

1077. MOZART TO MICHAEL PUCHBERG,¹ VIENNA

Most honourable B. O!²

[Vienna, before 17th June, 1788]

Dearest, most valued friend! –

The conviction that you are my true friend, sir, and that you know me as an honest man, encourages me to open my heart to you, [5] and to approach you with the following request. – In keeping with my natural forthrightness, I will proceed to the matter itself. –

If you were to extend to me such love and friendship as support me for 1 or 2 years with 1 or 2 thousand guldens,³ in return for suitable *interest*, you would help me with the very basis of my existence!⁴ – [10] You will surely find it evident and true yourself that it is irksome, yes, impossible to live if one has to wait from one flow of earnings to the next! – If one does not have certain reserves, at least what is essential, it is not possible to order one's circumstances. – With nothing one produces nothing; – If you perform this act of friendship towards me, I can then 1:^{mo} ⁵ |: since I am provided for :| make the necessary payments at the appropriate time, and therefore more easily; [15] whereas currently I have to put off the payments and then, unsurprisingly, often have to part with my entire takings all at once at precisely the most inconvenient moment. – 2^{do}: I can work with a less care-laden mind and a freer heart, can consequently earn more. – Regarding security, I do not believe that you will have any doubts! – [20] You know at least approximately how I stand – and you know how I think! – Regarding the *subscription*,⁶ you need not worry; I am now moving the date back by some months; – I have hopes of finding more music-lovers elsewhere rather than here. –

Now, in a matter that is of great importance to me, I have let you see everything that is in my heart, [25] have therefore behaved as a true brother – but it is only to a true brother that one can show everything. – Now I am looking forward longingly to a reply, but in truth to – an agreeable reply; – and I am uncertain: – what is clear is that I know you as the man who, like me, is sure to support, if he can, his friend, but true friend, his brother, but true brother. [30] – if perhaps you cannot part with such a *sum* at once, I would ask you to lend me at least a few hundred guldens⁷ by tomorrow, because my landlord in the Landstrasse⁸ was so *indiscreet* that |: in order to avoid embarrassment :| I had to pay him everything on the spot, which has caused great disorder in my affairs! – [35] Today we are sleeping for the first time

¹ BD VI, p. 368: Several letters to Puchberg are probably missing. Mozart's debt with Puchberg was already 8 ducats (36 florins) by the time the first known begging letter to him, No. 1076, was written. Documented loans by Puchberg amounted to a total of 1415 florins.

² Masonic greeting: "Brother in the Order". BD: Johann Michael Puchberg (1741-1822), 1768-1777 in charge of a factory and wholesale business for finished and semi-finished silk layers, velvet, ribbons, cloth and gloves. He resumed this activity in 1785 in association with his brother. The landlord of the premises on the Hoher Markt in Vienna was Franz, Count [Graf] Walsegg-Stuppach, who commissioned the *Requiem* from Mozart in 1791. Member of various Masonic lodges from 1773 onwards. It was probably in Masonic circles that he met Mozart. He was also in contact with Joseph Haydn, who wrote to him in January, 1792, in connection with Mozart's death. He represented Constanze for a time regarding Mozart's estate. Mozart dedicated to him the string trio divertimento in E^b KV 563 (cf. No. 1094/23; No.1121/11) and perhaps also the piano trio in E KV 542 (cf. notes on No. 1077/50 and No. 1083/18). Puchberg died in poverty in 1822.

³ 1 gulden effectively = 1 florin.

⁴ Mozart uses the stock phrase "auf Acker und Pflug": literally "with field and plough".

⁵ 1^{mo} (Italian) = "first, first of all". 2^{do} = secondly.

⁶ BD: A subscription for the string quartets KV 406 (516b), 515 and 516. Announced in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 2nd April, 1788, it had attracted so few subscribers that in June Mozart announced a delay of publication until 1st January, 1789. The attempted subscription remained unsuccessful. The subscription tickets were available from Puchberg, who had presumably voiced disquiet at the numbers.

⁷ Effectively the same value as florins.

⁸ BD: Mozart moved back into town from the Landstrasse (a suburb of Vienna) in December, 1787.

in our new *accommodation*,⁹ where we will stay both summer and winter; in principle, I find it equivalent, if not better; I do not have much to do in town anyway and since I am not subjected to the numerous visitors, I have my mind free for artistic work; – and if I do have to come into town for business, which will happen seldom enough anyway, any *fiacre*¹⁰ will take me for 10 kreuzers, [40] the amount that we save with our *lodgings*, and it is more pleasant as far as spring, summer and autumn are concerned – since I also have a garden. – The *lodgings* are in the Waringergasse, at The 3 Stars,¹¹ *N:o* 135.

Now take my letter as a sure sign of my entire confidence in you, and remain eternally my friend and brother, as I remain, until the grave takes me, [45]

in true friendship and heart-felt brotherliness, your

W: A: Mozart

P.S. When, then, shall we once again make a little *musique* in your home? – –
[50] I have written a new *trio*!¹² –

IN MICHAEL PUCHBERG'S HAND:

the 17th June 788 f 200 sent.

⁹ BD: Once again a move out to a suburb (Alsergrund).

¹⁰ BD: A light carriage hired for single journeys, not per day or hour.

¹¹ “bei den 3 Sternen”.

¹² BD: The piano trio in E KV 542 (cf. No. 1078/2; note on No. 1083/18), possibly written for Puchberg.