

*À Madame / Madame Marie Anne Mozart / à / Salzbourg*<sup>1</sup>

*Bologna, 13<sup>th</sup> Martij, 1770.*

Today we reached *Bologna*, as did your last letter, which we found at the post office there, because Herr Troger<sup>2</sup> had transferred it there along with some other letters which His Excellency Count *Firmian*<sup>3</sup> had sent on. [5] We are well, praise God, and living in the hope that God will keep us in good health. We will not stay here more than 4 days; likewise in Florence perhaps 5 or 6 days. Consequently, with God's help, we will be in Rome on Tuesday or Wednesday<sup>4</sup> of Holy Week at the latest and will certainly see the ceremonies on Maundy Thursday etc. etc. [10]

I wrote<sup>5</sup> to His Excellency the Royal High Steward<sup>6</sup> from *Parma* and not only thanked him for the graciousness which we enjoyed in the *Firmians'* house, but also asked him to make His High Princely Grace<sup>7</sup> aware that Wolfgang is to write the *opera* in Milan and to ask him for the permission. [15] Today I wrote from here, with this post, to His High Princely Grace, offered him my most obedient congratulations on his Election Day,<sup>8</sup> and likewise asked for permission regarding the *opera*. Find out if these two letters have arrived safely or not. The *scrittura*, or written contract, has already been made out, and mutually exchanged. [20] It therefore depends only on the permission from His High Princely Grace. The contract was made in Count *Firmian's* house, and we will receive 100 *cigliati*<sup>9</sup> and free accommodation. The *opera* begins during the days of Christmas. The *recitatives* must be sent to Milan in October, and we must be in Milan on the 1<sup>st</sup> November so that Wolfgang can write the *arias*.<sup>10</sup> [25] The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ladies are *Sgra. Gabrielli* and her sister.<sup>11</sup> The *tenor* is *Sgr. Ettore*, now *Cavaliere Ettore*, because he wears a certain Order. The *primo uomo*<sup>12</sup> and the others have not yet been fixed. It may be that *Manzoli*<sup>13</sup> will sing. *Sgra. Gabrielli* is known throughout Italy as an astonishingly arrogant clown who, besides squandering all her money, [30] carries out the most clownish escapades. We will meet her on the way, in Rome

<sup>1</sup> BD: Note (by Frau Mozart? Nannerl?) beside the address: "N: 14 from Bologna".

<sup>2</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0155/41. Secretary to the governor general of Lombardy.

<sup>3</sup> "S<sup>c</sup>: Ex: Gr: Firmian". BD: Karl Joseph, Count [Graf] Firmian, studied in Innsbruck, Salzburg and Leyden before becoming a diplomat. Governor general of L where//ombardy. A reliable supporter of Mozart in Italy; noted for his learning and intellect.

<sup>4</sup> BD VII: Arrived on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1770.

<sup>5</sup> BD: No. 0167a, lost.

<sup>6</sup> "S<sup>c</sup>: Ex: Obersthofmeister". BD: Georg Anton Felix Graf Firmian (1712-1786), member of a very extensive and influential Tyrolean family (cf. BD V, p. 8), occupied various positions at court, ultimately that of Royal High Steward (Obersthofmeister).

<sup>7</sup> "S<sup>c</sup>: Hochf: gd". BD: Siegmund Christoph von Schrattenbach (1698-1771), Prince-Archbishop [Fürsterzbischof] in Salzburg from 1753 following long association with the cathedral.

<sup>8</sup> BD VII: 5<sup>th</sup> April (1753).

<sup>9</sup> BD: 1 *gigliato* = 1 ducat = 4.5 florins.

<sup>10</sup> BD: Usually written taking the personal wishes of the soloists into account.

<sup>11</sup> BD: Catarina Gabrielli (1630-1696), daughter of the personal cook to Prince Gabrielli, for which reason she was often called "la cochetta/cochettina". She stated that no one could write as well for her voice as Joseph Mysliveček (1737-1781), mentioned elsewhere in the correspondence. Wolfgang had a negative view of her artistry: "nothing but a producer of passagework and roulades" (No. 0426/55); Leopold compared her unfavourably with Aloisia Weber (No. 0422/110-111). Her sister Francesca (\* between 1736 and 1740) regularly appeared with her as the *seconda donna*.

<sup>12</sup> = "leading man".

<sup>13</sup> BD: Giovanni Manzuoli (1725?-1780?), soprano castrato from Florence, in London since 1764. He gave Wolfgang singing lessons free of charge, cf. No. 0099/76. He sang the title role in the première of *Ascanio in Alba* KV 111.

or Naples, she is coming from *Palermo*, and then we will honour her like a queen and exalt her mightily: this way you can gain great favour. In *Parma*, *Sgra. Guari*, or the so-called *Bastardina* or *Bastardella*,<sup>14</sup> invited us to dine with her and sang 3 *arias*. [35] I was unable to believe that she could reputedly sing up to *c sopra acuto*, but my ears convinced me. The passages which Wolfgang wrote down were in her *aria* and she did indeed sing these slightly more quietly than the low notes, but so beautifully, like an *octavin* pipe<sup>15</sup> in an *organ*. In brief! She did the trills and everything just as Wolfgang has written them, [40] they are the same things, note for note. Besides that, she has a good low *alto* range, down to g. She is not beautiful, but nor is she ghastly, has a wild look in her eyes from time to time, like the people who suffer from fear, and limps with one leg. Otherwise she has good bearing, consequently a good character and a good name. [45] His Excellency Count *Firmian* honoured Wolfgang with a snuffbox set in gold with 20 *cigliati* in it.

We saw the tightrope-walkers with the dogs performing in *Mantua*, and now we saw them in *Parma*.

I keep forgetting to write that the *primo uomo* among the Italian actors [50] who were in Salzburg was at *Seccatore's*<sup>16</sup> in *Verona*. But I knew nothing about it. They came to our inn very late on the evening before we left *Verona*, and just at the moment when I was paying the waiter. Old *Seccatore*, seeing a Salzburg ducat, took the coin in his hand and kissed the portrait on it, saying, [55] this is my father, who showed great graciousness to us etc. The *prima donna*, *Seccatore's* wife, has died, and that was in *Verona*.

Herr Troger writes<sup>17</sup> to us today that he was informed by *Marcobruni*<sup>18</sup> that Herr Meisner<sup>19</sup> has reached Rome. So we hope to see him there.

[60] This *Abbé Marcobranni* is the one whom you knew well when he was at college. He will reserve private quarters for me.

This is the most expensive place we have encountered so far in Italy. We are admittedly staying at the *Pelegrino*,<sup>20</sup> the best inn, but we also have the honour of paying a ducat<sup>21</sup> every day. Everything went up here, [65] the more so because more people are staying here than otherwise a few years ago. The number of expelled Jesuits<sup>22</sup> here alone is over 1000. Farewell! I am glad that Nannerl is working hard. But she should not sing more than she thinks is not harmful for her chest.<sup>23</sup> My compliments to all friends, both ladies and gentlemen. We kiss both of you a million times. *Addio*. I am as always your Mzt.

[70] You wrote something about Herr Wolff,<sup>24</sup> but nothing about Schwarzkopf.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> BD: Cf. Nos. 0166/45; 0168/23 ff.

<sup>15</sup> 2' register on the organ.

<sup>16</sup> BD VII: It is doubtful whether this is the same musician is mentioned in No. 0147/36.

<sup>17</sup> BD: No. 0168b, lost.

<sup>18</sup> BD: Francesco Antonio Marcobruni, director of the post office in Rome; he had at one stage studied in Salzburg.

<sup>19</sup> BD: Joseph Nikolaus Meissner (c. 1724-1795), son of the Salzburg court musician Nikolaus Meissner. Employed in Salzburg from 1747, but often on tour. Reputed to sing everything from high tenor to deep bass, but cf. Mozart's judgement in No. 0453/83 ff. His sister also sang in Salzburg. The Mozart subsequently met him in Rome, cf. No. 0182/30.

<sup>20</sup> BD: "La Nobil Locanda detta del Pellegrino", still doing business.

<sup>21</sup> BD: 4 florins 30 kreuzers.

<sup>22</sup> BD: The expulsion of the Jesuits started in Portugal in 1759, in France in 1764, in Spain and Naples in 1767. They were finally suspended by Pope Clement XIV in 1773.

<sup>23</sup> BD: Cf. Leopold's exhortation in No. 0161/64.

<sup>24</sup> BD: Joseph Wolff, respected bookseller and publisher in Augsburg with a shop in Innsbruck. Leopold wanted to sell copies of his violin school in Innsbruck.

<sup>25</sup> BD: The Nuremberg representative of the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf.