

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

Bologna, 28<sup>th</sup> Julii, 1770

My first letter<sup>2</sup> from *Bologna*, dated 21<sup>st</sup>, will have reached you. [5] I have been in *Bologna* for 9 days now and have not come out of my room, yes, have lain constantly on the bed or with my leg<sup>3</sup> on a chair. Yet I hope to God that when you read this letter, I will already have been out a few times, since today I am applying certain dry, but warm, poultices as prescribed for me by esteemed *Doctor Rivieri*,<sup>4</sup> in order to get rid of the swelling. [10] For besides the swelling on the joints and forefoot, a small swelling has also started on the bone of the big toe and the ball, with redness and great pain. It looks like *podagra* and is preventing me from moving the toes and standing on that foot. Patience! Patience is the master of every villain.

[15] This little diversion will cost me 12 ducats,<sup>5</sup> for it is not amusing to be ill in an inn. If I had had takings of 1000 *doppias*<sup>6</sup> in Naples, I would finally have been in a position to brush off my expenses lightly. But I am not so greedy, I am also happy to settle for little. Naples is not the place to make 1000 *doppias*; ask Herr Meissner,<sup>7</sup> to whom we commend ourselves. [20] He will laugh heartily. Enough, I always have more, God be praised, than we need, and thus we are content and praise God. –

You also asked me<sup>8</sup> if I have ever had dizziness and *sciatica*. I had a little dizziness in Naples, but only for a few days. And for 4 weeks now, besides the accident with my leg, I have had rheumatism in the left shoulder-blade, [25] but very mildly, only I am occasionally reminded of it sharply during certain movements.

Yesterday we received the *opera* libretto and the names of the singers.

The *opera* is called *Mitridate Re di Ponto*.<sup>9</sup>

It is by a poet from *Turino*, Sig. *Vittorio Amedeo Cigna-Santi*,<sup>10</sup> [30] and was performed there in the year 1767. The personages are:<sup>11</sup>

*Mithridate*, King of Pontus.

*Sgr. Guglielmo D'Ettore*.<sup>12</sup>

*Aspasia*, promised in marriage to

*Sgra. Antonia Bernasconi, leading lady*.<sup>13</sup>

*Mithridate* etc. – – –

*Sifare*, son of *Mithridate*,

[35] *lover of Aspasia*. –

*Sgre. Sartorini. Soprano, leading man*.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BD: Note (by Frau Mozart? Nannerl?) beside the address: “N<sup>o</sup>: 33 from Bologna”.

<sup>2</sup> BD: No. 0199.

<sup>3</sup> BD: The result of a coach accident, cf. No. 0194/30 ff.

<sup>4</sup> BD: Professore Dr. med., Dr. phil. Bartolomeo Riviera († 1795).

<sup>5</sup> BD: ≈ 54 florins.

<sup>6</sup> BD: “doubloons”, 7 g gold coins (double the weight of a ducat) in use in various Italian states, e.g. Rome, Bologna, Venice. 1000 doubloons ≈ 9000 florins.

<sup>7</sup> BD: It is not clear what Mozart is referring to here. 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.

<sup>8</sup> BD: In one of the last letters, perhaps No. 0198a, which were waiting for Leopold in Rome (cf. No. 0193/39).

<sup>9</sup> BD: KV 87 (74a); the composition is marked “opera seria”. Libretto by Cigna-Santi, based on Parini’s translation of Racine’s *Mithridate*.

<sup>10</sup> BD: 1725-1785, member of the Turin *Accademia dei Trasformati*.

<sup>11</sup> From here to line 44 in Italian throughout.

<sup>12</sup> BD: Guglielmo d’Ettore, cf. Nos. 0166/38; 0448/199-200.

<sup>13</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0125/134.

<sup>14</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0166/37.

- Farnace, first son of Mithridate, lover of the same Aspasia. – Ismene, daughter of the king of the Parthians, lover of Farnace – – Arbate, governor of Ninfea Marzio. Roman Tribune.*
- Sgre. Cicognani, contralto.*<sup>15</sup>
- Sgra. Varese. – second lady. Soprano.*<sup>16</sup>
- *Soprano*
- *Tenor.*
- [45] We know *la Bernasconi* anyway. Herr *Sartorini* sang for us in Rome. *Cicognani* is here, and is our good friend. *Ettore* is also here at the moment.
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As far as the plaster is concerned,<sup>17</sup> your letter<sup>18</sup> is not yet in my hands, it will come with the next post from Rome. Today I received your letter<sup>19</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup>, [50] and at the same time a letter from Herr Troger,<sup>20</sup> along with the little box from Milan. *Mademoiselle Troger*<sup>21</sup> reached Milan safely. We like the 2 *portraits* very much and, in order to find them good, one should not look at them from close up, but go back a little, for pastel is not a miniature. They are slightly too fat, but much disappears a short distance away and we are satisfied, that is enough! [55] Wolfgang thanks you, his sister and all good friends for the congratulations<sup>22</sup> and commends himself, along with me, to everyone. We kiss both of you 1000 times and I am as always your

Mozart.

Just imagine our housekeeping when I cannot move from the spot; [60] you know what Wolfgang is.<sup>23</sup>

MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT TO HIS SISTER:

<sup>24</sup>*My dearest sister,*  
*I must confess to you that you have brought me great pleasure by sending me the portraits, which I very much like. I do not know what else I can write to you. Kiss my mother's hands a thousand times on my behalf, and I kiss you 1000000 times and declare myself to be [65] your most humble servant Wolfgango Amadeo Moz mp*<sup>25</sup>

<sup>15</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0156/16.

<sup>16</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0166/38.

<sup>17</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0194/46 ff.

<sup>18</sup> BD: No. 0198b, lost.

<sup>19</sup> BD: No. 0199a, lost.

<sup>20</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0155/41, No. 0160/55. Leopold Troger was secretary to the governor general of Lombardy, his sister lived in Salzburg.

<sup>21</sup> BD: She was expected to travel to Milan soon, bringing with her two pastel portraits of Mozart's mother and sister, cf. Nos. 0184/80; 0186/40; 0189/70; 0193/35.

<sup>22</sup> BD: For being given the Order of the Golden Spur, cf. No. 0197.

<sup>23</sup> BD: Wolfgang generally to meet Leopold's wishes regarding orderliness.

<sup>24</sup> Original Italian: *Carissima sorella mia. Jo vi devo confessare che hó un grandissimo piacer, che ci avete mandati i ritrati, i quali mi piacono molto. non vi só piu scrivere niente, bacciate la mano mille volte alla mia madre da parte mia, e io vi baccio 1000000 volte, e mi dichiaro [65] / vostro umilissimo servitor / Wolfgango amadeo Moz mp.*

<sup>25</sup> mp = manu propria = in his own hand.