux Airs Italiens et  
Je pense qu'il vous sont este presente par Un gentilhomme Musicien nomme la  
que J'ai ouy Chanter en Angeltorre lequel deuoit passer par Hollande, nous  
auons quelques airs de lui pour le moins deus Bonnes A sauoir. Oedi belli  
L'autre, se fedi colferir Amor darmi tormento. nous Vrons quelque fois Vne  
musique domestique en petit concert d'instruments come auons fait entendre  
a Mad<sup>me</sup> Anna Roomers a sauoir trois instruments avecq leur particulier de  
de trois filles. l'epinette, eluth, et la Virole ballarde emoy le Violon plus d'ouy  
e pour les Voix Un luth e la Virole a deux deus avecq les Voix de mes deux filles  
et quelq<sup>s</sup> fois deux dessus avecq Vne basse & Je chante avecq les pinette et corbe  
pour de petites madrigales duliers. Voila quelque fois nostre partemps pour  
nous diuertir Vne fois en six jours, ce que vous poures auoir quant il vous  
plaira par le moien de Vos quatre fils que Dieu Conserue finissant  
cause Presbumbent le meins demeurant

Vostre Trachante et Sauegard  
J. Duarte

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