

0165. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS WIFE, SALZBURG; POSTSCRIPT BY MOZART

*A Madame / Madame Marie Anne / Mozart / à / Salzburg*¹

Milan, 13th March
1770.

Last Saturday it was impossible for me to write because Wolfgang had to compose 3 arias and 2 recitatives with violins for the *concert*² [5] which took place yesterday in Count *Firmian's*³ house, and I was forced to write out the *violin* parts myself and only then let them be copied, so that they would not be stolen. There were over 150 persons of the highest nobility present, of whom the principal persons were the Duke, the *Princess*⁴ and the *Cardinal*. [10] Now it has been firmly settled that, with God's help, we should leave Milan on the coming Thursday, namely the day after tomorrow, but we will not arrive in *Parma* until Saturday morning, since we are departing with a *vitturino*,⁵ and not until around midday. As you can easily imagine, I have an astonishing amount to do, all the more so since, because of our long stay, [15] the whole chest has been unpacked. Between this evening and tomorrow, a further arrangement will be made. Their wish is namely that Wolfgang should write the first opera⁶ for the coming Christmas. If this happens, you can be glad because we will be home sooner than would, by all appearances, otherwise be the case; [20] then we have enough to do to get to Rome for Holy Week. You know that Rome is the place where one has to visit. Then we will go to Naples,⁷ which is a place of such significance that, if no *scrittura*⁸ calls us back to write the opera in Milan, an opportunity⁹ can easily arise that would keep us there for the whole of the coming winter.

[25] But if the *scrittura* is given, the libretto will be sent to us, Wolfgang can think the matter through a little, we can take the route via *Loretto*¹⁰ and then be in Milan again in Advent. And as the composer is not obliged to be there longer than it takes to get the opera on stage, we can afterwards go home via Venice and then be at home for a year. [30] I leave everything to Providence and God's disposition. I ask you to give my apologies and my congratulations everywhere to everyone who is called Joseph,¹¹ for this week is my most arduous week. You know how taxing, sad and arduous a departure is. Make my most obedient compliments and apologies to His Eminent Grace our Father Confessor¹² in particular. [35]

¹ BD: Note (by Frau Mozart? Nannerl?) beside the address: "N^o: 13 from Milan".

² BD: The 3 arias were KV Anh. 2 (KV⁶: 73A), cf. No. 0158/12 ff.; KV 88 (73c) and KV 77 (73e), cf. No. 0162/10. The recitative with violins was probably the extensive *accompagnato* in KV 77 (73e).

³ "in dem graf: Firmianschen Haus". BD: Karl Joseph, Count [Graf] Firmian, studied in Innsbruck, Salzburg and Leyden before becoming a diplomat. A reliable supporter of Mozart in Italy; noted for his learning and intellect.

⁴ "der Herzog, die Prinzessin". BD: Cf. Nos. 0161/23; 1212/236. Probably not Duke Hercole III Rainoldo d'Este (1727-1803), but his father, Francesco III (1698-1780). It was probably the Duke and his granddaughter who suggested to Maria Theresia that Mozart write *Ascanio in Alba* for the wedding of Ferdinand of Austria and Maria Beatrice Ricciarda, cf. No. 0236/47; No. 1212/236.

⁵ BD: Correctly: "vetturino" = hired coachman. The intended transport mentioned in No. 0163/21.

⁶ BD: *Mitridate Rè di Ponto* KV 87 (74a).

⁷ BD VII: Cf. No. 0193/39 ff.

⁸ BD: Commission, contract for the composition of an opera. Cf. No. 1212/237.

⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0188/28 ff.

¹⁰ BD: Loreto, a pilgrimage destination in the province of Ancona, supposedly containing the house in which Jesus was brought up, brought to Loreto by an angel.

¹¹ Name-day 19th March.

¹² "T: gd: H: Beichtvatter". BD: Ferdinand Joseph Mayr (1733-1792), confessor to the Archbishop until his death in 1771.

Always address the letters, as previously, to Herr Troger,¹³ he is sure to send them on to me.

I will write to you as soon as I reach *Bologna* or Florence, perhaps from *Parma* too.
[40] Tomorrow we dine with His Excellency to mark our departure, and he is providing us with letters for Parma, Florence, Rome and Naples.¹⁴ I cannot describe to you how graciously His Excellency has treated us during the whole time of our stay. I would already have written to His Excellency the Royal High Steward¹⁵ if I did not have to wait for tomorrow to write in more detail. [45] Commend me to all good friends, both ladies and gentlemen. Farewell, all of you, I kiss you and Nannerl 1000 times and am as always
your Mzt

To *Msr. Selzam*¹⁶ in particular every imaginable good wish.

POSTSCRIPT BY MOZART:

I commend myself, and kiss Mama and my sister millions of times, and am keeping well, thank God, *addio*.

¹³ BD: Leopold Troger, Secretary to Count [Graf] Karl Firmian. Troger's sister lived in Salzburg, where he visited her in 1771.

¹⁴ BD: Letters of recommendation. For some reason, Leopold does not mention what was probably the most important letter of recommendation, written by Count Firmian to Count [Graf] Gian Luca Pallavicini in Bologna.

¹⁵ "S: Ex: Obersthofmeister". BD: Salzburg Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister] Franz Lactanz, Count [Graf] Firmian (1712-1786), member of a very extensive and influential Tyrolean family (cf. BD V, p. 8).

¹⁶ Could be a play on "seltsam" [= "strange"]? BD: Not identified.