

Vienna, 30th July, 1768

You have done everything right again!³ – – We were only anxious about whether someone in your household might have been ill. We are all the more pleased at this end because we see that the reason for this silence was in fact beneficial, healthy living and diversion in the garden.⁴ [5] On another front, however, namely regarding our staying so long in Vienna, we are most discontent. Yes, nothing apart from our honour is holding us back, otherwise we would have been in Salzburg long ago. For would you wish that all of Vienna should say that Wolfgang could not finish the *opera*,⁵ [10] or that it turned out so miserably that it could not be performed at all, or that he did not write it, but his father etc.? Would you wish that one should wait unmoved for calumnies of this kind to be spread to all countries? Would this in any way be to our honour, yes, would it be to the honour of our most gracious Prince?⁶ You will say, [15] What does His Majesty the Emperor⁷ say about it? – – Here I must touch on the matter only briefly, for it is not possible to give a full description, but you will see how it is. If I had known everything that I know now, and if I had foreseen events which have happened, Wolfgang would certainly never have written a single note, but would have gone home long ago. [20] The theatre is leased, or, rather, handed over, to a certain *Affligio*.⁸ The latter has to pay 1000 florins annually to people whom the court would otherwise have to pay. The Emperor and the whole Imperial family pay nothing, are relieved of a burden. Consequently, the court does not have a word to say to this *Affligio*, since everything is at his risk, and now he really is in danger of ending in disaster, as you will hear immediately below. [25]

His Majesty asked our Wolfgang if he would like to write an *opera*, and said that he personally would like to see him at the *clavier* conducting the *opera*. His Majesty also let *Affligio* hear of this, and the latter then went on to agree the business with us for a purse of 100 ducats.⁹ [30] The *opera* was originally to be written by Easter, but the poet¹⁰ was the first to hinder it by constantly putting off making the changes which were necessary only here and there, so that it was only possible to receive two of the altered *arias* from him by Easter. The date was fixed for Pentecost, and then for the return of His Majesty from Hungary. But here the mask was taken off. [35] – – – For, during this time, all the composers, among whom *Gluck*¹¹ was a principal person, undermined everything in order to prevent the progress of this

¹ BD: Original lost. Copyist A; NissenB.

² BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Friend of the Mozarts and their landlord 1747-1773.

³ BD: Presumably Hagenauer has written (No. 0134a, lost) and explained the reason for the long silence (cf. No. 0134/2 ff.).

⁴ BD: The Hagenauers also had a house in the suburb Nonntal, cf. line 158.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 125/129. *La finta giardiniera* KV 51 (46a), text by Goldoni, revised by Coltellini. Despite all efforts in Vienna, the first performance was in 1769 in Salzburg.

⁶ “unsers gnädigsten Fürsten”. BD: Siegmund Christoph, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Leopold's employer.

⁷ “S: Mayestät der Kayser”. BD: Joseph II, who had suggested that Wolfgang write an opera.

⁸ BD: Giuseppe Affligio (also Afflisio, actually Marcati) (1719-1787), from 1767 the only person in charge of “spectacles” in Vienna, manager of the Burgtheater and the Kärntnertheater. For the accusations against him cf. No. 0139.

⁹ BD: ≈ 450 florins, the usual fee for composing an opera.

¹⁰ BD: Marco Coltellini (1719-1777), from 1758 theatre poet in Vienna, in 1769 successor to Pietro Metastasio as court poet. His changes to Goldoni's text for *La finta giardiniera* were only in the third act.

¹¹ BD: Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787). In No. 0125/110 ff., Leopold seems to think Gluck would soon be on his side in supporting *La finta giardiniera*, but here he sees them as being amongst those composers undermining the possible success of the opera. In Nos. 0420/160-161 and 0476/33 ff., he again sees Gluck as one of Wolfgang's opponents. On the other hand, in Nos. 0684/43-44 and 0731/18 ff., the relationship seemed

opera. The singers were whipped up, the *orchestra* was incited, and every means used in order to bring the production of this *opera* to an end. The singers, who hardly know the music anyway, [40] and one or two of whom have to learn the whole thing by ear, apparently now said that they could not sing their *arias*, the same which they had previously heard in our rooms, had given approval, applauded, and said that they were as they wanted. Now the *orchestra* apparently said that they did not like being conducted by a boy, and a thousand such things. Meanwhile, [45] some spread the rumour that the music was not worth a devil's curse, others said the music did not fit the words and went against the metre, since the boy did not understand Italian well enough. – – – Hardly had I heard this than I proved in the most respectable places that the father of music, *Hasse*,¹² and the great *Metastasio*¹³ have declared that the slanderers [50] who are spreading this should come to them in order to hear from their mouths that 30 *operas* have been performed in Vienna which do not in any aspect surpass the *opera* by this boy, whom both of them admire to nothing less than the highest degree. Now the story was that not the boy, but the father, had written it. – – But here the credibility of the slanderers collapsed, [55] for they lapsed *ab uno extremo ad aliud*,¹⁴ and here they at once got into hot water. I had someone choose at random a part of *Metastasio*'s works, open the book and present the first *aria* that came into their hands to Wolfgang. He took his pen and, without deliberation and in the presence of many persons of standing, wrote the music to it, with many *instruments*, at the most astonishing speed. [60] He did this in the houses of Music Director *Bono*,¹⁵ *Abbé Metastasio*, *Hasse*, the eminent Count of *Braganza*,¹⁶ and Prince von Caunitz.¹⁷ Meanwhile, another *opera* is in preparation and, since there is no longer any objection to be raised, Wolfgang's is to be put on immediately afterwards. – – – A hundred times I have wanted to pack everything and leave and [65] if this *opera* were an *opera seria*, I would have departed instantly, yes, in the first instant, and would have laid the work at the feet of His High Princely Grace.¹⁸ But since it is an *opera buffa*, and indeed one that requires the particular qualities of *persone buffe*,¹⁹ I must rescue our honour here, whatever it costs. [70] The honour of the most gracious Prince of our land of Salzburg is likewise at stake. His High Princely Grace has no liars, no charlatans, no deceivers in his service, people who, with foreknowledge and with the most gracious permission of this highest lord, go where they do not belong in order to create, like illusionists, a thick mist before people's eyes. No, rather, honest men who, to the honour of their prince and their native land, [75] proclaim to the world a wonder that God has permitted to be born in Salzburg. I owe it to almighty God to take this course of action, otherwise I would be the most thankless of His creatures. And if I were ever duty-bound to convince the world of this miracle, it is at just this moment, since they are making everything that could in any way be called a miracle ridiculous and denying all miracles. [80] One must therefore convince them. And was it not a great joy and a great

mutually positive. In his concert on 23rd March, 1783, Mozart improvised variations on “*Unser dummen Pöbel meint*” from Gluck's singspiel *La Rencontre imprévue* in honour of the composer present in the audience.

¹² BD: Johann Adolf Hasse (1699-1783), in Vienna again since 1764.

¹³ BD VII: Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782). Came to the Vienna court in 1730; Apostolo Zeno (1668-1750) had suggested him as his own successor. He remained there until the end of its life. He met Mozart at least once, cf. No. 135/60-61. Mozart set several of his libretti (KV 118/74c; 126; 208; 362) and numerous arias (KV 21 (19c); 369; 23; 78 (73b); 79 (73d); 88 (73c); 71; 74b; 77 (73e); 82 (73o); 83 (73p); 368; 440 (383h); 294; 512; 486a (295a); 432 (421a); 538; KV Anh. 2; KV⁶: 73 A (lost)).

¹⁴ = from one extreme to the other.

¹⁵ “Capellmeister Bono”. BD: Giuseppe Bonno (1710-1788), from 1739 court composer in Vienna, later (1774) court music director there. Acquainted with the Mozarts since 1773.

¹⁶ “tit: Herzogen von Braganza”. BD: Cf. No. 0120/9.

¹⁷ “Fürsten von Caunitz”. BD: Wenzel Anton, Count [Graf] (from 1764 Prince [Fürst]) Kaunitz-Rietberg (1711-1794), diplomat, from 1753 State Chancellor [Staatskanzler].

¹⁸ “S: hochfürstlichen Gnaden”. BD: Siegmund Schrattenbach, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Leopold's employer.

¹⁹ = *buffa* characters.

victory for me when I heard a *Voltairean*²⁰ say to me in astonishment, Now I have, for once in my life, seen a miracle; this is the first! But now, because this miracle is too evident and consequently cannot be contradicted, they want to suppress it. [85] They will not allow God His glory. They think it is only a matter of years and then it will decay into something natural and will cease to be a miracle of God. They accordingly want to withdraw it from the view of the world, and how does it become more visible than by means of a public spectacle in a large, well-populated city? – – – But should we be surprised at being persecuted in other lands, [90] since almost the same thing happened in the place where this child was born?²¹ – – What shame! What inhumanity! Now you will still be wondering why eminent Prince Caunitz and other great persons, yes, His Majesty the Emperor himself do not personally command that the *opera* be performed. First of all, they cannot command it because it involves the interests of *Sgr. Affligio* alone [95] |: whom some call Count *Affligio*²² |: 2nd, they would rather command him to put it on at another time, only Prince Caunitz, against the will of His Majesty, persuaded *Affligio* to have French actors²³ brought who cost him over 70000 florins per year and who are now |: since they are not getting the audience that was hoped for |: are bringing disaster upon him, and he, [100] *Affligio*, puts all the blame on Prince Kaunitz, while this prince in turn held out hopes of persuading the Emperor to take pleasure in the French theatre and to refund his, *Affligio*'s, costs. The result was that, for many weeks, His Majesty was not to be seen at any public entertainments at all. You see the vexatious situation that just had to arise at the same time [105] and which also helped *Affligio* to allow himself to be easily persuaded to free himself from the burden of Wolfgang's *opera* in order to keep the 100 ducats²⁴ in his purse and which, on the other hand, out of fear about the refunding of the 70000 florentine guildens, meant that no-one wanted to speak to *Affligio* with sharp and commanding firmness. Yet all of this has in the meantime been done secretly. [110] *Affligio* blamed the singers for the delay with the *opera* and said they could not and would not sing it; the singers, on the other hand, put the blame on *Affligio* and maintained that, declaring himself against it, he had said that he would not perform it. They could, of course, have changes made in one place or another. So it is to be performed. But if a new hindrance should emerge, [115] which must show itself now, I will have my complaint²⁵ presented to His Majesty the Emperor and the Empress and demand such satisfaction as will rescue our honour in the eyes of all Vienna and the whole honest world. For it would not be an honour for us, nor, indeed, for the court in Salzburg, if we allowed ourselves to be downright driven off by the envy that pursues us [120] and thus left the stage free after our departure for the evildoers to announce to an unsuspecting *public* |: as has already happened |: that Wolfgang has not even completed the *opera*, or that it turned out so badly that it could not be put on etc. etc. You see how one has to brawl one's way through in the world. If someone has no talent, [125] he is unhappy enough. If he has talent, envy pursues him in proportion to his abilities. On top of all that I have already told you, a singer, *Bernasconi*, now develops a hefty catarrh and *Baglioni*²⁶ is also not at all well, the whole thing is hindered and delayed by at least 3 weeks, so that, with the greatest consternation, [130] the like of which I have not experienced on any

²⁰ BD: Probably Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (cf. No. 0074/15).

²¹ BD: Nothing is known of any persecution of Wolfgang under Siegmund Schrattenbach.

²² "Graf".

²³ BD: *Affligio* offered to engage a French theatre troupe and ballet if he could use the Burgtheater, which had been closed since the death of Emperor Francis I. Maria Theresia agreed, and he was given a contract for 10 years from 1767. The payment for the actors and dancers alone came to over 100,000 florins per year; the famous dancer Noverre (cf. No. 0293/51) alone received 7425 florins. He applied for a subsidy of at least 25,000 florins. After help from private subscriptions and loans, Emperor Joseph II agreed to the removal of the French troupe, who performed for the last time in February 1772.

²⁴ BD: Fee for composing the opera, as above.

²⁵ BD: No. 0139.

²⁶ BD: Cf. list of singers in No. 0125/134, 135.

of our journeys, I have to wait for the outcome of this hateful matter. All reasonable people must notice with shame that it is a scandal for our nation that we Germans are attempting to suppress a German whom other nations, with the greatest astonishment, yes, with printed statements, have treated justly. [135] But it is with patience and steadfastness that one must convince people that our opponents are malicious liars, slanderers and envious creatures, who would snigger into their sleeves over their victory if one allowed oneself to be terrified or exhausted and left here in vexation. All the more so since such people in Vienna, who perhaps have a princess or an Imperial prince²⁷ to teach, [140] yes, even those who only take mouthfuls of the air here, are already proud enough because it is the seat of the Emperor; they look with contempt on people who serve princes²⁸ elsewhere and speak mockingly and basely of such princes. Now, sir, I think you understand my circumstances; – – And, nevertheless, I have only related it in essentials. [145] I would also have told His High Princely Grace, our most gracious lord, of this situation myself if I had not had the propriety to refrain from distracting His Person from more important things with such a long story. We all commend ourselves to His Reverence and Grace, our gracious Father Confessor,²⁹ and request that he might present us obediently at the feet of His High Princely Grace. [150] Herr Joseph³⁰ will see from this news that my enemies in Salzburg mean well with us, for they are spreading word that Wolfgang received 2000 florins for the *opera*. The letters from Herr Peisser³¹ will teach you a completely different story, and we will no doubt fetch 50, and perhaps 100 ducats,³² from him before we come back to Salzburg. [155] My wife and daughter send their most obedient thanks to all for the congratulations.³³ They spent their day outside the town at a good friend's, where we are again invited this evening and to stay until tomorrow because of Nannerl's birthday. Oh, we certainly thought of Nunthall!³⁴

Who will become Prince of Berchtolsgaden?³⁵ Perhaps Baron Culmar³⁶? – – [160] Yesterday, someone said to me Herr Kieffl³⁷ had arrived here. He will certainly not demand to see me because of the 4 ducats.³⁸ I wish you well, we all commend ourselves to you and to all good friends, and I am, sir, yours as always.

²⁷ “Prinzessin ... Kajser: Printzen”.

²⁸ “Fürsten”. BD: e.g. the Salzburg Prince-Archbishop.

²⁹ BD: Ferdinand Joseph Mayr (1733-1792), confessor to the Archbishop until his death in 1771.

³⁰ BD: Hagenauer's second son, Ignaz Joseph Hagenauer (1743-1780), cf. No. 0032.

³¹ BD: Franz Xaver Peisser, banker in Vienna, correspondent of the Salzburg firm Hagenauer and known to the Mozarts since 1762.

³² BD: ≈ 225 and 450 florins.

³³ BD: Name-day (Anna): 26th July.

³⁴ BD: Nonntal, suburb of Vienna. The Mozarts were frequent guests at the Hagenauers' house garden here.

³⁵ “Fürst [von Berchtesgaden]”. BD: Franz Anton, Baron [Freiherr] von Hausen was elected.

³⁶ BD: Helfried Franz Philipp Kulmer, Baron [Freiherr] von Rosenbichl und Hohenstein, member of the chapter of the monastery in Berchtesgaden.

³⁷ BD: Küffel, cf. No. 0109/113, had already visited the Mozart's in Vienna once (cf. No. 0122/30-31).

³⁸ BD: ≈ 18 florins.