

0218. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS WIFE, SALZBURG

Milan, 10th November, 1770

The miscellany¹ by our good friends reached us safely, and we are very happy that you had such an entertaining time in Triebenbach.² Express our thanks once again to our gracious Frau von Schiedenhofen³ and her worthy, estimable son,⁴ [5] with the most obedient compliments from both us, while we both likewise thank all our friends in *optima forma*,⁵ with our sincere compliments, for the entertainment with which they provided us in the enclosed letters and the poetry, which far surpassed all German poets. We wish Herr Spitzeder⁶ 1000 and 1000fold happiness, but one roomful of children, as it is now getting more and more expensive in Salzburg.⁷ [10] What is his new wife's name? — Do I know her? — I believe so,⁸ yes! My only fear is that he will have done himself harm with dancing at the wedding and perhaps overheated.

If our good friends occasionally write something for fun in your letters, they are doing a good work, for Wolfgang is now busy with serious matters and consequently very earnest. [15] I am glad if he occasionally gets hold of something humorous. Otherwise I ask my friends that they might forgive me that I do not write to anyone. Now I am less in the right frame of mind for it than ever, and in the course of time you will be amazed what a storm we have had to fend off, for which presence of mind and constant reflection are necessary. [20] In the first battle, praise God, we were the winners, and defeated an enemy⁹ who brought to the theatre all the *arias*¹⁰ the *prima donna*¹¹ was to sing and wanted to persuade her not to sing any *arias* by Wolfgang. We saw them all, they are all new *arias*, but neither she nor we know who composed them.¹² [25] But she turned down what this wicked person offered, and is quite beside herself for joy over the *arias* which Wolfgang wrote according to her will and wish, as is her *maestro*, Sgr. Lampugnani,¹³ who rehearses her part with her and cannot praise Wolfgang enough. Today, as we were with her, she was just working on the first *aria* with the *maestro*. [30] But another storm is brewing in the theatrical heavens, one which we can already see in the distance. But, with God's help and a good manner, we will no doubt battle our way through. But you should not be surprised, these are unavoidable things which confront even the greatest masters. If we can only stay healthy and keep the digestive tract free, the other things have no significance, [35] one should not take these things too much to heart. In due time you will hear all about it. Here it is still raining most of the time, and it is

¹ BD: No. 0217a, lost. Apparently a composite letter written by Leopold's wife and several friends for Leopold's birthday and then name-day (14th and 15th November), cf. No. 0218/2.

² BD: Cf. No. 0217/3. Triebenbach. The country residence, north-west of Salzburg, of the Schiedenhofen family.

³ BD: Mentioned in No. 0203/60.

⁴ BD: Johann Baptist Joseph Joachim Ferdinand von Schiedenhofen, who made a successful career in the state administration of Salzburg. He is mentioned frequently in the correspondence and was obviously a regular visitor to the Mozart's house in Salzburg.

⁵ In the best form.

⁶ BD: Franz Anton Spi(t)zeder (1735-1796), studied at Salzburg university, tenor in the Salzburg court music, later a favourite of the Archbishop and an influential figure in the court music. Sang in Mozart's *Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots* KV 35 and *La Finta semplice* KV 51 (46a).

⁷ BD: Mentioned in several letters from Salzburg: Nos. 0189/51; 0203/58; 0206/27-28.

⁸ BD: Marie Anna, née Englhart, daughter of the clothing merchant Johannes Englhart.

⁹ BD: Probably Abbate Quiro Gasparini (c. 1725-1778), 1760-1770 director of music in Turin, or someone representing him. Cf. Nos. 0226/10; 0229/6.

¹⁰ That is, other settings of the aria texts for that rôle in the libretto.

¹¹ BD: Antonia Bernasconi, cf. No. 0125/134 for the names of singers performing in Vienna.

¹² BD VII: Cf. No. 0226/9 ff.

¹³ BD: Giovanni Battista Lampugnani (1706- c.1784), at that time *maestro al cembalo*. At the première of *Mitridate* on 26th December, 1770, he accompanied on the 2nd harpsichord; from the fourth performance onwards he conducted the opera (cf. No. 0227/26 ff.).

the thick mists which, if one day is fine, cause the next to be worse again. We kiss you both 1 000 000 times, commend ourselves to our friends, both gentlemen and ladies, within and beyond the house, and I remain as always your
Leop Mozart.

[40] I don't know if I wrote to you that Herr *Kreuser* the younger¹⁴ visited us in *Bologna*, the young *Kreuser* from *Amsterdam*, whose brother¹⁵ leads the first *violins* there, who always called on us and wanted to travel with us. He enquired after us in Rome and Naples, but we were always already gone. Now he is going back to Holland via *Turin* and *Paris*. He commands himself to both of you. [45]

I have just received this very minute your letter¹⁶ of the 2nd *November*. If you have not sent off the 2 *violin* schools, simply keep them and do not send them off. Doctor *Britti* from *Roveredo*¹⁷ is himself a good *clavier* player. Count *Castelbarco*¹⁸ is well known to me. I am writing this in the rooms of the esteemed steward¹⁹ in Count *Firmian*'s²⁰ residence.

¹⁴ BD: Georg Anton Kreusser; “2 Kreuser” brothers are mentioned in No. 0105/78. Georg Anton Kreusser (1743-1810), violinist, player of viola and double bass, pupil of his brother. From 1773 in Mainz, after 1774 as music director. Leopold reminded the travelling Wolfgang about him in letters from Salzburg in 1777, cf. Nos. 0375/28 ff.; 0478/118 ff.

¹⁵ BD: Johann Adam Kreusser (1732-1791), violinist, horn player, finally concertmaster in Amsterdam.

¹⁶ BD: No. 0216b, lost.

¹⁷ BD: Probably Antonio Giacomo Bridi (1721-1799) of Rovereto, uncle of the Giuseppe Antonio Bridi who sang in a private performance of *Idomeneo* in Vienna in 1786 and himself a “good clavier player”. Giuseppe represented the firm Bridi, Parisi & Co. in Vienna.

¹⁸ BD: Conte [Count] Carlo Escole Castelbarco.

¹⁹ “H: Hausmeister”. BD: In No. 0158/59, Mozart mentions the hospitality of Therese Germani, the wife of steward [Haushofmeister] Don Fernando (Ferdinandi) Germani.

²⁰ BD: Karl Joseph, Count [Graf] Firmian, studied in Innsbruck, Salzburg and Leyden before becoming a diplomat. Governor general of Lombardy. A reliable supporter of Mozart in Italy; noted for his learning and intellect.